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President Wall, members of the board, faculty, honored graduates, parents, students and friends of CCU. I want to congratulate you who are finishing today. A lot of people never finish what they start, but you have. Thank you for asking me to come and speak to you on this important occasion even though a commencement address is probably the most difficult assignment that can be given to a person. I'm expected to preach so your hearts will be blessed and yet be scholarly so your minds will be stimulated (and, not so incidentally, so that you will know I am a scholar). I should have some good quotes, yet not bore you. I must be contemporary yet be timeless. I need to aim my remarks to the graduates and yet not ignore everybody else. There is only one thing about which there is agreement concerning a commencement address, and that it is must be short. I sometimes wonder if Michael the archangel could satisfy all the demands of this occasion. But Mike was not available today, so where angels fear to tread here I am running in.

I have good news. I did not have an heart attack but an auto accident and apparently successful surgery from which I am still recovering. But I must ask your indulgence to sit down while I speak to you. And

God says "we all are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another" 2 Cor. 3:18).

In a recent interview a well-known psychiatrist observed that young people today want immediate gratification of their desires. And the reason, he said, was that they lack patience and self-discipline. Pressuring people can never replace praying for them. Pep is no substitute for power, and programs no substitute for purity. You graduates have undoubtedly been exposed to good habits of prayer and Christian growth here; do not lose them next week or next year. In time, some of you will be connected with various aspects of the Lord's work as lay leaders, board members or workers. Lead with maturity, not the "brown and serve" kind, nor the "just add water and stir" variety, but with genuine, mature power that comes from sustained fellowship with your Lord.

Second, I want to remind you that maturity involves testing. Our Lord was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Isa.53:3). When insulted He did not answer back (1 Peter 2:23). When led to slaughter He opened not His mouth. Paul reminds us that it is normal to be killed all the day long and accounted as sheep for slaughter. just like the Lord was (Romans 8:32). So

3

God may leave some trial or temptn in your life all your life to teach dependence and humility. Victory is not escape.

"We may take comfort about our souls if we know anything of an inward conflict. It is the invariable companion of genuine Christian holiness... Do we find in our heart of hearts a spiritual struggle? Do we feel anything of the flesh lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; so that we cannot do the things that we would? Are we conscious of two principles within us contending for the master? Do we feel anything of war in our inward man? Well, let us thank God for it! It is a good sign. It is strongly probable evidence of the great work of sanctification... Anything is better than apathy, stagnation, deadness and indifference."
JCRyle, Holiness, 1889, p. 82.

Third, to be mature you must trust God's Word ^{explicitly} as the full and final authority over your life. ^{a separate} But, you say, I do. I hope so, but I don't think all evangelicals do. They affirm their trust in it, but not implicitly (which means without doubt or reserve). The proof? They elevate other ideas and teachings on a par with the Word, implying that the Bible is not sufficient for the 20th century problems. If you want to look at our 20th century or the 1st century world, read Romans 1. If you want to see our 20th century churches or the 1st century church, read 1 Cor or James. To be sure we have things the 1st century did not, like AIDS and tobacco to kill and TV to dull, but the Bible gives us direct commands how to deal with such. But isn't all truth God's truth? It is if it is true truth. And true truth without any doubt or possibility of change is found in the Scriptures. And that truth restores the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart, enlighens the eyes, warns, rewards, keeps us from sin, teaches, reproves, corrects, trains us in righteousness, and equips us for every good work. That pretty much covers the waterfront. Trust it implicitly.

(5)

the authority of experience. One secular writer called our time the age of unreason. He said, "Reason and logic have, in fact, become dirty words--death words. They have been replaced with the words feeling and impulse. Consciousness--the rational--is presumed to be shallow, and unconsciousness--the irrational--to be always interesting, often profound and usually true." Christians exhibit this mindset as well. I have been cataloging the articles in one of the well-known Christian magazines since the December issue. Usually there are 5 feature articles. In all the months at least 4 of the 5 were lightweight, thin, ditties about someone's experiences. What the lights of Christmas taught me. Lessons learned ^{on Route 247} from a hitchhiker. ^{Travis} What I learned about God from my ^{dog} cat. ^{Dogmatic}

Or if you don't read the magazines, listen to the testimonies that give the impression that experiences created truth rather than attesting to truth. I experienced it, so it must be right. Look at the change my experience brought, so it must be valid. Or dare I remind you of a favorite hymn? He lives, he lives, XJ lives today. He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. You ask me how I know he lives. Because the tomb is empty, because 500 people

*Jesus to people
my feelings tell me so*

that experience cannot be the full and final authority since "its subjectivity is too self-centered and introspective to be spiritually healthy. If Xn exp is to be the final court of appeal in matters of faith, then the force of religious attention must be within rather than without. The search for security and certainty becomes introspective and psychological. The understanding of faith becomes self-understanding. Theology becomes anthropology. Revelation becomes self-discovery. The search for salvation becomes the effort to know thyself." Every experience anyone has is genuine simply because he or she has had it. But the question is: is that experience a biblical one?

Finally, maturity and involvement in the local church go hand in hand. To be sure, Christians who are imprisoned for long periods do mature, and I hope that will not be the way God brings maturity into your life. You can and should be involved in a local church and this involvement will help you mature. Well, someone may be saying, the church is not doing the job. I'm going to be involved in a parachurch ministry. After all it's an arm of the church. Fine, but how many arms does the body have? And where is the heart that gives life and where the lungs that give breath? Not in the arms. Arms don't direct the body;

Money Rom 13:8 - Unpaid. NOT liquid. ^{How?}

Parents help 2 Cor 12:14 - a good man leaves in h. to grand
Subsidy, down payment. ^{Prof 13:} ^{Parents?} Then college - do what want.
Kids - obligation & accountability.

② Results - Bummer is Mastercard. Rom 22:7-10 slavery.

Less attention to loving world

More to give. Sum. Dec 31 give interest pd on credit card

Life verse? Good life style.

Maintaining

1. ~~Not~~ Take time. of travel, fast, plants, flowers. sleep, coffee. lobby to be done in mind.

7 princ. to ... 5 secrets to ... 3 keys to area - prayer

7 hours of revival. 10 steps to take from stuff sins. 3 wrap of seeing & in Summary Page. of 2 Cor 3:18

2. Takes testing, Ebu 5:3-2. 1 Pet 2:23 inhibited. Rom 8:32
Pleasure - self-centered, Pain - other & self centered.

Physical, emotional, unannounced prayer, tempt. Pass tests.

3. ^{Delegation} Take back exp. All exp. genuine trust built?

4. Another ch. Para - arm. Para - selection.

Rom 2:3, 1 Cor 12, Acts 11, 1 Tim 5 2 Cor 8-9, 1 Cor 5, 1 Cor 14: 23-24

Teach SS. Youth Ministry, Support.

Can't maintain unless begun X's life. Rec X & will be commencement of eternal life

Relevant? Bec. Rom is "

Money - Rom 13:8. Def. unpaid. liquidity.
How? Careful Parents, 2 Cor 12:14. "good man leaves
Budget) inherit to ch's ch." Prov 13:22. Subsidy, Down payment.
Car. than college - now can do what want.
Kids - obligation + account ability

Why? 1. Borrower is Mosaic's slave. Prov 22:7. No slave
2. less attention to loving world. Having doesn't
eliminate coveting.
3. More to give. Sun. Dec 31 - give int. pd on credit cards.
hite vs. good life style.

MATURITY

1. Takes time. Inhomotic Age. Travel. Fast. Bkfst. coffee.
Outmeal, photos, glasses. 7 Keys to... 5 secrets to
Victory. 3 Keys to ans. prayer. 7 Laws of Renewal. 10 Steps
to take when someone sins. 3 ways see X in every pap.
2. Takes teaching. Isa 53:2 (Pet 2:13 (result)). Rom 8:32
Pleasure tends to self-contradiction. Pain to others + X.
Phy, emot, unans. prayer, tempt. prob. Pass tests.
Dedication
3. Trust God's word implicitly
4. Have Biblical exps.
Magazine articles
Testimonies
Hymns

6) 5. Get in vol in local church

Rev 2-3. 1 Cor 12. Relief Acts 11. 7 Thim 5. 2 Cor 8-9.
1 Cor 5, 1 Cor 14: 23-24.

4. P. 55. Give, attend.

Can't mature unless begin Xⁿ Mts. Rec X + will
be commencement of eternal life.

Relaxant? Yes bec. Bible is

"Far from catering to our changing ~~from~~ whims,
The relevance of Bible is precisely its unwavering
+ disturbing demands on our life. It is
relevant by showing how our life is
gloriously irrelevant to it." You gods will
have 50 yrs to get a 1000 relaxant to Bible.
So - get with it.