



## 229: A Blessing for the Graduates

In the season of finishing up, of moving on, of celebrations and endings, and new beginnings, we pause to offer a blessing for you at graduation. Whether you're transitioning from one classroom to another, or from classroom to workplace, or to a year of adventure you've yet to uncover, may you ever be a student of life, of people, and of the world around you. If there's apprehension of the future, may it melt into hope. The choices you'll make as you grow will always come with a mixed bag of fear and doubt, excitement, and love. It's okay to not feel confident all the time, no one does. May you not be overwhelmed by too many options, or underwhelmed by the lack of them. Remember, the point is not so much about making a right or wrong decision, as much as it is about the person you're becoming, as you go along your way. And as you move into the world, don't forget who you already are. Honor the toddler you with your questions of where and when and why, why, why.

Give a nod of respect to the elementary school you, who learned to stand in line and write full sentences, play tag and hide and seek, and survive in resilience, even in times of confusion, joy, celebration, and wonder. Even in times of heartbreak, even in times of grief. Offer love and compassion toward the middle school you in all your awkward glory. Can you celebrate your courage? Do you see how hard you were trying? And for the teenage you, who's changed so much in the last several years, that teenage you will always be within you. Your curious questions, your testing the limits, your flourishing and your longing for justice. I hope you can forgive yourself for what you didn't know yet, I hope you can accept your true, full, authentic, wonderful self. May you know that you are beloved, seen and known by God, equipped for good, designed in goodness. No matter where you go or how far you travel, you will never be alone because God has made a home in you. You are always surrounded and embodied in love.

What are you bringing forward into this mad and beautiful world, in this new stage of your life? What gifts are we waiting to receive from you? No matter what, you can't miss your own future. Let this reflection be a reminder of what your schooling has done for you how being there has shaped you, and how you'll be changed moving forward. Welcome to this next chapter of your life, graduate. Here's to your next great thing. You are a gift, you are a wonder. We've been waiting for you.