

"Do Not Leave Your Faith for College"

By Sean Sullivan

Introduction:

Our congregation has been blessed to watch many young people grow up in our midst. Among our young, we have some High School Seniors this year. As they venture out into "life on their own", many will head to a college campus in pursuit of higher education.

It is our constant-hope, and prayer, that we have done enough to arm our children against the pressures that will come with their new environments. We know that there will be some hazards along the way. We do not want our children's spiritual hope to be dashed by *"the mind of college"*. The pressure to reject their principles and to accept worldly ways is going to be one of the greatest pressures that these souls face.

This final lesson in the series is intended to encourage spiritual survival for these young ones who are heading out on their own. The focus of this lesson is *"Do Not Leave Your Faith for College!"*

Keep Your Perspective

Wisdom does not refuse to help the young, and the young should not refuse wisdom's help.

We, including our young people, all need to keep the purpose of this Divine creation in proper perspective. This time called "life" is to allow you and me—creatures of *free will and reason*—to freely seek our Creator (Acts 17:24-27). In this pursuit, we discover a powerful thing called faith. Faith is conviction to principles (Romans 10:17). Faith is the willingness to be steadfast (Hebrews 10:23). Faith is trusting in God, more than man (1 Corinthians 1:20-25). Faith is enduring hardships with knowledge of hope (Galatians 6:9).

Today, faith is challenged on all sides: Increasing criticism from non-believers—*who are determined to remove the thoughts of God*. We must not walk away from the clear evidence (Psalm 19:1-6). We must not depart from faith for men's philosophies (Colossians 2:6-10). Also, increasing criticism from world religions who attempt to discredit our faith by pointing out all of the "historic flaws" of Christianity from centuries past. We need to know that our credibility does not come from what men have done over the centuries—*we are founded on first-century scriptural principles*. To make this claim we need to know what we are talking about. We need to know the pattern of sound words (2 Timothy 1:13). We need to test all things according to the word of God (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

Keep Your Armor On

As has been said in this series, we cannot take a vacation from faith—*planning to ignore God during one's college years is a disastrous plan*. When others claim that our faith has no evidence: We know there are two great sources of evidence for our faith. The created world around us (Psalm 19:1-6; Acts 17:24-27). The creation, our world, functions in designed patterns (Genesis 8:22; Ecclesiastes 1:5-7). This fact necessitates a Great Designer—*God* (Genesis 1:1). And, also, the delivered word—*the Bible* (Psalm 19:7-11; Hebrew 1:1-2). The Bible is a book of recorded proofs—*the evidences of our faith* (John 20:30-31).

Because of the constant challenges that we will face we need more nourishment from the source: We need God's word every day, for necessary strength: Reading and studying (1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16). Rightly dividing and applying (2 Timothy 2:15). Growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus (2 Peter 3:18). We need to put on the whole armor of God, and keeping it on (Ephesians 6:10-18), "...that you may be able to withstand in the evil day..." (Ephesians 6:13).

Keep Your Faith

As people of faith, we are going to have to take on a continual interest in the things of faith. God's instructions: The more you know, the more it shows (1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16). It will give you strength to stand against the winds of doctrine—*the lies of man* (Ephesians 4:11-16). The ancient paths of wisdom: The counsel of God; not the

world (Psalm 1:1-6). The wisdom of being instructed by God (Proverbs 1:1-7).

There are many strong winds in our modern days: Lots of things trying to derail our faith—*this is no time for surrender*. Let's determine to find the promised blessing of James 1:17-25. "*...he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does*" (James 1:25).

Conclusion:

This month, all across our country, young people are leaving their parental homes with hearts full of hopes and dreams—*seeking a college education*. It is possible for every young Christian to be educated, and successful, without abandoning their faith in God, *but it will take determination*.

Today's world is a challenging place for the faithful to stay faithful. Know that no "worldly success" is more important than your soul being saved. You can become the "greatest ever" in your field of study and your eventual career, but it will be a total failure if it costs your faith.

The hope of Heaven, the assurance of faith, and the best life are blessings for the faithful servants of God, through Jesus Christ. If you are not yet a Christian, become one and find this true success. Once you are a Christian, work daily to maintain your faith—*it is the armor of God, our protection in the battle of life*. Do not leave your faith for college!