**Psalm 16:7-11 I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons. 8I have set the Lord always before me; Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved. 9Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. 10For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 11You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.**

 Graduation – it’s a beautiful time in the hearts of the student and the parents, grandparents, and family. It’s a time of transition – passage to a new relationship between parent and child. It’s a time of mixed emotions – gladness, sadness, relief of old concern, arrival of new concern. A child wondering – where do I go from here? A parent wondering – did I prepare them properly for what lies ahead? College, a trade, a job. New independence – for both child and parent – an empty nest paused… just in case the baby bird returns one day. Yes – graduation from school is only part of the graduation that’s happening right now. Parents graduate to new stage even as child crosses school stage.

 Verse 7 says - *I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.* The Lord gives us counsel. Will we receive it? Unlike instructors in college or grade school, who’s counsel and teaching will age, God’s counsel is timeless, continual. He gives the Holy Spirit to guide us and a mind to instruct us. Proverbs 22:6 *Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.* God never promises that a child won’t stray, wander, say things that you know you never taught! The child will one day return because his mind, her mind falls back to Truth in dark times – the night seasons - to the Hope Mama and Daddy gave when they were young. Young parents – remember this!

 Verse 8 *I have set the Lord always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.*Through it all we have a wonderful Counselor, beautiful Teacher, One we can forever depend on. But, we must choose to set Him before us – No matter what the schools teach, no matter what the world says, we choose the timeless Truth of Jesus. Remember, the world thought it was right when sailors believed dragons lived at the edge of the earth and ships fell off the edge. Remember, once Earth was thought to be the center of the Universe. Through it all, God’s Word is timeless. Cling to the timeless always.

 Verse 9 *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.* Anyone who has been there knows that the saddest place to be, a place where no heart is glad and glory never rejoices, there is no rest, no hope, is when we are separated from God. Proverbs 2:10-11 says - *When wisdom enters your heart, And knowledge is pleasant to your soul, Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you.* We rejoice when we have wisdom. Well, where do we find this Wisdom that makes a heart glad? Proverbs 2:6 *For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.* Cling to His word always.

 Verse 10 *For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.* God is the only one, through Jesus, that can deliver souls to Heaven. Ecclesiastes 12:1 says *Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come,
And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”.* The world offers no wisdom. It only rails and screeches against the God who does. Proverbs 26:12 says *Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.* Hell is separation from God. We create our own hell on earth when we take our eyes off Him – we go into the dark, away from the Light, into the night seasons of life. Stay in the Light.

Verse 11 *You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.* Never graduate from following God… never become wise is your own eyes… James 1:5 says *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.* The very Source of wisdom, giving freely to all that ask. Ecclesiastes 12:12 Solomon, the wisest man to ever live, says *And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.* God will direct the steps of those who seek Him – fullness of joy and eternal pleasure in Christ.

Graduates – never let this decaying, rotting, confusing world lead you astray. Remember what you have learned, cling to it – in the times of Light and brightness, when times are good – and in the night seasons, when darkness surrounds you – both will come in life. But let’s hear once again from Solomon – Ecclesiastes 12:13 *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all.* No matter how high you climb in life, this is the conclusion of the whole matter – the meaning of life – Fear God, keep His commandments. This is man’s all. When you do this, *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow you All the days of your life; And you willdwell in the house of the Lord Forever.*