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Take your time in making life decisions. You will probably either refine or change them several times during your lifetime anyway. It’s surprising what circumstances come along to shape your life. Understand that fifty years went by very quickly for us. Constantly be aware of what’s important and what isn’t. I often wish I had picked my battles more carefully and had not “sweat the small stuff.” It wastes time, energy, and resources that could be put to much better use.
Don’t take life too seriously. Relax and enjoy, knowing that God holds your whole life in His hands and loves you extravagantly.
When I attended Houghton I had just become a Christian but thought I was a pretty cool guy. I played on the basketball team, was social chairman of my class and lived at Yorkwood which then was like a frat house where many of the cool guys on campus lived. However, once I left I began to realize very quickly that I had much to learn about life. While attending Florida State University to get my Master's in social work I was exposed to every religion and philosophy known to man, and was overwhelmed and realized that I needed to lay a solid foundation in my life.

The Lord led me to read a chapter from the Old and New Testament every day, which I have done for the past over 50 years of my life and is the only reason I have any idea of what it means to be a man, husband, father and true disciple of the Lord Jesus.

I have been married for almost 50 years now with 6 children and 15 grandchildren and the only reason my life has made any sense is two fold. First, understanding that growing in a love relationship with Jesus every day is the reason that I was created. Second, I have come to understand that I was designed for eternity and not primarily for this earth which has given me a very freeing perspective on life on this earth. So as you begin your new life after college may you allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you in all the decisions you make - you will never regret it even though
the road of life on this earth is very difficult and painful at times which Scripture clearly helps us understand.
In all you do, remember that God’s Word, the Bible, is true; read it and follow it. Love Jesus and make your work a ministry for Him. (Colossians 3:23-24)
Enjoy the gifts of life and health - time passes so quickly! And make the most of every opportunity to share the gospel with the lives you touch.
Facing the future is both challenging and daunting. Our culture and the wider world today holds many situations totally beyond our control. My wife and I have lived and worked in Latin America, the US, and Central Europe (Ukraine). Much of what is happening in the “hot” spots of the world is very close to our life experience. We can visualize and feel what is going on because we’ve lived in some of these locations. When we stood where you stand today, we could not have foreseen how God would direct our paths. He unfolds life daily. To walk with Him in obedience is the most exciting and rewarding outcome of your Houghton education. No one can predict where your opportunities will take you. But what is of prime importance is to make that deliberate commitment to daily walk with God through the power of Jesus Christ. You may not be able to know what to expect, but you can have confidence in knowing that Christ will enable you to do His will. God’s Word must be your constant companion. Contrary to many voices in our culture today, there is no better source of wisdom than God’s Word applied by His Spirit. One of my many personal favorites is this foundational advice: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and
strength to your bones.” Proverbs 3:5-7. And let me add the words of the Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:23 and 24: “… whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.” In retirement as we face the “rest of our lives” we still do so with the excitement of looking to the Lord for His daily leading. We would do it all over again for His honor, for there is no better life than to use your gifts to serve the Lord Christ, King of all kings. Retired from Reach Beyond (formerly HCJB Global) General Manager of WJSL and Associate Professor of Communication, Houghton, 1987 - 1998.
It is never too late to dramatically change one’s career plans, even subsequent to completion of an undergraduate degree. I did complete a major in mathematics at Houghton, but enrolled in an elective course in my senior year, Introduction to Accounting. This exposure to the business world and the discipline of Accounting, changed my aspirations from teaching high school Mathematics to teaching Accounting & Finance at the university level and ultimately to the “corporate world” for over 20 years. Never let fears, embarrassment or inertia dissuade you from pursuing a new direction.
Congratulations! When you leave Houghton your future is all taken care of - by God. God and God alone knows the “where”, the “what”, the “when”, the “who”, and most importantly, the “why” of your future. Always keep God first! Don’t get off the path chasing political, socioeconomic and cultural issues without going through Him and His Word. If God is first and foremost in your life, your future is bright indeed. If you push Him aside, your successes, no matter how great, will always be suspect and subject to emptiness and doubt. May God bless and keep His guiding hand on all of you.
Someone told me this a number of years ago and it is still true today. “It’s not the number of years you live that count, but how you live those years.” May the Lord bless all of you as you and He embark on this new journey.
From a fellow graduate, of “only fifty years ago,” I still can identify with you and the many aspirations you may have, embarking on the careers you have been studying for so diligently! The most important words of Wisdom which I could give you, would be from Jesus’ Own words in Matthew 6:33, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” I have found these words to be foundational in my search for success. Even now, in my “golden years,” I continue striving to follow them. You too, can become that outstanding success that God has planned for you, by following Jesus’ exhortation! Congratulations, and may God bless you! Yours in Christ, Rita (Hartman) Capuano ‘Class of 64’
Keep innovating to use your gifts and talents in new ways throughout life.
Learn a trade (eg. welding, plumbing, graphic skills, sewing). That brand-new degree is not much good if you can’t find a job. There are very few dream jobs. Don’t be afraid to change careers (often). Think outside the box. Pay off your loans as quickly as possible. Don’t live at home any longer than you must. Get a job and don’t become a “professional” student to avoid those student loans. As you get older, be aware of those who would defraud or embezzle from you – Christians and trusting people of high moral character are prime marks. Buy a copy of Greg Gutfeld’s book “Not Cool”. And remember Houghton College; your college friends and time spent at that little isolated spot in Western New York State will be some of the BEST memories you will ever make.
Label and date your photographs, and don’t hang your valued painting over the mantel.
Dear Graduates of the 2014 Class, Life always presents choices. In college I was aware of tightly scheduled classes, papers, and exams, but now I look back on all the little minutes God gave me to enjoy friends, unplanned activities, and worship. These are what create beautiful memories now. Through fifty years the Lord has taught me to give Him each day and let Jesus plan my schedule as I encounter people, work problems, opportunities, and family members. Proverbs 3:5-6 applies to every life situation!
Fifty years ago I wish I had known how important it is to listen, to play more and to pray more.
Although I knew this in my head fifty years ago as a “20 something”, now half a century later I am convinced in both head and heart that the undisputedly best, most fulfilling way to live an abundant, meaningful life is articulated by the Psalmist who declares, “God’s laws are perfect. They protect us, make us wise, give us joy and light. God’s laws are pure, eternal and just. They are more to be desired than gold and sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb. For they keep us away from harm and give success to those who obey them...” (Psalm 19). Live God’s way and you will confirm the words of St. Irenaeus, “A person fully alive, that is the glory of God.”
Back in the early seventies, Alvin Toffler wrote a book entitled Future Shock. He predicted how many changes would come to pass in the next several decades. As he predicted, our world has changed exponentially. Perhaps it gave him a shock even beyond his expectations and extrapolations to see how rapidly his predictions were realized.

Since our class graduation, we have changed in many ways. Not only have we gotten older, but some of us have entered eternity. It is hard for us to believe we are as old as we are. Our day of leaving this earth is fast approaching. But we can take great comfort that we serve an immutable God who does not change as we do. As the well known poem by Thomas O. Chisholm states, “Thou [God] changeth not, Thy compassions, they fail not; as Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.” Our goal should be to know the living God and His Word. Not just knowing about Him and His Word, but getting to know Him personally. James Packer in his book Knowing God, says it well. Read it, it is worth your ponderosity.

I hope as part of your education at Houghton, you have learned to arrange priorities in your life. Life is more than being educated, having a good job or being well-known. It will be a fiasco if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul (Mark 8:35 - 38).

In my time at Houghton there were three teachers who
especially stand out in my mind. They took an interest in their students’ future. One encouraged me to be trained in more than one area since I was considering the foreign mission field. That advice was the very best. Another teacher always gave the benefit of the doubt to his students. He bent over backwards to help them, and set a sterling example of Christian graciousness and humility. The third teacher also gave me some sound advice, “Don’t sink all of your ships in the English Channel,” to help me resolve some difficult choices I needed to make at that time.

Use your training and put the living God and His Kingdom first and foremost (Matthew 6:33) in your life. Do not expect all your rewards and recognitions to be given in this earthly life. Be willing to await the “Well done, good and faithful servant...enter into the joy of your Master” (Matthew 25:21, 23).

May you constantly be blessed by our heavenly Father who so loved us that He gave His beloved Son; may you continually be blessed by the Lord Jesus who out of love gave Himself up for all His sheep; and may you always be blessed by God’s Holy Spirit Who is with us and in us and bringing to completion the good work begun in those for whom Christ died.

In the meantime “deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Jesus,” He who is the author and perfecter of faith (Luke 9:23, Hebrews 12:1, 2).

In Him,
Arthur L. Fawthrop