

- Grace, mercy and peace be with you from the Lord, our God, who has made us who redeems us and sustains us. With what shall we come before the Lord, our God and bow ourselves before God on high. God has showed us my friends, what is good and righteous and what does the Lord requires of us, but to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly before our God. With that awareness, let us confess our sin before God almighty, be seated please. Let us pray, oh holy God, to who's service we long ago dedicated our souls and lives, we grieve and lament before you, that we are still so prone to sin and so little inclined to obedience. Attached to the pleasure of sins, negligent of things spiritual, prompt to gratify our bodies, slow to nourish our souls, greedy or present delight in different to lasting blessedness, fond of idleness, indisposed for labor, soon at play, late at prayer. Brisk in the service of self, slack in the service of others eager to get, reluctant to give. Lofty in our professions, low in our practice. Full of good intentions, backward to fulfill them. Severe with out neighbors, indulgent with ourselves. So eager to find fault, so resentful at being found fault with. So little able for great tasks, so discontented with small ones. So weak in adversity, so swollen and self satisfied in prosperity, so helpless apart from you and yet so little willing to be bound to you. Oh merciful heart of God, grant us yet forgiveness for your holy name's sake, amen. Writer of Hebrew's declares to us, anyone, who comes to God must believe, that God exists and rewards those, who search for God. The mercy of the lord is new every morning, great is your faithfulness, oh Lord, our God. By declaring to you in the name of the Lord, our God, our sins are forgiven, amen. With that assurance, let us give thanks for God is good and God's love is everlasting. Thanks be to God, who's love creates us, thanks be to good, who's mercy redeems us. Thanks be to God, who's grace leads us into the future. Now I say a word of welcome to each of you this day, this is without a doubt the most significant occasion of the academic year for us here at Duke university, that is those events, which make up this graduation weekend, it is a holy time, a special time for all of us, so I welcome those of you, who are graduating and parents, and family and friends, those of you, who helped to make up the larger Duke family. We are glad to have you today. Those of you, who are parents and family should know, that this exactly, where the same students sit every Sunday, they just don't wear caps and gowns. Now I offer a word of congratulations to those of you, who graduate, my prayer is, that your time here has been most enjoyable and most beneficial to you and that as you leave this place, God's blessing will go with you to guide you and to give you courage in times of difficulty, to stir you and to keep you doing what is best for you and for God and your neighbor. It is our privilege today to have as our guest preacher for the bachelorette services for the class of 1983, a most distinguished United Presbyterian churchman, the reverent doctor Bryant Kurklin. Doctor Kurklin is a graduate of Wheaton college and of Princeton theological seminary, a man, who holds honorary doctor degree doctorates from a number of major universities. He has been the senior minister at fifth avenue Presbyterian church in New York city for 21 years. During that time, indeed, before that time, he was already acclaimed and widely known and well known in this country and around the world as a preacher, a teacher and a writer. Doctor Kurklin, it is our privilege and honor to have you here and to have you preach the word for us on this holy occasion, welcome to you, sir.

- Let us pray, oh mighty God and whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, open our eyes, that we may behold wondrous things out of your word and give us grace, that we may clearly understand

and heartedly choose the way of your love, amen. The old testament lesson is from second kings, chapter six. Once when the king of Syria was warring against Israel, he took council with his servant saying at such and such a place shall be my camp. But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, beware, that you do not pass this place for the Syrians are going down there. And the king of Israel sent to the place of which the man of God told him, thus he used to warn him so that he saved himself there more than once or twice. And the man of the king of Syria was greatly troubled, because of this thing and he called his servants and said to them, will you now show me who of us is for the king of Israel. One of his servants said, none, my lord, oh king, but Alicia, the prophet, who is in Israel tells the king of Israel the words, that you speak in your bed chamber. And he said, go and see where he is, that I may send and seize him. And it was told him, behold, he is in Dothan. He sent their horses and chariots and a great army and they came by night and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold an army with horses and chariots were found round about the city. And the servant said alas my master, what shall we do? He said, fear not, for those, who are with us are more with those, who are with them. Then Alicia prayed and said, oh lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. The lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire, round about Alicia. Here ends the reading from the old testament. The epistle lesson is from revelation, chapter 21. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down out of the heaven from God, prepared as bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, behold the dwelling of God is with men, he will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more. Neither shall there be morning, no crying, no pain anymore for former things have passed away. And he, who set upon the throne, said, behold, I make all things new. Also he said, write this for these words are trustworthy and true. And he said to me, it is done, I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life. He, who conquers shall have this heritage and I will be his guide and he shall be my son. Here ends the reading from the epistle lesson. Will the congregation please stand for the reading of the gospel? The gospel lesson is from saint Matthew. Then the disciples came and said to him, why do you speak to them in parables? And he answered them, to you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them, it has not been given, for to him, who has will more be given and he will have abundance, but from him, who has not, even what he has will be taken away, this is why I speak to them in parables because seeing they do not see, hearing, they do not hear, nor do they understand. With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, you shall indeed hear but never understand and you shall indeed see, but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull and their ears are heavy of hearing and their eyes, they have closed, less they should perceive with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn to me to heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see and your ears, for they hear, truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous men have longed to see what you see and did not see it, and to hear what you hear and did not hear it. Here ends the reading from the gospel lesson, amen.

- President Sanford, distinguished trustees, faculty and honored graduates and long suffering parents, I congratulate you on your attainment and pray God's blessing on you, it's a great privilege to be here with you this afternoon to celebrate glory to God and commemoration of your future. When I asked my officers, if

I might be released Sunday to come to Duke university, they said yes with alacrity, because of the fame of your institution, but as with such speed and enthusiasm I was wondering, if they were giving me a message. It is also a very heavy responsibility to talk to you young people and your parents, because of all the future, because of the imminence of many great issues in our day and because this is an historic tradition, that goes back centuries and centuries, when men and women held in unity both the secular and the spiritual world. Many of you have and some of you will go to the continent and see where young men and women often spend the whole night in prayer of dedication. My hope is to say one word to you, that may be useful as you fulfill your dreams on this happy weekend of graduation. In one sentence I would like to say to you, live by the light of an inner vision. If anybody asks you what he said, you can say, he said, live by the light of an inner vision. I say that, because the missionary out in Utah once walked into a saloon and drew two pistols and said, I came to preach the gospel and I aim to finish the sermon. The Harvard business review said, culture is not measured so much by success, as by how men and women and a generation handle their defeats and their disappointments. This is an interesting insight about vision, when you put it against one of the great cliches of our American era, Vince Lombardi said, you know, winning is everything! But as you know in an eminent state for basketball championships, somebody has to lose in order to make somebody win. Once the navy cross country team lost and their coach analyzed it with his runners and they said, coach we lost because we didn't know how to run downhill. How do you plan to handle the turbulence, the disappointments and the pain of life? That's a sad note to bring on a happy beautiful weekend, but the two go together, because when you live by the light of an inner vision, you will be able to discover, that most great artists, jurists, most people of substance, as the Harvard review said, have come to terms with the heights and the depths and now that, that amalgam has come, the character, that this wonderful education you've had in this glorious institution becomes wisdom, maturity, love, faith, hope, the things, that the world cannot give you, nor take away from you. You might have thought, when the president read the old testament lesson, what's that got to do with this vision. In quick capsule you know, it's the prophet and his servant were surrounded by a squadron and when they woke up in the morning, the servant said, oh look, cavalry all over the place, what will we do? And the prophet said, oh God, open his eyes to see a vision, as it were in the sky of the chariots and horses of God suggesting spiritual strength and a way out and then the prophet boldly led them down into the valley and threw the lines and they looked so none descript, that the encircling enemy didn't even recognize them. And so you see I have a play on two words there. Open your eyes to that, which is obscure and learn how to recognize the obvious. That should have special reference to you, because every one of your automobiles has a license plate, that says what, first in flight. And on December the 17th at Kitty Hawk, when these two methodist, bishop's sons flew that orange crate for about 19 seconds, one of the world's better known newspapers called, I think, the New York Times said, it isn't worth sending anyone down there, nothing will ever come of it. And all through the day and the night our jet driven transports cross the skies and any place in the world is 50 hours away from Raleigh Durham. And all within the lifetime of a couple of generations in your home state. I pray, that you may have a vision to see what is obscured, because the average man and woman is blind to recognize the truth and development the implicitness, because perspective close up can never give you the full perspective. It was in the 30s, when your parents may have known something of the depression, that a scientist named professor Goddard with colonel Augustus Lindbergh set off a small rocket, that went poof for 30 yards in a few second. And today there are 100s of satellites rocket born into the sky, possessing camera quality to read your program from a 150 miles in the heavens. Men and women, I pray for you to seize this great education you have and live the

light of an inner vision, that sees beyond the obscure, into the potential of your life and of your times and of your state and your nation. Because there's enough validation in scripture and in secular history to teach you, that most men and women are near sighted or far sighted. Not to see the obscure and to fail to recognize the obvious as it happens to them. This has been the history of people, Abraham of ancient old testament, son of Judaism and Muslim faith with us all went out not knowing whether he went and never got there, but pursued it, because he said he looked for a city, who's builder and maker was God. Our lord taught the same thing, he, that would be the greatest, let him become the servant of all. And then John of Patmos exile, the author of the last lesson imprisoned on the island of Patmos, which is not a tourist attraction 60 miles westerly from the coast of Turkey, wrote the last book of scripture, because he saw a vision of a city, who's builder and maker was God, where there would be unity among men kind, that would be no more pain and sorrow and death and it would be the light eternal illumining the human scene. Only as you and I and our parents have dreams and hopes and vision can we get the most out of what you've had as a privilege in this great university. And if I stop now, I would pray God give you the light of an inner vision to go on all your years and fulfill your education with the high hopes, that lie before you. There are more powers available for you, than a closeup of this present perspective give. I hope you live to see the day, usually comes about 30 years later when things go around in a cycle. And people change and come right back to center. If you live that long and take that long viewpoint, you will have a stronger life and you will have more stability. You will learn, that no single event explains a situation, for example. Today just happens to be the birthday of two eminent musicians, Peter Tchaikovsky and Johannes Brahms, but if you read their short biographies, both men suffered long and intensely, that you and I on cassette or what's the new form, digital, I'm not quite up there yet, but the new sound system, the electronic, all that music comes out of the pain of these men, who suffered in the previous century. Tchaikovsky, for example was often laid on the shelf his music, his fifth symphony lay on the shelf for 15 years, that's a long time for you to wait for recognition, but the bible teaches and history confirms, that when you live on the light of an inner vision, you can afford to wait, until the fulfillment comes. And more than that, the inner process of life always interprets the event, I want to say education is not an amassing of facts, it's more than that, it's the interpretation and the application of them. One of the great southern writers is Flannery O'connor, a young catholic woman, who died at the age of 36. She was limited by her disease to her red clay farm and the spiritual encouragement of her mother. But men and women who read her letters and literature today know, that out of that narrow confinement of geography and of health came a radiant spirit, that lived with the sight of a vision beyond her own lifetime and her pain.