

# Graduates

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Most graduates have been focused on the academics right up until graduation. Little or no time has been invested in seeking a job before graduation. Then suddenly there are no more classes to attend, books to read and papers to write. That means that there is time available. Often there are student loans to repay and other pressures to find employment soon. Some will receive job offers quickly after sending out a batch of resumes. Others will wait weeks, months or much more.

There are graduates that grabbed what they thought would be temporary jobs after graduation and are still there several years later.

The economy is neither very strong nor very weak. It is somewhere in between and thus the employment market is soft. There are ministry jobs available but there is not a surplus.

The graduate of a seminary has the additional complication of needing to discern God's will in the midst of this complex transition. It is not just a matter of money and personal preferences. Thus the input of prayers can be a huge benefit at this critical interval in their life, career, marriage, family and ministry.

The cover letter and resume gives the highlights of the person's qualifications and interests. However these are very brief documents. A basic Web site can round out the profile and perhaps provide an advantage. Also most ministries have a large component that is spoken (preaching and teaching). Thus a sample of their sermons and teachings can help a search committee make a wise choice. (Later we may include streaming video.)

## **Overview of the Graduates Web Hub site**

- When the student knows that they are going to graduate within less than a year -- they contact Four Bridges. (They have heard about Four Bridges from other students, graduates, professors, etc.)
- They are pointed to the web hub for graduates. On the site are many and various resources listed under categories that are related to the process of making the transition from graduation to ministry including:
  - Writing a resume
  - Preparing for the interviews
  - Knowing where to send the resumes
  - Using the Four Bridges services to their best advantage
    - Profile web site
    - Samples of their preaching & teaching
    - Testimonies
    - Samples of portfolio

- Answers to questions that a search committee might ask
- Before and after graduation a team coaches and encourages them through the processes.
- Much prayer is made on their behalf throughout this phase.
- Networking is done to help them be presented to the potential employers.
- The graduate's spiritual gifts, personality type, core values, vision for ministry, family needs and other key factors are honored as Four Bridges works with them and God to find a good fit.
- The graduate may choose to prayerfully consider missions and/or church planting as a short term or long term direction. By using the Four Bridges systems of building a support base this may be an attractive option.
- The chief aim of Four Bridges in this area is to work alongside of the graduate to locate suitable ministry and that could mean
  - Full time employment with a local church
  - Full time on the mission field with full support
  - Bi-vocational – full time or part time employment while serving
    - Small church
    - Mission field
    - Part of a church planting team
- Along the way Four Bridges support teams work with the graduate to prayerfully consider seeking further formal education during the coming season. For example
  - Another masters degree?
  - A Ph.D. degree?
  - A degree or training that will better facilitate bi-vocational work?
- This process may be long or short. It may be simple or complicated. It will be unique for each graduate. All graduates that find their ministry fit will be asked to fill out a questionnaire to assist Four Bridges in improving our services for the other graduates. They will be asked to pass along insights and wisdom gained along the way (written and audio). For those that the process was long and complicated they will be asked to be available (by email and phone) for others that are passing through a long and complicated transition process. (Any believer over 18 years of age can participate in a Four Bridges team -- but those who have been there and done that can speak words of comfort that an outsider cannot.)