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Prayer for Graduates

John Baas
Dordt College, john.baas@dordt.edu

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Prayer for Graduates

Abstract

"I find this passage from Philippians 1, a wonderful prayer and assurance as I think about the graduates in my life."

Posting about our confidence in Christ as we step out into the future from *In All Things* - an online journal for critical reflection on faith, culture, art, and every ordinary-yet-graced square inch of God's creation.

<http://inallthings.org/a-prayer-for-graduates/>

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Disciplines

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

A Prayer for Graduates

 [inallthings.org /a-prayer-for-graduates/](http://inallthings.org/a-prayer-for-graduates/)

John Baas

Daily Scripture Texts

[Psalm 31:9-16](#)

[1 Samuel 16:11-13](#)

[Philippians 1:1-11](#)

At the college where I serve, we are fast approaching commencement. I am always amazed when I watch the graduates walk across the stage. How can it be that you are graduating already? It seems like they just got to campus yesterday!

I have become familiar enough with these students during their time in college that I almost think of them as my own children and I feel mixed emotions. I am happy for them, excited for their futures and for what they will accomplish. I am proud of who they are becoming. And I'm a little bit sad they won't be here next year.

This year my wife and I have two children graduating—one from high school and one from college—so those emotions hit even closer to home.

These soon-to-be graduates do not yet know much of what the next chapter holds. They may still be looking for a job. Moving to a new community. Wondering who their friends will be. How they will pay their bills. These are often times of high anxiety for students and for their parents.

I find this passage from Philippians 1, a wonderful prayer and assurance as I think about the graduates in my life.

In the opening section Paul says, “In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with **joy**...being **confident** of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.” (v. 4-6) We can pray for our graduates with joy *because* of our confidence. Not necessarily confidence that they will land a great job, that they will immediately find a great group of friends, or that their lives will be free from trouble or pain. Rather we have confidence in a richer, greater truth—that from long before these children were born, God planned and began to work in them something good, and that he promises he will see that good through to its completion.

Just that assurance might be enough, but Paul goes on to strengthen his claim. He says it is *right* for him to have such confidence “since I have you in my heart and...you share in God’s grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.” (v. 7-8)

If we were able, wouldn't we all see to it that our loved ones were kept from falling? And if we would do so, will not God do it, and do so more perfectly than we ever could?

Of course, we pray that our graduates will be kept safe, for good work habits and grades, that they will form lasting, quality friendships, that they will have meaningful careers and strong families—and these are all good. But Paul's prayer is for ends that we know are most precious: that your love may abound more and more...that you may be able to discern what is best...that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit or righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ. (v. 9-11)

As this academic year nears its close, I encourage you to use this passage as you pray for and with your graduates. We know their paths will not always be smooth or straight. There will be happiness and pain, success and failure, times when the way forward is clear and times when it seems shrouded in fog. Yet we can pray with thanks and joy, confident that the good work started in them will be completed, that they will be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ. Their lives are in hands bigger than ours. All glory and praise to God!