



Excerpts from Valedictory Address, given by Miss Alice Brand, Class of '65, at the Commencement Exercises in Music Hall, on June 15, 1965. (Complete speech, page 172.)

Commencement is, in a very real sense, the beginning of many new experiences. It is the beginning of our acceptance into the adult world. It is the beginning of a new freedom to direct our own actions. It is the beginning of a new responsibility for our own financial and social independence. But, most of all, Commencement is the beginning of our search for our purpose in life.

Purposeful living is based on an understanding of four points: where we are, who we are, where we are going, and how we hope to get there. . . .

First, where are we? We are in a universe which challenges us on to more and more exploration. We live in a great nation, which is still plagued with problems of poverty and civil rights. . . .

Looking backward, we can see that we, as graduating seniors, have walked a fairly common path. . . . Looking forward, we see that soon the road will diverge, opening to each of us new opportunities. But before we choose a path-way, we must, first, have a thorough understanding of ourselves. . . .

Who are we, anyway? You might say we are a combination of interests and abilities, successes and failures, likes and dislikes, fears and hopes. . . . In any event, who we are—as shown by our interests and abilities—determines where we are going.

Then, where are we going? Soon the Class of '65 will scatter; some to take jobs, some to go into military service, some to be married, and some to pursue their education in college or elsewhere. Yet regardless of what our future plans may be, we all need a vision and a goal. . . .

However, if we are not willing to supplement our visions with effective work, they will never be realized. And, of course, when our visions are not real goals, but rather idle wishes, they will never, never come true. . . .

Now that we have analyzed who we are, where we are, and where we are going, we come to the final question: How do we get there?

Further education, whether at college or in the world, is the first step toward achievement. . . .

It follows, then, that the second step toward our achievement is work, for it is through work that we put our knowledge into practice. . . .

Finally, all our knowledge, all our plans, and all our work, still do not insure us of discovering a true purpose, for we may become easily discouraged. Our vision may sometimes be dimmed by adversity. We may have to modify our dream.

Yet there is one fact of which we may be sure. There is a God of infinite power and love who cares about us. Through Him, our failures, our blunders, our trials and our tears are transformed into the very stepping-stones of achievement. And through Him, we can discover the finest purpose in our lives.