



Commencement
Opening Comments
May, 2010

Good Morning.

It is my privilege to welcome you to Episcopal Collegiate School's Seventh Commencement.

This sacred ceremony remains the most visible testament to the values that we hold dear and to the love that we share for Episcopal Collegiate School. We should all rejoice and give thanks for such a gift.

We gather today to not only celebrate this important milestone but to bid farewell to our seniors as they embark on a new journey. Although these past few months for them have been hectic, challenging and filled with anticipation, I do hope that they will slow down a bit today to soak in these last moments. Seniors, be joyful as you raise your voices in song and in prayer together for the last time. Please take this opportunity to be fully present with those whom you have shared so much.

A Favor

I have a favor to ask of our seniors.

Ben Johnson, the playwright, poet and contemporary of Shakespeare once wrote...

Very few men are wise by their own counsel, or learned by their own teaching. For he that was only taught by himself had a fool for his master.

All of us have had people in our lives who have shaped who we are. I know I have been blessed by many such relationships. When I think back, I remember well one of my high school teachers. Although he was only at our school for one year, he made learning come alive for me, unleashing in me a love for learning that remains to this day.

I remember well my first professional mentor, a self-made guy who had little regard for the trappings of corporate life. When others would be worrying about titles and office location, you could hear him saying, and not too quietly, "call me anything you like and put me anywhere you want-just make sure that you slide my check under the door." His genuine humility and instinct for focusing on what was important did not go unnoticed.

And I remember my mother working two jobs so that I could attend a school like Episcopal Collegiate, modeling daily the sacrifices it takes to do what has to be done.

You, the Class of 2010, have accomplished much and you should be proud. But you have not done it alone. Not one of us has. You are here today because of the love, work and support of others.

So I ask that you do me a favor by doing yourself a favor. Seek out those who have helped, supported and loved you and tell them thank you.

A Prayer

Victor Frankl in his book, Man's Search for Meaning, tells us that "Each man's destiny is different and unique. No man and no destiny can be compared with any other man or any other destiny. Our answer to the meaning of life must consist, not in talk and meditation, but in right action and in right conduct. Life ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems." He goes on to say that "everything can be taken from man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms, which is to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

My prayer for you today is very simple. I pray that you will always have the courage to choose your own way.

You members of the class of 2010 have enriched our entire school community. Your many achievements are impressive and your recognitions are well-deserved. You will most be remembered, however, for sharing your lives and your love with all of us.

I salute each and every one of you for arriving at this moment with such a promising future ahead of you.

God Bless You.