

Graduation Generation – Modern Family

**Bumper Video –

Jennifer, Taylor, and Lauryn I would like you to sit on the front row. Today I want to preach to you.

As they come let's give them some applause. We are so proud of them.

You spend roughly 2160 days in High School.

12,960 hours in class – 777,600 minutes

Jennifer – Your college degree called for hours. But we all know you gave more time to it than that. To do well in school it is suggested you give 3 hours per week to each individual class. That adds up to a lot of time.

No one should ever take graduating for granted. It is an amazing commitment and you have seen it through to completion.

What you 3 have accomplished is so important.

What happens from this point on is just as important.

You have graduated.

<Graduate – To advance to a new level>

You are headed off to do new things and tackle new goals.

Before you decide what to do, decide who you will be.

Don't just hurry off into a new direction... jobs, relationships, more education... **Before you decide what to do, decide who you will be.**

Leadership author Steven Covey in his book "7 habits of highly effective people" urges us to - Begin with the end in mind. Habit #2.

Before you start a project... Begin with the end in mind. Think about and define exactly the outcome you desire.

But this habit applies to more than projects, deadlines, to do lists, and business practice. It can be applied to your life as well.

At the End of today who do you want to be? Who do you want to be, how do you want to change at the end of this summer? Who do you ultimately want to be... for your family, friends, community.

Stephen Covey suggests a Funeral Exercise.

Imagine you are somehow secretly attending your own funeral. People have gathered to pay their final respects. At the end of your life what do you want people to say about you? Talk about beginning with the end in mind...

This exercise defines Personal Success like no other. Think about it... at the end of your life do you want people saying...

“She always turned in her homework on time” or “She was kind and generous.”

“She had an excellent GPA” or “They were trustworthy and honest. They had my respect”

“He had a successful business” or “He had many friends and family and was loved by so many.”

“He won an award...” or “I’m so glad I knew him.”

Stephen Covey has led many people through this exercise and this is what stands out to him.

<Personal success is defined on who you are... not what you do.>

You are a graduate... You are advancing to a new level... But don't just graduate to a new set of things to do... a new level of schooling... and increased list of responsibilities...

<Graduate into a new person.>

2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.(NIV)

Many people get into trouble when they graduate to new levels of power, authority, position, wealth, influence... but have not graduated to new levels of Character, Discipline...

Peter tells us to Graduate... to Grow to new levels of Grace & knowledge...

Check out this scripture

2 Peter 1:5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;(NIV)

2 Peter 1:6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;(NIV)

2 Peter 1:7

and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.(NIV)

2 Peter 1:8

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.(NIV)

Keep growing. Keep adding. It will change you in good ways.

Israel stood at the River Jordan... A small body of water stood between them and graduation. God had brought them to the precipice of a new level.... The Promised land was across this river and God had promised several times that He was going to give it to them. There was Blessing across this river. There was wealth and influence. Israel becoming an actual nation and not a rag tag group of nomads was waiting across this river.

...Israel didn't graduate. Here is why.

They looked across the river and saw Giants in the land.

Numbers 13:33

We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."(NIV)

Remember that **<Personal success is defined on who you are... not what you do.>**

They saw the Giants and thought of themselves as Grasshoppers. There are times in life where we stand at the River Jordan and are forced to make a decision... Can we face the Giants or are we grasshoppers? Will you pursue your dream or be a grasshopper. Will you be brave or a grasshopper?

Grasshoppers don't Graduate.

Israel had a Grasshopper Mentality – It defined who they were... And it defined what they could do. This had to change before they could Graduate to the next level.

40 years. Israel had seen God do a lot for them over the last 40 years. They saw God bring them a deliverer named Moses. The plagues in Egypt. The Red sea parted and they were no longer slaves. In the wilderness God showed up every day... Mannah, Pillar of Fire, Rolling Rock with Water, Glory Cloud... SO many things happened.

They graduated to new levels in God. They graduated from slaves to free people. They graduated in experience, knowledge, wealth...

But they never graduated in courage... in faith... in their thoughts about themselves. They were still slaves in their own mind... Grasshoppers don't graduate.

Proverbs 23:7 tells us that as someone thinks about themselves... they become what they think they are...

Think you are stupid & you will be...

I want to encourage you to change your thoughts about yourself.

If you want to go to the next graduation level – You have to change your thoughts. And so Israel wandered 40 more years before they had another opportunity to cross the river Jordan.

<God doesn't call you to do... He calls you to be>

Israel thought they couldn't do what God was asking them to do... Graduation isn't about something you do... it's about what you become.

Jesus didn't say...

Come do disciple work... BE DISCIPLES

Do salt of the earth work... Be Salt

Do city on a Hill things... Be a City on a Hill

You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a Holy Nation... It's not what you do... It's who you are.

You can get away from what you do... but you can't get away from who you are.

Israel – You aren't called to do... You are called to be

We can focus so much on doing... Graduation is about becoming.

Israel spent 40 years doing... and not becoming. They should have become the kind of people who would have graduated across the River Jordan.

<Graduation Generation>

We are in the middle of our Modern Family series and I want us to point some things out.

The purpose of parenting is to get the next generation to graduate.

Genesis 2:24

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.(NIV)

Your parents are so proud of you and they should be. This isn't just your graduation... it is also their's. They have successfully parented you to this moment.

One day you will find yourself in their situation... where you are looking forward to bringing a new Generation to their graduation.

How do you know you have successfully parented? As Genesis 2 says... They leave. You grow them to a place where they are ready to leave.

The success of your parents is tied to your success. And wouldn't you say that part of your success is tied to your parents? Each Generation's success is tied to the previous generations.

You see this in the Bible frequently... So in so walked with the Lord... The next generation was blessed by it...

So in so didn't remember the Lord... the next generation either had to overcome hardship or simply sank into the abyss.

The Bible talks about generational curses... To put it very simply... in these cases the previous Generation made such bad mistakes that it negatively effects the next Generation.

It is possible to overcome a bad previous generation... But it is so much easier to succeed when the previous generation has been a stepping stone and not a stumbling block.

Not only are you supposed to walk in the success of your graduation... But you need to look forward and look back to the previous generations. Your success is going to be tied to this lineage.

Think Generationally.

<There is no retirement>

No I'm not talking about social security...

I'm talking about Joshua.

Musician

This better not be the only time you Graduate. Remember Graduate means to advance to a new level.

As important as this moment is... it would be sad if this was as far as you go in life. I believe that God has some levels for you that go far beyond a high school or college graduation.

You here in this room today. It may have been 50 years since you graduated highschool... but God still has plans to Graduate you into new things.

There is no retirement in God's Kingdom. There is no arrival in God... No place where He says "ok this is far enough... Good job."

Joshua was Moses right hand man. Joshua was born in Egypt as a slave. He went through the Red sea. He wandered with Israel for the 1st 40 years... He was one of only 2 people that saw the Giants in the land and thought... We aren't grasshoppers we are who God says we are... the other was Caleb.

Joshua wandered with Israel the 2nd 40 years... Do the math... Dude is getting old..

96 years old to be exact.... When God tells Joshua. Moses your leader is dead... I have taken Moses... I want you to lead Israel.

Wait a second... God I'm old... You should choose someone younger... I'm not in a good stage of life right now...

No... God chose 96 year old Joshua to lead Israel across the River Jordan, into the promised land... It was Joshua who would be the General of the army that would overtake the Giants and nations already in the land...

<There is no retirement>

I don't care what age you are... if you are very young or very old. It doesn't matter what stage of life you find yourself... God always has another Graduation for you.

You are never done graduating.

Somebody needs to graduate today.

We are about to open these altars... but first

Pray for Graduates

Invite their previous generation to join them.

Everyone else come and surround them making a 2nd layer.

After we are done praying we will go into our altar time. I invite you to stay here and spend time talking to God.