

Congratulations seniors for this significant milestone, the completion of your high school coursework to attain your diplomas. Graduations are called a commencement which means a beginning. This moment in your family's history is the start for the plans the Lord has for you. The theme of this graduating class is "defending the faith". The Lord has masterfully communicated his plans on how to defend the faith for us as parents and for you as sons and daughters. I will spend a few minutes to briefly provide an overview of the plans and why your parents chose this particular path for your education.

Communication between generations has always been a challenge. When I was growing up, we called it "the generation gap". Young people consider old people to be out of touch or old fashioned and maybe set in their ways. Older people consider youth to be trendy, unstable, maybe even like an accident about to happen. These are two extremes but there is some truth to this observation.

I was sitting at my desk one day when my daughter enters the upstairs area where I was sitting after she came home from work. She begins to sniff around as though there was an unexpected odor in the area. She said to me, "it smells like up dog in here". I said to her "what is up dog?". She laughed almost uncontrollably and responded with something like, "I am good. How about you?" It took a while for me to figure out what was so funny. For a moment, it was over my head. This kind of describes the gap in the ways we communicate as older and younger generations.

The Bible has a way that it communicates ideas. Sometimes it seems over our head just like I described in the "what's up dog?" greeting conventions of today. Nevertheless, the Lord expects us parents to communicate His plans to you so that things will go well for you. The way the Bible communicates may seem cryptic, but it designed this way on purpose so that only those who are supposed to hear the message will get it. I want to spend a little bit of this time to share with you some of these plans in the Bible that you may have never considered very useful, but the plans are so necessary that you do not want to ignore them as you start moving to the next phase of your life.

Dikaios was founded on the idea that it is our responsibility as parents to bring our sons and daughters up in the training and admonition of the Lord. This idea of training our children is found in Eph 6:4. Even more of these instructions are found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Where it says that we are to have the word of God in our own hearts (as parents) and we are to teach our children the word of God when we lie down and rise up and when we walk by the way.... The Dikaios' theme verse is 2 Tim 3:16-17. All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete thoroughly equipped for all good works. You may ask why does Dikaios place an emphasis on the scriptures instead of modern science where the fundamentals of physical elements are taught? Aren't we making a mockery out of ourselves by putting our emphasis on outdated ideas of the Bible? If I were a young person, I would wonder about the approach that the Bible gives. Deut 6: 20 says when your son asks you in time to come saying, what is the meaning of the testimonies, the statutes, and judgments which the Lord Our God has commanded you? We are told in subsequent verses to mention the stones of remembrance of our past.

Here is a quick summary of what we learn from Deuteronomy and Matthew's Gospel and from our past: The Decalogue (Ten Commandments) can be arranged into two structures: 1) Light and 2) a Tree of Life. A form of both of these structures shows up in our US Constitution. The Decalogue Light comes from [seven positives and seven negatives](#) . Decalogue tree of life comes from [5 roots and 5 fruits](#). Light represents the sovereignty of God. Have you ever noticed that shadows are lowest when the Sun is at its

highest? A tree represents our redemption and rebirth. Have you ever noticed that a tree's life begins with a death or burial (Matt 12:24-29)?

The book of Deuteronomy shows up in John's Gospel where [John presents the physical world as reflection of God's spiritual nature](#). The preamble to our U.S. Constitution does the same. It was the "[Laws of Nature and Nature's God](#)" that compelled us to separate from the tyranny of the earthly King of England. In a side by side comparison, [John's Gospel Chapter's 1-12 presents the "Laws of Nature" from Genesis next to "Nature's God" of Deuteronomy](#). It was this moral Light from "[Nature's God](#)" that compelled us to serve Him as our [Sovereign \(Light\)](#) rather than serve an earthly king. These seven moral opposites were [placed in a Children's chart](#) to help illuminate the moral distinctions of the spiritual kingdom that is in [Deuteronomy and John's Gospel](#).

The 5 roots and 5 fruits of the Decalogue reveal Jesus as the Vine (Jn 15:4-5), the Root, or Source of Life. This means everything we see has a spiritual origin. God is a spirit and those that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth (Jn 4:24). The fifth root and fruit pair of the Decalogue is essentially Psalm 23. Since the Lord is Our Shepherd, you are not lacking in anything. This root and fruit pair starts at Matt 6:19 where Jesus shows earthly parents serving as temporary substitutes. Your Heavenly Father is your Primary Provider; you need not covet anything. We are your feeble earthly parents, but you have a more caring and capable Spiritual Father of Whom you must give account.

Our American culture has had some challenges with the roots and fruits of the Decalogue. In the past, we have pitched the Decalogue as 4 sacred commands and 6 secular commands leading to the idea of "[the separation of church mistake](#)". We are mistaken **by thinking we have authority to redefine marriage** (Gen 5:2, Matt 19:4-6) , and **by thinking we have authority to corrupt justice** ([Deut 25:13-16](#), Lev 24:22), and **by thinking we have authority to declare ourselves owners rather than stewards over things and other persons** ([Deut 23:15-16](#)). The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. Ps 24:1.

This is the summary my message to you, "Be not deceived. God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows that shall he shall also reap. For he who sows to his flesh, will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit, will of the Spirit reap life everlasting. (Gal 6:7-8)

Meanwhile, we have [seven nations](#) (Deut 7:1-3) to clean up while we go out to serve our God. [These nations result from our tendency to serve the flesh](#) (Gal 5:16) rather than the Spirit (Gal 5:16). We have a promise of liberty from which Christ has made us free (Gal 5:1). As a gift to our graduates and to our parents, I am providing a copy of poems that I initially wrote for our children back in 1994. Your dad and mom carried you on their backs until now. It is your turn to carry others on yours. I pray that the pictures and the poems will light the eyes of your children's children as they serve the Lord.

