

To My Child on Your Launching

The first occasion I had to cradle you in my arms was in the birthing suite where you were born. The stark realization that God's plan for the salvation of humanity required the death of His Son brought me figuratively to my knees and literally to tears (*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* John 3:16, New International Version). The grand tapestry that we know as life served as a backdrop for your birth. The miracle and mystery that is human existence had been playing out before me those months prior to your birth as you developed within your mother. At the moment of your first breath the Lord infused within me a love for you that was truly beyond what is humanly capable. That event was the culmination of years of prayer and three miscarried siblings. After all your mother and I had been through, I could not humanly give you up even for the noblest of causes. From that moment forward, our mission was to prepare you to make a difference in this world as a godly adult.

The mission statement of our family, as followers of Christ, has been "the world will be a better place for us having lived." Consequently your launching into adulthood is an important part of this mission. You, as our child, will touch this world well beyond what we can do personally or individually. You will love those that we shall never know. You will set foot where we shall never walk. You will live life beyond our years. (*The children born to a man when he is young are like arrows in the hand of a warrior.* Psalm 127:4, GOD'S WORD® Translation).

We have striven to provide you with the best rearing we could. We purposed to pour wisdom, knowledge, compassion, and courage into you. We have educated you to think critically, analytically, and prayerfully as a member of society. (*Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.* Proverbs 22:6, New Living Translation). We have attempted to impress upon you the existence of eternal Truths that far transcend any "truth" conjured by human logic. We have prayed, by our example, you have seen that service to God, by assisting others in their lives' journey is the highest expression of Christ's love on this earth.

The overwhelming truth is that our efforts are miserably paltry compared to the potential that God has instilled within you. We are, and always have been, driven to prayer as we laid your past childhood and future adulthood before the throne of God. As is the case with any set of parents, we could not hope to rear you without God's divine intervention.

The culmination of your launching, your release into adulthood, was your mother and I laying hands on you and praying the Lord's blessings and guidance over you. We are committed to praying for you and yours so long as we live. The final judgment of whether we have capably followed God's guidance as parents will be evident through the impact your family has on this earth and God's Kingdom.

Life's journey is composed of memorable celebrations and lingering regrets placed in a fabric of simple pleasures and minor disappointments. God uses life in its entirety to shape us into His image. Drink deeply from the cup of life. The mystery of our relationship with God is that He uses the imperfect,

rebellious, and foolishness of human existence to manifest Himself and forward His Kingdom. Celebrate your victories. Learn from your mistakes. Embrace who you are, yet strive to improve. Practice détente, but never surrender your values. Praise God in the good times and lean on Him in the bad times. Follow God daily. Purposely commit your efforts to His Kingdom. Shine brightly as only you can in Him.

We love you deeply.

Evan Todd Yeager, Ed.D.