

Greetings friends, family, teachers, all of the Redding Christian High School staff or alumni. My name is Cody Kirch and I have been given the awesome opportunity to cordially welcome each and every one of you to the commencement exercises for the Redding Christian High School graduating class of 2006.

When I contemplatively look back on these last four years of high school, I think they can only be accurately described with a well-known quote by the late author Charles Dickens. The quote is as follows, "It was the best of times. It was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity or doubt, we had everything before us, we (felt that we) had nothing before us..." - I truly believe this quote poignantly describes all the hopes, fears, dreams, and occasional heartache we seniors felt at some time or another throughout our years in high school. However, please do not misunderstand me, I am not here to focus on the shortcomings of our class- far from that- I am here to shed some light on the fact that each of these seniors standing before you had an individual part in the formation, with the help of our loving Father in Heaven, of an awesome class permeated, time and again, by a feeling of love, courage, joy, and unwavering devotion.

One of the reasons I am extremely proud to be a member of this class is because we are the first class that has had the privilege to enjoy all four years of high school here at Redding Christian. Honestly, most of the seniors here today, started our freshmen year here during a very trying time as both North Valley Christian School and Redding Christian School were combining to form a brand new high school called Redding Christian High School. We scarcely knew each other at the time, but each of us had the courage to reach out to his fellow classmate and, in turn, our divided class soon became one. I think many people often do not understand or rather realize the considerable amount of time it takes to foster an openness or outright honesty our class has

unabashedly tapped into and enjoyed over these last four years. Though, as a class, we may enjoy this remarkable sense of unity and sincerity now, it was only the result of our painstaking commitment to learn about and understand each other in a deep and profound manner during our freshmen, sophomore, junior and even senior years. Not surprisingly, there were many events, both through Redding Christian and outside of it, that had a large part in creating the atmosphere we now enjoy. Winter banquets, mystery parties, and marine world trips, to only name a few, each had a large part in cultivating a powerful union between each and every member of our class. Other events such as late-night parties, small group Bible studies, informal volleyball games at Big League Dreams, and eating out together at various restaurants have all helped transform us from a group of estranged teenagers into a loving and sometimes ridiculous family.

Now, however, we seniors face a new age or era of sorts. An era in which each of us leaves the friendly confines of Redding Christian High School and prepares to embark on the incredible journey into college and adulthood. My friends and fellow seniors, we have reached a crossroad in each other's lives- a crossroad in which each of us is bombarded with countless important questions and decisions we must answer such as What college do we plan to attend? What career do we plan to pursue? How do we plan to use the gifts God has given us? With God's guidance, each and every one of us must answer these questions and take on the responsibility of becoming upright and God-fearing adults. Though it seems like an impossibly daunting task, I honestly believe we have what it takes to successfully transition into adulthood.

Congratulations, my classmates, friends, and, Yes, Dr. Forbes, even my esteemed colleagues, we have finally made it. I am proud of each and everyone of you and can't wait to hear the stories of the great things you all will accomplish. So it is with a tear in my eye and smile on my face that I can finally voice my appreciation and gratitude to all my classmates- it

has been both an honor and pleasure to spend my high school years with all of you. I love all of you and will miss each one of you very much. Thank you.