

How to handle change at graduation

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Graduation is a time of change. We are progressing from one stage to another. Part of the purpose of attending school is to prepare us to face the challenges of life. But sometimes in the process we grow attached to familiar surroundings, friends, a routine.

Graduating means a significant leap into the unknown. Sometimes we don't know where we are going to live. Who our friends will be. What job we will have. Even when we get up and go to bed may radically change. Perhaps we are ready to graduate but feel uncertain how to successfully move forward.

Instead of all the decisions being made for us by others, now all the decisions are ours. And there are so many. We want to choose wisely. How can we know the right path to take?

Your heavenly Father has a plan for you. God's plan is not material. He does not pre-destine one of His children to a factory and another to an office. God's plan is to help you nurture and develop your spiritual qualities.

Each of us is endowed with unique spiritual qualities, talents and abilities. For example, God has given us intelligence, honesty, courage, compassion, creativity. It is helpful to make a list of your good qualities and become consciously aware of your God-given identity.

Make a list of a least ten good qualities that you express. Perhaps as you make this list you may think of qualities that you express but want to develop more consistently. This can form a second column of qualities to work on.

The spiritual qualities we express determine our success. It is not so much what we do (given that it's legal) as how we do it. For example, if we take a child to the park what is most important is expressing patience, joy, spontaneity. The same trip is spoiled by anger and impatience. The result depends on the qualities expressed.

The same holds true for most decisions in life. The decision to attend this college or another, take this job or that, live in this city or that is not how our success is determined. It is whether we are expressing good qualities. The more good qualities you develop, the more useful and productive you will be.

Each morning pray about what quality or two you need to be expressing that day. God will tell you. Then go forward with whatever the logical tasks are for the day. But instead of focusing on the tasks, focus on expressing your spiritual qualities.

If graduation is a time of change and uncertainty, trust that God has a good purpose and path for you to follow. Focus on the substance, your spiritual qualities. Practice expressing your strengths in every aspect of your life. Even if you choose the wrong path, your desire to do right and express your Godly nature will keep you safe until you hear more clearly God's guidance for you. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isaiah 30:21)

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