



Are You Now a Body in Motion or at Rest?

Jerry Clemmer SCS Commencement University of Richmond 2011

Good morning, and thank you Dr. Ayers, Dr. Narduzzi, platform party guests, members of the faculty, trustees, parents, friends and fellow graduates. What a deep honor it is to be here today. We have all come down a **long road** to finally reach this point. I told my wife 17 years ago before we got married, "Come with me and we will do great things together!" She said yes. She took a vow of poverty, -- and married me. *(pause)* On the day of our wedding, with \$200 in the bank I put \$50 in an envelope, and handed it to the priest. He asked, "What's this?" I said, "This is your pay for the ceremony today." He asked, "Aren't you restaurant managers?" I replied, "Yes." As he handed the envelope back to me, he said, "No thanks, you're going to need this." *(pause)*

Speaking today has forced me to look inside for something useful that I can share with you. I'm truly grateful to have the chance to do so. I am going to ask you a question at the end of my comments; think of it as a one-question final exam. But I am going to give you the answer now: *In Motion. (please repeat)*

Sir Isaac Newton's first law of motion is "that in the absence of a force, a body either remains at rest, or is in motion." If you're a person at rest, because you now have a degree, you may think that you have achieved the ultimate goal you wanted in life -- that you're finished -- there's nothing left to do.



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We all use keys. I'll put money on the fact that most of you have keys in your pockets or purses right now. (*Pull out keys*). We use them for work, for home, the car, etc. They get us into places we want to go. They're a powerful metaphor: the key to the city, the key to success, the key to happiness, or the keys to the Kingdom.

I remember in a class discussion a couple of years ago, Professor Elisabeth Wray asked us why we came back to finish college. The most common answer was, "To get a better job." Translation: "I have been locked out of many opportunities and never had the right key to get in. **I'm now here to find it.**" But, looking back at the journey, did you grow in ways you didn't expect? I know I did.

We are much different than the young, early 20 year olds in the class of 2011 that are graduating tomorrow. They are starting with new and shiny keys that they believe can unlock anything. We already have a lot of worn and broken keys. You could say, we are "seasoned locksmiths." Most of you, I'll bet, are like me in many ways. Did you drop out of college too early or never got the opportunity to start? Did you have to work harder because you didn't have a degree? Did you watch others move up the ladder because they had one? It makes us appreciate this moment even more!

For the past few years, we have sacrificed time away from family and friends, and we thank them for their support while we were making this



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investment in our future. Today, we will walk up here to receive a new type of key . . . one for which we all worked very hard. Now what? Do we have a plan to use it or is it just going to be another key on that ubiquitous, big key ring?

Victor Frankl wrote a book called, Man's Search for Meaning, where he explained, "Man does not simply exist but always decides what his existence will be, what he will become in the next moment." Frankl says we have held, and always will hold the keys to control of our future, but we all know that we need the right key to open the right door. Now it's within our grasp.

You no longer have to take required classes to complete your core curriculum; from this point on, everything is an elective. When you are handed this degree and shake hands up here on stage, they will congratulate you.

So I ask you the one-question final exam that I want you to ask yourself when you are up here: From this point on, will you be a body at rest or in motion? **IN MOTION!**

Congratulations class of 2011. You have just made your family and friends very proud.