

Becoming a Young Adult

Opening Prayer

*Gracious and Loving God,
Help these young men and women to be a light for all the world to see,
in all the places they live and work. Let their light shine for all peoples:
for their families,
for their church communities,
for their cultures and societies,
for the economic and political systems,
for the whole world.*

Scripture Theme

May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed (Psalm 20:4).

Introduction

Congratulations! You've finished high school and now it's time to launch into young adulthood. What does God have in mind for you? How can you make the most of these years? What's next for your life? You are probably tired of these sorts of questions.

Perhaps you are discovering that the new found freedom of not having to go to high school is tainted by all these serious life questions. High school was relatively easy. You could float along day by day and it all brought you to the graduation stage.

But now, you are faced with the challenges and responsibilities of young adulthood. Further, you want to know how God will play a part in your launch. In effect you want to know, "What is my call? What is my vocation . . . at least for this next stage of my life?"

In his article, *What Should I Do After High School* Greg Forster gives three key questions for the person trying to discern her/his vocation.

- ◆ **What am I well-equipped to do, or what can I get well-equipped to do?** This includes not only aptitudes, talents, and skills but also things like relationships, networks, credentials, and even doors of opportunity that get opened for you "by accident."
- ◆ **What does the world around me need?** Real vocational discernment is not narcissistic navel-gazing. It's mission-focused. The goal is not self-fulfillment, but to put the holy love of God into action in a dark and broken world.

- ◆ **What do I feel called to?** Although it's not navel-gazing, real vocational discernment is really *discernment*. There's no standardized test. God has authorized you to use your judgment, and a vocation that doesn't feel right to you is less likely to be sustainable. (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/what-should-i-do-after-high-school/>)

In short: What am I good at? Who needs me? What do I sincerely want to do?

These are the questions to keep in mind and heart as you engage in this reflection. As God's call for you emerges, place your trust in God, say 'yes' as best you can, and give it your all.

And one more thing. Don't assume that God has only one call for the remainder of your life. It's easy to feel a bit of panic, like, *I can't miss the call, or I might spend the remainder of my days in meaningless mediocrity*. In reality, it is safe to say that God calls us many times throughout the seasons of our lives, and each call challenges us to stretch further than we might have anticipated or imagined. Take a breath. Relax. Open your heart to God's ideas for you.

What's Changing?

In his book *Managing Transitions*, William Bridges writes that transitions always start with an ending. Seems odd, yes, but he maintains that the first step toward a life change is identifying what you are losing and learning how to manage the losses. As you launch into young adulthood, it may make you feel confused, even sad and lonely, mixed with a healthy dose of anxiety. Normal . . . but pay attention to those feelings, as they are indicators of a life change.

Consider

Take a look at the video "The Graduation Stage" by the Skit Guys, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vokRn_7-tLk). The purpose of this video is to help you remember that you are going through a "stage" and that on the other side is world waiting to hear your voice.

Write and/or Discuss

Jot some notes or share with others your responses to these questions:

- ◆ What do you miss most about being in high school?
- ◆ What scares you the most about launching into young adulthood?
- ◆ If the world is waiting to hear your voice, what do you want to say?

Reflect

As you begin your young adult life, take a moment to complete these reflections . . .

- ◆ Ever since I was a child, I've dreamed of . . .
- ◆ No matter how confused or troubled I get, I know I can count on . . .
- ◆ Today, my gut is telling me to . . .

Finding concrete answers for how to align your life with God ideas for you is a process that takes time. So, all your wonderments and anxieties are normal and part of the process.

Acknowledge them and recognize that God is present in them. And pray for trust that God will mold you into the authentic person you desire to be.

Take heart

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." (John 14:27)

What's Emerging in My Life?

Let's consider what might be emerging in your life as a result of these changes. As we do so, let us remember a few things that others have discovered about God's callings in their lives. We can say that responding to God's call will likely . . .

- ◆ Lead to happiness in the long run. If it makes you depressed, it's likely not God's call. Although it won't make you immune to all other emotions such as sadness, frustration, resentment, guilt, etc. But if there is no happiness whatsoever, somehow you are not aligned with God's desire.
- ◆ Not be easy. It will probably stretch you toward something you never thought you could do or be. But you can do it, especially if you have some help.
- ◆ Benefit others besides yourself. If it only involves you, it's not God's call. This is baked-in to parenting at all stages.
- ◆ Not be overly complicated. You'll be able to explain it to others in just a few words.

Consider

Let's focus on the fourth bullet point: not be overly complicated. While, at the moment, it may be difficult and confusing trying to determine your call, once you see it and know it, there will be clarity that gives you incredible focus and energy to pursue it.

Take a look at the video blog by Maria "Do You Have a Plan for Life After High School" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1hWoMdw9Gk>). What do you want to be when you grow up? Maria helps you answer that question so you can have a plan for life after high school.

Write and/or Discuss

Jot some notes or share with others your responses to these questions:

- ◆ Do you see a connection between Maria's thoughts and the three vocational questions mentioned in the Introduction above: What am I good at? Who needs me? What do I sincerely want to do?
- ◆ Maria's key advice: "Make a plan!" What do you think? Are you ready to do that?

To Inspire You

Take a look at the video "Graduation: You Got This" by the Skit Guys (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rgbhgix04Wo>). When graduation day arrives, big things are on the horizon. But there's been a long road paving the way to this moment. Watch as one dad marvels at his little girl who has grown up before his eyes and has the strength and courage to follow God, live out her dreams, and take on the world.

Write and/or discuss

Jot some notes or share with others your responses to these questions:

- ◆ Did you hear the statement in the video, "The world hasn't met you yet, but now it's time. How did this world every get by without you?" If applied to you, how does that make you feel?
- ◆ What do you make of the last line, "Look at you. You've got this"?

Take heart

When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. (Luke 24. 30-31)

How Should I Live?

Now we seek to turn the corner and fully embrace the call. We seek to develop fruitful patterns of behavior and action that bring fulfillment. You want to do more than just survive young adulthood, you want to *thrive*.

Watch

An entertaining video by the Fung Bros called "Things to Know After High School" gives a lot of concrete, practical advice for thriving in young adulthood. Take five minutes and watch it at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmZWFn3_tOE.

As you can see, the Fung Bros video are very practical, yet not at all religious. While their advice is helpful, they don't take into account God's presence in your life. So now take a look at the video "Graduation Nuggets of Wisdom" by the Skit Guys: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebDeqNkb8QU>.

Write and/or Discuss

Jot some notes or share with others your responses to these questions:

- ◆ What's the most helpful piece of advice you heard in these videos?
- ◆ What do you think of the prayer, "God, help my character catch up with your blessing?" What does that mean to you?
- ◆ "God has given you everything you need to be the person God created you to be." Do you believe this? If so, what are your waiting for? Go out there and *be* that person!

Consider

Here are links to helpful practices and strategies for responding to the call of becoming a young adult.

- ◆ *Standing Up to Stress: How to Avoid Getting Crushed by College Anxiety* by Nora Bardbury-Haehl. No matter how together they might seem on the outside, in the back of most new college students' minds lurks the fear of failure. <https://bustedhalo.com/life-culture/standing-up-to-stress-how-to-avoid-getting-crushed-by-college-anxiety>

- ◆ The new edition of *"The Freshman Survival Guide"* is available online and in stores now. Download our free condensed version [here](#) to give to your favorite freshman-to-be.
- ◆ "Pope Francis' Advice for College Students" by Nora Bardbury-Haehl. Sometimes his advice is like talking to your favorite grandpa and other times he really rocks the boat. https://bustedhalo.com/life-culture/pope-francis-advice-for-college-students?utm_content=buffera67a7
- ◆ Video: *Why Your Major Will Never Matter*. "What's your major?" Is the first question you are asked when you meet a college student. Once out of college the question is replaced by "what do you do?". Luckily, our economy is shifting from one that rewards a "safe" career choice to one that rewards those who follow their own authentic path. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARGkp6am3S8>)
- ◆ *Kindly Shut the Hell Up About "Adulthood"* by Danielle Tullo. "Adulthood" implies that being an adult is not a necessary part of growing up, but rather a life choice you're hesitant to fully buy into. <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/lifestyle/news/a58946/stop-adulthood>
- ◆ *What Should I Do After High School* by Greg Forster. What would you say to someone who doesn't have a clear idea of their vocation after graduating high school? <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/what-should-i-do-after-high-school>
- ◆ Video: *How To Survive After High School: 5 Things I Wish I knew Before Graduating* by SimbraSupreme.. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvIFPVJTrso>.

Take heart

Plans are made in human hearts, but from the LORD comes the tongue's response. All one's ways are pure in one's own eyes, but the measurer of motives is the LORD. Entrust your works to the LORD, and your plans will succeed. (Proverbs 16:1-3)

Blessing for Young Adulthood

This blessing may be used with a small group or with the entire congregation.

Introduction

Today, these young adults stand before us in a time of transition. Transitions bring forth many different feelings and emotions and thus always call for wisdom. Please extend your hands as together we bless them.

To the Young Adults

In the adventures that lie ahead, no matter what they may be, there will be more to do than time will allow. In this world, time has become a precious commodity. Today, this community blesses you with wisdom, hope, and support. We urge you to take time to stop, look, and listen for the God who is every faithful and always with you.

Amen.

In times of great movement and change, may you take time to stop and find God exactly where you are.

Amen.

In times when success and achievement seem to become of supreme importance, may you take time to look for God to put it all into perspective.

Amen.

In times of hardship, sadness, and in times of anxiety, may you take time to listen for the God who calls you "Good." And, once you hear it, sing along! Sing it loud, and sing it proud!

Amen.

To All

God of giving, we ask that you allow our community to be a stable home where your gifts, poured out abundantly and unconditionally, become lifelines anchoring these young adults to you, and so allow them to jump courageously into deep waters ahead. We ask this in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen