

Pres. \_\_\_\_, board, fac, guests, parents, and particularly honored grads,  
Delighted to be here for several reasons. Sincerely congrats you  
on completing course. Our world, cities, lives littered with unfinished  
projects. So congrats you for discipline, sticktoitiveness this day  
recognizes. I support Bible Coll. Served in 1. Its distinctives of  
emphaizing Bible and Xn serv are so needed in this day. I appreciate  
being asked to give this message. What a comm mess. should be is  
prob most disagreed on subj in world. Scholarly but not boring;  
speak to grads and everybody, be biblical but not a sermon. Only  
agreement is that it should be short. So where angels fear to tread  
I come rushing in. But glad for opp, for I have your attention for  
these moments to plant some ideas in your minds which I think impt  
amid all the babel of voices clamouring for your attentn today.  
I asked wife if I could call this "Making friends of the trends" but  
too undignified for occasion. So call it The Grad in Today's World.  
Want to speak of 4 of the trends or characteristics of our day and,  
on one hand, warn you how they can scuttle your life, and on other hand  
show you how to use them to enhance your life and ministry.  
1st, we live in an existential age, an experience-oriented age.  
The experiences of our existence are the all-impt things in life.  
No obj authority. May be religiously oriented or hippie oriented but  
same basic existentialism. What are the dangers that may sidetrack you  
I see 2. First, the danger of diluting the obj, final, complete authority  
of the Bible.

"I experienced it" has become the norm of truth, not the Bible says. All exp must be tested as to their validity by the obj auth of Bible. Books, sermons on truths of Bible do not have the prominence in Xn circles today as books, sermons on understanding what makes Xns tick psychologically and how they can live happily within the relationships of the family, church, work, community. Bible says things about these relatnships, but these are an outgrowth of sound doctrine, not a replacement for ti. Theol becomes anthro. Rev is replaced by self-discovery. Sanct becomes a game of psychological strip-tease in small group encounters. Don't ever dilute, replace or reservse the preeminence of the obj Scrip in your personal life, and in whatever service you have for the Lord.

The 2nd area of danger in our exis age is in the realm of ethics. Permissiveness is King. Newspaper calssified ads are ponography minus pictures and sometimes in the movie section with pictures. TV is a curriculum in swearing, stealing,<sup>sex</sup> and shooting. Watch a rerun and see the diff.

What can you do? Learn the Word, keep studying it, let it give your life its sure foundation. Be guarded and guided by its perspecitves as well as its clear teadings. And in ethics, be simple concn evil and wise concn that which is good, Rom 16:18.

*Peace, innocent, unmixed.*

The second characteristic of our time is this: we live in a tech age. Radio, TV, travel, computers. Buying pounds. 15 on conf call. Great advantages: generally more aware, not nec more mature. Radio, TV for gospel. Printing (1455) <sup>to major part. home and world</sup> and tapes make laymen more knowledgable. Questions in mtgs. Hear great men of Gdd bec can travel. Can visit mission fields easily. Short term service. Aduios and visuals in teachings. Teacher or sec on field, technician. Danger comes when make methods substitute for power of God. God can use tech advances but beautifully prepared slide-tape presentation will not nec be blessed of HS any more than beautifully prepared sermon. And blessing one time won't guarantee blessing every time. Danger is that we rely on methods and not God. Overheads and not the H.S. Programs, rather than power, computers rather than fellowship. Be on guard. How? By being strong and constant in prayer. With a list, without one, in church, outside, regular times, irreg, alone with others. Learn to walk so intimately with the Lord that you will know His leading. Recently a consultation on missions in reality substituted computerized leading for Spirit-direction. It recommended hiring strategists, staticians, concentrating on responsive groups having measured sceintifically where such groups were. Such strategy in the 1st C would have told P to stay in Asia where people responding instead of Europe. If the results of the work at Phil fed in, machine jammed. 1 Cor 7:31. Use, not abuse.

Third we live in a sports-oriented age. It's almost in the same category as speaking against God, country, apple pie or mother to imply anything negative about sports. But think of the way this whole area of interest has mushroomed in the past 2 decades. Big league baseball was about the only prof game going when I was growing up and you could see ball games only if you lived east of the Miss (and no TV). But now it's prof baseball, soccer, ~~football~~, tennis, hockey, basketball, and football. And what ~~shall~~ dare I say about prof football. Shall I tell you of the church elders who reminded me not to preach too long? Or shall I tell you of the pall of gloom that is thrown over <sup>Sun</sup> evening services in Dallas if the Cowboys lose? Or shall I ask you if you know more Bible verses than names of prof athletes, their records? Or shall I ask what you do on Sun afternoons and Mon nights when the season is on?

Nothing inherently wrong with sports. Indeed, good, and need to be reminded that the earthen vessel you carry around between the top of your head and the soles of your feet is the only one you will have in this life with which to serve the Lord. So take care of it. Regular exercise as a participant, not a spectator, becomes more and more essential ~~xxxxxx~~ with every passing day. 1 Tim 4:8 bodily exercise profits a little--its benefits are limited and transient in comparison to the extensive and permanent benefits of godliness.

Fourth, and finally, we live in an easy-~~work~~<sup>credit</sup> age. The effects are everywhere obvious. Not 1 but half-dozen credit cards in the wallet. Bills at the end of the month. Moonlighting for the husband and a job for the wife in order to keep up. Keep up with what? Necessities or desires? Fight it, young people. Keep your life style simple. Drive an older car. You don't need so many clothes. Fight easy credit. Use credit cards only for convenience not of necessity. Wait the 30 or 60 days and pay cash. Cut back gas credit 1 week/ mo and in Sept you'll be on a cash basis. One may borrow but a Xn is not to be in debt. If assets don't exceed liabilities then in debt. And assets must be pretty immediately liquid. Staying out of debt will teach you discipline that will affect other areas of life as well. Let existential drive you to knowledge of God thru Word. Let technology drive you to dependence of God. Let sports drive you to develop all your faculties, phy, and spir. Let easy credit drive you to a disciplined life.