

We Have Changed Together

By Jason Rueger



Jason Rueger, valedictorian.

Editor's note: Jason spoke to the graduating class as this year's valedictorian.

Fellow graduates, esteemed president, board members, and faculty, parents, relatives and friends: It is an honor to stand before you today as a representative of the RBC graduating class of 2011.

C.S. Lewis, British scholar and novelist, once said, "The great thing is, if one can, to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions in one's 'own' or 'real' life. The truth is, of course, that what one regards as interruptions are precisely one's life." Lewis' point is that the human life is defined by change. My challenge to you today is not to fear change, but rather to cultivate an attitude that welcomes it, knowing God uses change to accomplish His purposes.

When I first visited Rosedale in the fall of 2008, I was completely unaware of how much this small institution would affect my life. However, as a result of that first visit, I began to understand that Rosedale is defined by its commitment to loving God and loving others, and I wanted to be a part of that.

Through the reading of the Word, the counsel of my parents, the challenge of my professors, the hours spent talking with the dean of students, and the friendship of the men's resident director, I have come to a much greater knowledge of what the life of a Jesus follower entails. I learned that God has a heart for the poor and down-

trodden and that those who love Him should have that same heart. I found that Christ's call to peacemaking is something that should be exemplified in all areas of life.

RBC has certainly changed me. Why? Because Rosedale casts a vision for its students of being kingdom followers, and on behalf of the graduates, I want to thank this institution for its commitment to that vision and the way that commitment has impacted our lives.

I have witnessed this process of change at work in our student body on campus this year as well. In the wake of spiritual renewal services, we were left on our knees, crying, praying, and seeking that God's will be done in our lives. When several of the girls were involved in a serious automobile accident, life changed, and yet

the product of that change has been deeper relationships and submission to God. Many of those who began the year struggling to connect with others are now dealing with the reality of leaving those they have

come to love. We have changed together and God has used this change to draw us closer to Him and to each other.

Today we find ourselves at a crossroads. At the conclusion of this ceremony, we will walk out, say our goodbyes, and go our separate ways. This is change. Yet, my hope and prayer is that we embrace this change and see what exciting new things God has in store. As Andre Gide, French author and the winner of the Nobel literature prize, once proclaimed, "Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore."

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Graduation is a family affair, spanning generations.