



Commencement 2005





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As you graduate, I implore you to continue to learn more of God's word. In a few years the majority of you will be married, have families, work in various ways (maybe in the home), and do many things that you have not done while you were a student at Vanguard. You must bring the light of Scripture to bear on these changes in your lives as the Holy Spirit works within you.

However, it is not enough to know Scripture. We must live it as well. The Lord has given each of us different gifts and talents. You are called on to be faithful to Christ in the exercise and use of these gifts. The important thing for each of us is to use those gifts as the Holy Spirit applies the word to us and enables us to serve the Lord.

—Professor Larry McHargue, baccalaureate speaker.

For us, today is a day of exuberant joy, immense relief and uncertain optimism. To sit here today we needed to endure stressful plights, sleepless nights, unrelenting exams and never-ending papers. It was well worth it!

While we celebrate hard work, diligence and perseverance, and while we prepare to embark on whatever the future may hold, I ask you to remember the words of the Psalmist in the 31st Psalm: "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; for the rights of all who are destitute."

We are the instruments of Christ's love to this hurting world. Is this not what James meant when he wrote that "Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles"? And is this not what Isaiah described as the fast that the Lord requires of us: "to loose the chains of injustice, and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free [...] to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter"?

Vanguard has given us the spiritual and intellectual tools necessary to engage in this task.

—Student speaker Paul Blankenship

