



"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children," Romans 8:16 (NIV). Knowing you are special as you start any journey or next chapter gives us a hope and uniqueness that can influence our decisions and provide us with a map going forward. Why should you go for a wonderful opportunity? We are God's children! Let that provide you confidence to take on any new events in your life.

"Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own," Matthew 6:34 (NIV). It might lead to hesitation realizing that there will be trouble in your tomorrows, but we are not to spend each day worrying about the future. We need to focus on our today, and what positive affect we can provide in the now. Tomorrow will take care of itself, but if you are worried, that leads to one of our favorite texts on our future...

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you," 1 Peter 5:7 (NIV). We wish for our graduates the brightest of futures, but as older people can tell you, the plans that we have may not turn out the way we wanted them to. Anxiety can creep in along with self-doubt. But God already knew this and says to give it ALL to him, not just because he can handle it but because he CARES for YOU!

In the end, nothing else really matters. You are God's child, and he cares for you. May that be the motto for us all as we face our tomorrows with him.

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The STEWPOT

A POTPOURRI OF PRACTICAL IDEAS to help you become a better steward

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STEWARDS OF OUR FUTURE

June brings warmer weather and the promise of summer fun. It also marks a new beginning for a special group—our youth. Whether celebrating graduations at the kindergarten, 8th grade, academy, or college level, our youth are starting new journeys. They are celebrating the end of their first year of school, the big jump to high school, the formative years of lifelong friends and becoming an adult, or finally leaving their main academic years behind and

STEWARDSHIP is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality, and finances.

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entering either the job market or masters/doctorate programs. The graduation season provides many of our young people the chance to reflect on their past and look excitedly to their next step and the future. It provides an important opportunity for the rest of us as well.

Graduation programs are filled with mottos and aims: "We look not behind, but forward;" "With one foot in the past, we step forward to our future;" or "We boldly and courageously step into our tomorrow." How many of the mottos and aims do you

remember from your graduation program? They were wonderful sentiments to sum up our feelings of an exciting but completely unknown future in front of us.

As many of us adults now know, the future isn't always what we thought it would be. While we have hope in the brightest future of all that we will one day go home with our Father in Heaven,

this world can provide many challenges before we get there—tragedies, illnesses, difficulties we never even thought of at those graduation moments.

And that's where the rest of us come in. Being stewards of our youth takes commitment, experience, and thoughtfulness. We need to be there for all of these young people starting new journeys so they know they have family, friends, and a church family behind them who will help lift them in good times and support them in the tougher times.

The classes graduating this year are definitely unique. They've already faced a bigger challenge than many of us ever went through while attending school during a pandemic. Students had trips canceled and classes moved online. And if they were able to get back to the classroom, most had to mask up. Time will tell how these tougher times will impact them.

So as they face their future, let's be there for them, sharing with them that we are here to help, provide support, and let them fly, taking the opportunity to also remind ourselves that the best place of all to face all of our futures is putting our faith firmly into God's hands.



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In a time of new beginnings, let us all take a moment to reflect on our pasts and futures framed in the advice God gives us. He's provided us all this advice in his book to us.

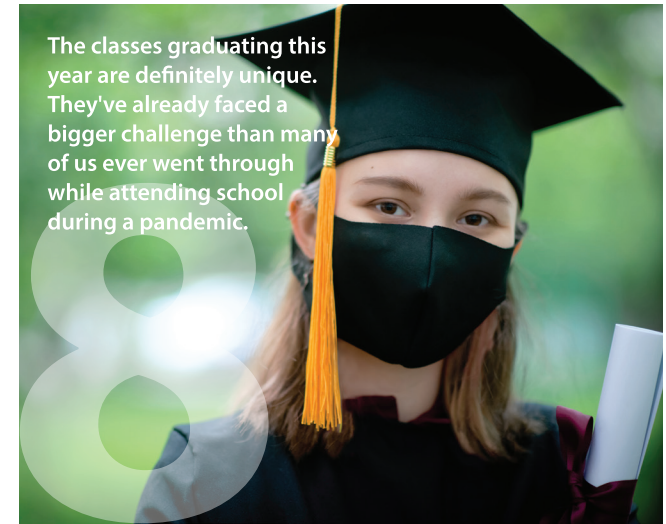
"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go," Joshua 1:9 (NIV).

What a wonderful promise our Father in heaven makes to his children. While many mottos already include those inspiring words—strong and courageous—it's a request from our God. He asks us to be bold and strong because he's with us. This command from God, along with his assurance that he's with us, gives us confidence to face our futures, whether we are age five or eighty.

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and

approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will," Romans 12:2 (NIV). The world offers many distractions; things which we think will make us happy, but often leave us feeling empty and abandoned. Renewing our faith and mind in God's word continually helps us to stay aligned to his will, not just our own.

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