



Sending Students off to **Campus**

by Joe Wiley

My wife, Glenda, and I enjoy our work with college students. Seeing young men and women grow and mature on campus gives us a gratifying feeling of building for the future.

Beyond the students at Freed-Hardeman University, we are also privileged to meet the parents as they bring sons and daughters on campus visits and to orientation sessions. To these parents especially, I would like to share a few thoughts.

Time Passes By

Nothing can really prepare you for the reality that your child has grown up. Wasn't it just yesterday that you were carpooling to school, and wasn't

it just the day before when you were changing diapers?

When a child becomes a senior in high school, he and his family are caught in a flood of activities building toward the long-anticipated graduation. But then, college is waiting in the autumn. What can you do to make the most of this last summer at home?

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise," Ephesians 5:15-16 counsels, "redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (KJV). Whether your child is headed to a secular school or a Christian school, it is important to use your time wisely to prepare for this new phase of life.

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Don't Leave Anything Unsaid

Our young people have been exposed to more information about sex, drugs and violence than any previous generation. As parents, you need to talk with your sons and daughters about the Christian perspective on all of these and many other topics.

Although your children are moving into adulthood, do not underestimate your influence in their lives. As a college president, one of the heartbreaking things I deal with is talking with a student who has made wrong choices and must be sent home. This is a tragedy that hurts on so many levels, but the thing most of these students dread most is disappointing their parents. What your mother and father think of you is always important.

Before sending your child away to

college, make sure he or she knows clearly that you do not approve of drunkenness and immorality. Make sure your child knows you expect church attendance to continue at school just as you expected it at home.

Don't Leave Anything Unasked

As a parent, I believe it is your responsibility to know as much as possible about the influences on your child's life. Hopefully, long before your child settles on a college, you will get an idea of what his or her life will be like at school.

Be sure to know what congregations are near campus. In addition to the Henderson congregation, Freed-Hardeman is blessed with many sound congregations close to campus. In some parts of the country, a student may have to travel some distance to

find an appropriate church home. Especially with some schools prohibiting freshmen from having cars, transportation to worship could be a problem.

Be sure to schedule a visit with the faculty members in your child's major academic department. The men and women who are teaching in the classroom have much more influence on college students than those of us who serve in the administration.

Even at a Christian college, do not take anything for granted. If your son or daughter is studying biology, for example, you need to know whether the professors in that department believe in the truth of Genesis or believe in theistic evolution. There is a strong probability that whatever these professors believe will be what their students believe.

Any family considering a Christian college has a right to ask any member of the faculty or administration what he or she believes. We all should strive to live up to the standard expressed in 2 Corinthians 8:2: "Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."

I also believe Christian parents should have access to information regarding their children in college. Although college students are legally adults, they are still in a transitional stage of life. At Freed-Hardeman, we encourage students to sign authorization giving us permission to talk with their parents.

Trust God and the Power of His Word

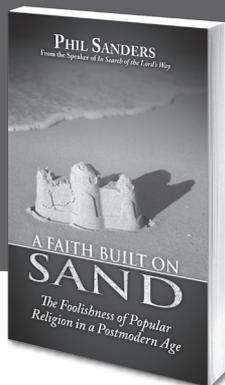
Sending a child off to college opens many uncertainties. But through it all, Christian parents have the confidence that God does not change, and His Word is more powerful than the error of the world.

The time-honored practice of Bible study and prayer strengthens God's people, preparing them for whatever may come in life. Make sure your sons and daughters stay close to God, and you can be sure He will bless them in their college years and beyond. □

Joe Wiley serves as president of Freed-Hardeman University and may be reached at jwiley@fhu.edu.

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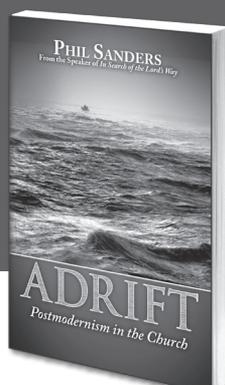


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