

**Guidelines for Successful Graduates
Graduation Sunday 2018**

**II Timothy 1:7; Philippians 3:13-14; Hebrews 12:1-3
May 18, 2018**

Congratulations! You have come to a time of transition. Up to this point this is the biggest transition you have faced in your life. It is reminiscent of the boy who visited the Grand Canyon with his family. His Dad gave him a diary and asked him to make an entry each day of his insights and observations.

The boy stood on the edge of a very high cliff and spit as hard as he could. He seemed to get a thrill out of the experience. That night, he made his entry in his journal of the days activities.

His father slipped into his room after he had gone to sleep. He saw his journal and could not stand the temptation. He opened the diary and this is what it said, "**Today I spit two miles!**"

That was quite an accomplishment. But you also have earned quite an accomplishment. And now you have come to a **Fork in the road!** Yogi Berra said "When you come to a fork in the road, take it!" Well, in which direction are **you going to go?**

Today I want to give to you **Three Choices** you can make that will help you go in right direction.

I. **Successful Graduates** will Face Their Fears (**2 Timothy 1:7**) for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

A. **What You Don't Have** (**7**) for God gave us a spirit not of fear

B. **What You Do Have** (**7**) but of power and love and self-control.

1. **Power** (**Acts 1:8**) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

2. **Love** (Three Legged Stool)

1 Timothy 1:5 The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.

3. **Self-Control**

Self-Control talks of having a disciplined mind!

Romans 12:1-3 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will. ³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

II. **Successful Graduates** will **Forget Their Failures** (**Philippians 3:13-14**)

A. **Learn from the Past** (13) Brothers, I do not consider that **I have made it my own.**

Paul is saying that he has Not Arrived! He continues to press on while learning from his past mistakes and seeking not to repeat them again!

“Been there done that, Then been there several more times, Because apparently I never learn!” **This is a defeatist attitude!** You have a choice!

And don't **Play the Victim** by blaming everyone else for your problems!

Vince Lombardi:

“Winners never quit and quitters never win.”

If you want it, You will have to go get it! Because nobody is going to give it to you!

B. **Live in the Present** (13) But one thing I do: **forgetting** what lies behind

When we live in the present we forget our:

1. **Failures**

When we live in the present we forget our:

2. **Successes**

Bragging is a sign of **Pride!** **Proverbs 16:18** **Pride goes before destruction,** a haughty spirit before a fall.

Never blow your own horn!

- C. **Looking Forward to the Future (13)** and straining forward to what lies ahead,

Focusing on Past Failures and Successes will damage your Future.

Soon you are going to Miss High School, Living with your Parents, and having no real Responsibilities. You cannot dwell on this!

- D. **Lunging Toward Victory (14)** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Goal: Christlikeness here and now!

The Prize: Christlikeness in Heaven!

III. **Successful Graduates** will: **Follow Their Faith** (**Hebrews 12:1-3**)

Maybe you have heard that life is a game! Well let's play to win! Don't play to just get by!

- A. **Following Your Faith** you will your **Encouragement (1)** **Therefore**, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses

We are encouraged to play to win by the examples of God's Hall of Fame of Faith found in Hebrews 11.

- B. **Following Your Faith** you will Remove your **Enemies (1)** let us also lay aside every **weight, and sin** which clings so closely

Weights hold us down. A good runner doesn't run with weights attached to his body. Instead he wears as little as possible so that he can run effectively. I believe a weight is any thing that keeps us from running a good race for the Lord. **I believe the sin that hinders us is unbelief.** Chapter 11 tells us that we can't please Him without faith. Not to live by faith is a sin!

- C. **Following Your Faith** you will Develop you're Endurance (1) and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us
- D. **Following Your Faith** you will focus your Eyes (2) looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- E. **Following Your Faith** you will find your Enlightenment (3) Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

A Boy asked his Father: “Dad what is the size of God?”

Then the Father looked up at the Sky and saw a Plane and asked his Son: “What is the size of this Plane?”

The Boy replied: “It is very small. I can hardly see it.”

Then, the father took him to the airport and as they approached a plane, he asked: “Now, Son, how big is this Plane?”

The boy replied: “Wow dad, it's huge!”

Then the father told him: “God's size depends on **how close** or **how far away** you are to him. The closer you are to God, the Greater and Greater he will be in your life!”

That is the truth.

Your intimacy with God will show you the greatness of God..... May God's greatness cover your life and family as you draw closer to Him...

Remember life is full of choices!

Only you can chose to **Face Your Fears**

Only you can chose to **Forget Your Failures**

Only you can chose to **Follow Your Faith**

Recognize Graduates

Praise Team Takes The Platform