

As You Go Forth

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The message you have just heard from Elder Hales is some of the best counsel you will ever receive for finding success in the important areas of your life. However, in the excitement of commencement and its attendant activities, you may not have captured the deep significance of what he has shared. I strongly recommend that you use a copy of his message as a guide year after year, for life. It will pilot you through uncertainties and opportunities now and in the future to a life of great substance.

I am deeply grateful for the privilege of celebrating with each one of you graduates on this significant day of your life. The tremendous effort that has brought you this success with its inherent acquisition of professional skills and precious growth experiences will sustain you throughout life. These achievements were obtained through your tireless personal effort on a campus unique in all the world. You have been blessed by an administration, a faculty, and staff who are not only extremely gifted but have been worthy examples of faith, devotion, and leadership. You have found among your fellow students enduring friendships with those of similar noble characteristics. All of this has been done in a spiritual environment centered in principles of eternal truth. You are unique. Therefore,

what we expect of you are future accomplishments far beyond those asked of a graduating class elsewhere. We are extremely proud of you. Your presence here indicates that you are each a singular man or woman of great value and potential. Your preparation here has provided an exceptional foundation for you to realize worthwhile ambitions and to accomplish much good.

It is normal that you feel some anxiety about the uncertainties concerning your future. Each of you faces different opportunities and challenges. If you feel no anxiety now, you will, because you are exceptional young men and women and the Lord will accelerate your growth by giving you experiences that will stretch your current capacity. Trust Him. As you stay close to Him through obedience and faith in His capacity to guide you, in time you will find the solution to every perplexing problem you face. The answers will likely come a portion at a time, but they will come.

Make raising an eternal family one of the highest priorities of your life. Focus the cream

Richard G. Scott was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this commencement address was given on 14 August 2003.

of your effort on that objective. Some of you have begun that sacred work as wife and husband. Others are searching for that eternal companion. Some may have feelings that you will not have that blessing. Do not cheat yourself that way. Decide now that you will live to be led to an eternal companion. Then live to permit the Lord to guide you to that dream on His timetable. I testify that the greatest happiness in this life comes as a wife and husband, mother and father, work together under the guidance of the Lord to create an eternal family.

Establish a set of guiding principles for your life, and never compromise them. Make no exception to them. Difficulties in life begin when small deviations from true standards are made to justify a quick move to a greater accomplishment. Over time that pattern brings failure. Strength comes from making no exceptions to foundation principles. Without such guidelines, an individual lives from moment to moment, making decisions according to current circumstances. Such a one is doomed to violate eternal truths and lose by rationalization many of the marvelous opportunities of life that bring great achievement and happiness.

Be honest and loyal. Keep your word and keep your commitments. If your responsibility is to provide an income for a family, acquire work with good leadership in a field that really matters. Give more than is expected. With your background from this university, minimum or average work is plainly not acceptable. Admit mistakes when you make them—for we all do. Admitting your mistakes builds character and also respect. Accept full responsibility for your actions.

Live so as to be trusted. Trust opens wide the gate to exceptional opportunity and success. Seek to be challenged in what you do. Don't look for a safe haven where you have no risk, for you will not grow or have real satisfaction. Do not compartmentalize your life into segments that apply to profession, Church, and family

with different standards used in each segment, as is done in the world. Your life must be a continuum in which uniform high standards of truth, integrity, and hard work will bring success to every aspect of life.

Smile. Everyone has problems, but nobody wants to know about yours. Smile a lot. It's a beautiful way to let sunshine into your life and to spread it to the joy and benefit of others.

Don't complain. There will be times when life just isn't fair. Some others may make unfair decisions that affect you professionally or otherwise. Don't waste time complaining. Life is charged with opportunity when you seek the help of the Lord to find it. Look for the gold nuggets of opportunity around you, mine them, and use them.

Serve others. Immense happiness comes from serving others selflessly. Always have a Church assignment. Always. Don't request specific callings but ask to be used so that you are constantly connected to the reality of eternal truth. That effort will keep your life in balance.

It is love for each of you that has motivated these comments. Their fulfillment will require you to continue to live a life of obedience to the Lord. With that pattern you will constantly be in a spiritual environment with protection against the contaminating influences of the world. It will require constant prayer and the courage to follow the spiritual promptings that come. It will result in the Lord guiding your footsteps in life to where you never imagined you would be blessed to go.

We are immensely proud of you, and we pray the Lord will bless you in every aspect of your life. More than that, in the name of Elder Hales and myself, as apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, we invoke a blessing upon each of you—a blessing that, based on your obedience and faith, the Lord will guide you through promptings of the Spirit to make correctly those decisions that will bring happiness. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.