

- Distance...and you make your contribution to your time. When things get rough for me in New York, I don't know what your political feeling may be, but he's gone, so we can talk about it--Winston Churchill. I'd looked back on him because he was thrown out of office four times, and bounced back each time when the public called him to assume leadership; without rancor or resentment because he lived in the vision of something beyond his time. And you can apply this to any aspect of your life or your classmates or your future, yet unseen. Because God has a way of giving you an interpretation of circumstance, as that imminent biochemist Rene Dubos said: "It's not what you have in life, "it's what you do with what you have "that celebrates life". That's my point. Live in the light of an inner vision. Because the short term perspective is never enough. Because a single event does not encapsulate the whole of the situation. On top of it, is your personal dedication and your own interpretation of the circumstance that happens to you. And another major aspect, to live in the light of the inner vision is because there's more depth to your development and our country, and the university, then any of us can imagine. Because God works unseen in any event or incident. Lately I have gotten great comfort, friends, out of T.S. Eliot--a play called A Yard of Sun. It deals with a courtyard in Italy after World War II. This is an astounding line, I don't know what your faculty would say, but we're all removing out of here, aren't we? This is what T.S. Eliot said, listen to this: "There is a reality that would make falsehood "out of much that we hold true today." I can hear a philosophy major say: "Oh, that's just Berkeleyan subjectivism." But there is a greater reality that would make falsehood of much that we hold true today. It's a reasonable position to hold. A few weeks ago was the anniversary of the discovery of the Great Bay of New York Harbor--sorry to be local, but that's where I'd been confined for the last 20 years. Giuseppe Verrazzano came in on April the 17th 1524 and discovered the Verrazano Bridge. (audience laughs) He'd started a few weeks earlier down here mapping the coast of Carolina, he went on all the way to Maine. What's my point? Those days in 1524, were bold days; you had Columbus who died in...59, you had Americus Vespuccio who died in 1527 and Verrazzano. Verrazzano did the most to map the American coastline and open up for the colonies. Each built on the other. And it's been that way in all of science. There was electricity in the Garden of Eden, but they didn't know how to make it a public utility. (audience laughs) If that is not so, when did magnetism and the whole Electrofield Theory come into existence in between? And when did they plant uranium? It's all there; and in the days of Verrazzano and the others, they thought the Earth was flat and science taught for four centuries the Earth was flat, you fall off. We don't believe it anymore. There is a greater reality that would make falsehood of much that we hold true today. So you live in the light of a vision that the God of creation, the God of wisdom, the God of the university life, the God who is always been willing to move with courageous men and women, will guide you into all truth. And he has a role for every one of you to play. I like to think of the young woman who retired last summer--this is a rather lowly example, but it seeks to make my point. She was the information clerk in Radio Corporation America building in Rockefeller Center, and many young men and women touring New York would go to her with their personal problems and predicaments: where to stay, eat, go, and et cetera. She was a refugee and that was the only job she could get 39 years ago. And many men and women would've said that's not very high aspiration. She made a sacrament out of that information table and presided over it like a holy altar. Helping you young graduates who come to a great city to make your name and fortune, and find your fun and pleasure. And when she retired, a great staff of people recognized she had used that humble office as

one of God's servants because she lived in the light of an inner vision, that her life, limited as it was, could be of great service in a tumultuous city. So God has great use for you men and women, and I urge you to live in the light of an inner vision because there are more ways to fulfill your life than you will ever know. If you want to live by the light of an inner vision remember, if I may refer to William and Mary College, President Ewell, when that institution was bankrupted for seven years, 1881 to 1888, faculty were dismissed, buildings were left open, doors banged... Only President Ewell roamed that campus and everyday for seven years, went over and rang the chapel bell in hope and faith, and in a light of an inner vision that God would bless that institution, your institution. All men and women who live in the light of an inner vision that the God of truth and of progress will fulfill himself in the slow, painful, torturous process of human life. So I urge you to live by the light of an inner vision and continue your education as long as you live. I urge you dear friends, to live by an inner vision to nurture your life when times get rough in your profession, your marriage, and in your civic existence. I urge you to live by the light of an inner vision in order to create and contribute something to this republic in our time. And last, I urge you to live by the light of an inner vision that you may know the peace of God who made you out of the love of your parents and loves you inestimably through his son, our Lord. God bless you all, amen, let us pray. Grant us thy favor Lord Jesus Christ, in all the years to come, amen. (organ music) (choir sings)

- Let us affirm what we believe. (audience speaks in unison) We believe in God who has created and is creating; who has come in the truly human Jesus, to reconcile and make new. We trust God, who calls us to be the church, to celebrate life and its fullness. To love and serve others; to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, Our judge and our hope in life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us, we are not alone. Thanks be to God. The Lord be with you, (audience responds) let us pray. Carl Sanburg has a word for us, he writes: "I have kept high moments, "they go round and round in me." Let us pray. O blessed, loving Lord our God, we pause on this day of beauty and meeting, this high and holy moment, to thank you for all the high moments of the years just passed; moments that we recall just now. New insights, deep friendships, a trust kept, a hope realized, frustration overcome. Darkness become light, sadness shared, hurt healed; comfort given and received, new life experienced and love made real. For this is the place, O God, where our lives have been molded, our values clarified, our minds enlarged, our visions expanded, where our touch has been made more sensitive. For life, where life for each of us has taken on deeper and richer meaning; as together, we have struggled and sweated and studied and cursed and griped and laughed and cried and now, we celebrate. O God, in spite of our complaints and our frustrations we do give you thanks for Duke University, and for all its people who love and care for one another here. Hear our prayers of intercession, O God, which we offer for those who graduate from this university now. Keep them strong in their struggles, weak in their pride. Give them health to do and to be, and grace, to become. Make them wise in their decisions and satisfied over the consequences. Give them power, not only to serve self, but also, to serve others. Give them not all things that they might enjoy life, but give them life that they might enjoy all things. Perfect, O Lord, the talents you have given them. Chasten the self-centered striving of their spirits. Forge their wills to follow you, no matter what the cost. Direct their lives the way that you would have them to go. And give them always the awareness that you and your love are with them. May deep joy be their constant companion along their way. May they keep this high and holy moment, may it go round and round in them. And now hear us as we pray together: Our father who art in heaven, (audience prays in unison) hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom

come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever, amen. (organ music) (choir singing)

- Will you stand, please? Now will you join with me as we offer to God, this, our unison prayer of gratitude and hope, let us pray. Almighty God, as you have granted us place and part in this university, (audience prays in unison) hallow to us now, this day when we dedicate ourselves to the life and work to which you have called us here; that we may remember with gratitude the families and friends who have cared for us. We ask your presence, O God, that in the life ahead of us, we may keep faith with those who have loved us and trusted us and whose hopes follow us. We ask your presence, O God, that we may enter with good courage and constant purpose upon the tasks which await us, we ask your presence, O God. From all sense of strangeness and loneliness, and from the fear that we may fail or may find no friends, good Lord, deliver us from neglect of the opportunities which are all about us, and from distrust of our ability to meet the duties of each dawning day, good Lord, deliver us. That the example of wise and generous people who have gone before us in our families and here in this university, may save us from folly and self-indulgence, we ask your presence, O God. More especially, that you would show to us and to all people your way of love, in a time when all of us desperately need to love and to be loved, we ask your presence, O God. These things and whatever else you see needful and right for us, we ask in your holy name, amen. (organ music) (choir singing)

- And now my friends, fill your minds and hearts with those things that are good and worthy of praise. Those things which are true and noble and right and pure, lovely and honorable. Put into practice the good which you have learned at this place. And the God who loves us and cares for us and gives us peace, will be with you now and always. (choir sings) (organ music) (faint audience chatter) (triumphant organ music) (lighter organ music)