***Proverbs 16:1-3 The preparations of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. 2All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the spirits. 3Commit your works to the Lord, And your thoughts will be established.***

Graduation, a milestone in the life of both parent and child. The young look ahead with hope, ready to take on the next challenge. Parents look back, remembering the baby in arms, hopeful in what is ahead and yet nostalgic for what has passed by. Graduation, life will be different, roles will be different, journeys will be different; yet, love remains the same.

This morning, we look at 3 wisdom verses from Proverbs. Often, graduation signals a time when the question of what should I do is replaced by what should I have done? Verse 1 starts *The preparations of the heart belong to man.* This part of the verse has the idea of confused plans - confused, gray, fuzzy thoughts. We often don’t know what to do. Graduates, when you don’t know what to do, pray. Ask God for wisdom. Seek Him. Psalm 119:133 *Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.* And our verse this morning tells us God will give the answer. *But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.*Abide in God, through prayer, through the Bible. The world will test you. 2 Cor 3:4-5 - *And we have such trust through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.* As a young man, I was sure I was sufficient in myself. As I grow, I see God is my sufficiency. Graduates, abide in Christ, He will order your steps.

Verse 2 *All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the spirits.* We always think we are completely right… until we know we are not. Jer 17:9 – *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?* Like spoiled children, we want what we want. We deceive ourselves. We have limited knowledge, blindness to our faults, hear a sentence of the story and think we understand the book. Prov 21:2 says *Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts.* The wise seek God’s answer before taking a step. God knows our intentions, motivations, blind spots. He has seen the preparations of our heart. Guess what? He’s also seen the intentions, motivations, and preparations of all other hearts. He guides with perfect knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Graduates, He has seen your heart. Be surrendered to His will. Trust Him. He is a Mighty Fortress in every storm. Abide in Him through Christ. He will order your steps.

Verse 3 *Commit your works to the Lord, And your thoughts will be established.* So we have made preparations in our hearts, but sought the Lord for the right answer. We’ve realized that we always think we’re right, but God sees the heart perfectly and will direct our path. Commit your works – This has the idea of Roll upon God the burden of the future. Often, there is much anxiety about the future. God says, “Trust Me. Remain connected to God, as burden passes unto burden, as work passes unto work, each day leads on to another day, place your trust in God and He will establish your thoughts. Remember those preparations in verse 1? The ways of a man in verse 2? When we surrender to Jesus, truly giving our life to Him, our hearts and thoughts change. Pride and craving for the world disappear and God establishes our focus rightly. Until that time, the world will deceive us and our thoughts, our desires, will always skew wrong. We will never feel fulfilled or satisfied. Graduates, He knows your purpose. Vanity of vanities all is vanity. The richest, wisest man to ever live uttered these words. King Solomon had it all! In the end, he said this in Eccl 12:12-13 – *And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.* *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all.* Graduates, the meaning of life – Fear God, keep His commandments. Be surrendered to God Who awaits you when this momentary vapor we call life is over.

In the end, there is at least one graduation still ahead, the great graduation that awaits us all. Based on our choice to follow Jesus, we will either graduate to everlasting life, where Christ will meet us and utter the words, Well Done! Or we will graduate to everlasting death where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. There is only one question on Christ’s test – Who do you say that I am? Our humble answer must be as Peter answered in Matt 15:16 “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Graduates, parents, abide in Christ, He will direct your way.

If you have never trusted Jesus, today must be the day! Come as we sing. He will guide the answers of your tongue, weigh the motivations of your heart, and order your steps perfectly. Come, believe on Him today.