

SEBASTIAN MEREDITH

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY/THEOLOGY

Senior School Subjects

- Year 11: English Language, Physics, Outdoor and Environmental Studies, Music (Solo Performance), General Mathematics, Youth Ministry.
- Year 12: English Language, Psychology, Outdoor and Environmental Studies, Music Style and Performance, Further Mathematics.

Why did you choose these subjects? My previous schooling grounded me well in the foundations of the grammatical structure of English, so it seemed suitable to study English Language during both Year 11 and 12. I studied Outdoor and Environmental Studies and Music Performance purely as I am interested in both of those fields with great levels of personal enjoyment; I believe it is very important to take the time to input into the things you enjoy as well as the things you are required to do. This makes the whole study process profoundly more enjoyable, particularly if you are one that struggles to enjoy studying.

The final subjects - Mathematics, Physics and Psychology were all subjects that would keep me engaged in learning the things that I thought would be of value to know outside of school. I did not choose them because they were a prerequisite to a course, nor because they were subjects I would necessarily enjoy thoroughly; they were simply an intellectual stimulus that I believed (and still believe) to be helpful in my day-to-day journey outside of school.

What resources did you use to choose subjects? For my high school subjects, I had my family as a resource - all my mother wanted was for me to graduate with mathematics as one of my subjects. I also had conversations with previous students that had undertaken the subjects in previous years. I also spoke to teachers about the difference between music performance and music composition, which helped me to decide which direction to take.

What is your course like? Fantastic! The study of Theology is so broad. My course offers a contextual overview of the books of the Bible (e.g. Corinthians – who was the original audience? What was the governmental structure of the audience? What were the issues addressed by the author?), it offers the studies of the original languages used in the early manuscripts (Hebrew and Koine Greek), it offers philosophical classes (Apologetics and Philosophy) that ensure you are thinking on logical grounds, and studies in different faiths (for example, I have done classes on Islam, which entailed me visiting Mosques and engaging with Muslims throughout Melbourne).

What do you enjoy about your course? I love the variety to my course. I love learning the history of the church and of the Greco-Roman era; from Alexander the Great and his 'Hellenisation' (the spreading of Greek culture) of the common world to Martin Luther and his motives and impacts on the Reformation. I have completed studies in the ancient (Koine) Greek language, which allows for reading and translating of original Greek manuscripts dated to as early as 400 A.D.; this also gives me a great understanding in the roots of today's English language.

Finally, I think the thing that I love the most about my course is the fact that I know I will take all that I learn from it outside of university after I graduate. Not only will I graduate with the credentials that allow me to apply for jobs in churches, chaplaincies, mission organisations etc., but I will also come out of it with an abundance of knowledge that I will desire to continue to expand on; the course has me reading textbooks that I believe I will be reading for the rest of my life for the sake of pure interest, growth, and enjoyment.

Give students an example of a 'day in the life' of your course? Most of my study time consists of attending classes and sitting in a quiet library either researching books that expand on things learned in class, or writing essays. However, if you are one to study on campus rather than by distance, you will obviously have the benefits of friends. In between the times where I am quietly studying, I am playing basketball or Frisbee with mates, or eating out at cafes and restaurants – trying to get as much physical stimulus as I can so that I don't overload on the intellectual stimulus.

What have been some of the highlights of your course so far?

- My course offers a lot of practical learning. For example, I spent one day at the National Gallery of Victoria browsing through the general collection of the different pieces of art that reflected the history of church progression, and also just the history of human progression in general.
- I also participated in a week long Islamic ministry, where I went to the Islamic Museum of Victoria, visited some mosques and gained insight from some local Muslims, helped teach English to Muslim refugees, and took part in devouring some of the most delicious feasts known to man.
- I am also on the student leadership team of my university – and my role with that is to choose a less privileged ministry for my university to support for the year, and promote ways in which they can be supported. And I would say my greatest highlight is to be able to witness the difference that the contribution of my fellow students makes to the underprivileged children of that particular ministry.

How did the subjects at school prepare you for your course? English! Essays! I could not even begin to fathom the intensity of writing 4000+ word essays without a strong foundation in grammatical structure and an extensive lexicon.

What is the best piece of advice you've received about following your career goals? You have got time; not being certain on your career path is far from a big deal in the grand scheme of life.

What advice can you offer students considering studying the course? Attend an open day and sit in on a class; you will receive a great insight on the content that is studied, and what the student life looks like. Talk to someone you know that has studied the course and assess the pros and the cons for yourself.

Course information: Bachelor of Theology, Melbourne School of Theology, <http://www.mst.edu.au/>