

10 COLLEGE COMMANDMENTS

So you're in college now.

The time you spend here will no doubt be invaluable because your education will be more than just academic. You will also learn more about who you are as a person. If high school was the training ground, college is the testing ground where you prove to yourself and all those invested in your success that the time, love, wisdom, energy, (and money) that loved ones have deposited into you will ground you through this time of freedom and self-discovery.

However, college can be a daunting place for the Christian. You see, while your loved ones were busy investing in your development, they were also shielding you from those things that could hinder it. For those of you that grew up in the church, the decision was probably made for you on what should be exposed to you. And on the college campus, *if it is to be seen, you're going to see it*. You will see many more approaches to life than what you thought existed, and the choice of what to allow into your sphere of influence will be entirely yours. This can be unnerving. You are now without your loved ones' immediate presence, control, and sway, and you must utilize *your* spirit of discernment to determine what is good from what is actually a distraction from the path God set before you. All your loved ones can do now is pray that they've equipped you with enough tools to help you do so.

So while you are getting yourself acclimated to life on a college campus, I pray these 10 College Commandments help you get your bearings, stay grounded on God's path, and navigate through these years of self-discovery until you graduate:

01) STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED

2 Timothy 2:15

The whole reason people have been hustling to get your butt to college is so that you can get a good academic education and a degree to make more opportunities available to you. Crack books, not a pipe. Absorb knowledge, not alcohol. Make As, not out. Play by the rules, not hooky. If you don't get the grades, then you won't get a degree, and all of the work, blood, sweat, and tears to get you here will be for nothing.



02) I AM THE LORD THY GOD.....HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

Exodus 20:2 -3

This time of self-discovery, the freedom to make your own choices, and the pressure of coursework will cause you to put the focus on you and your needs

first while inadvertently pushing God out of the picture. Before you came here, your parents carved time for God out of your schedule for you. Now it will be up to you to not allow God's place in your life to be supplanted by your own needs and desires.

03) PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Have you ever been aggravated by someone that would talk and be friendly to you only when he or she wanted something? Perhaps God isn't that much different. He likes hearing from His children and talking to them to guide them. I imagine it annoys Him too hearing from you only when you want help. I won't belabor this point though. There's nothing like a group project, a midterm, or a research paper due in T minus 36 hours to open the lines of communication on your end.



04) HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER

Ephesians 6:2

Part of your journey is realizing that there was actually a method to the madness in your home-training. There's a reason why Momma said what she said, why Daddy did what he did, why your next-door neighbor was just as hard on you as your parents, why your pastor and the church mothers encouraged your activity in the church. All that home-training your loved ones gave you was really for your benefit; take it with you and use it. Trust that they weren't trying to steer you wrong.

05) THERE ARE DIFFERENT KINDS OF GIFTS.
..SERVICE ..WORKING, BUT IN ALL OF THEM AND IN EVERYONE, IT IS THE SAME GOD AT WORK

1 Corinthians 4: 5

News Flash y'all! This just in: your gifts, talents, and thoughts are not the only gifts, talents, and thoughts in existence. Recognize that what you see may look different in the eyes of someone else. The challenge for you will be finding value in other perspectives and figuring out how to get varying points-of-view on one accord starting with your college roommate. Remember that the same God that made you and loves you made and loves others on the campus. If He wanted the world exactly like you, He'd have run you through a copier machine.



06) I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

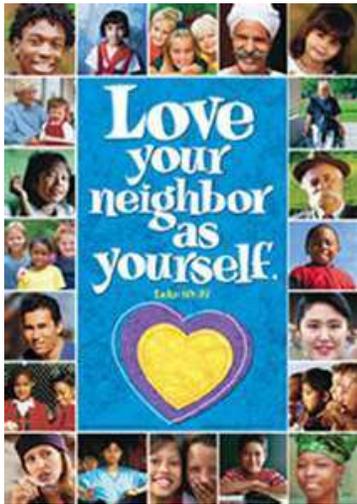
Romans 1:16

College is one of the few places where you may run into discrimination because of your faith walk. The rebels will run the gamut from organized groups on campus to close friends who associate Christian values with child's play and put you down for maintaining them. Sustaining your Christian identity will be difficult, but remember that Christ calls you blessed when people persecute you for His sake.

07) CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE...
.AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE WE WILL SERVE THE LORD

Joshua 24:15

Every person maturing into adulthood will be faced with this decision, and many Christians encounter it during their college years. At some point in your growth you will come to understand that the prayers of your loved ones will not be enough to save you from Judgment Day. Simply being in church will not be enough to spare you. Part of getting your act together is getting your spiritual house in order. Hemming and hawing and side-stepping the choice is not going to cut it. I ain't saying nothing; I'm just saying: you were told.



08) JUST AS YOU WANT
MEN TO DO TO YOU,
YOU ALSO DO TO THEM
LIKEWISE

Luke 6:31

Y'all would not believe how hard this is to follow. The tendency of most people in the work world is "get them before they get you" or "perpetuate unto others the wrong that's done to you." These credos often get adopted and bred during the college years. Learn now how to do right in spite of this. And since you'd want someone else to step up and acknowledge their wrongs, then you man up or woman up and try to make things right

when you're in the wrong.

09) NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER

Hebrews 10:25a

Tell the truth: Some of y'all hated being highjacked out of a good sleep and forced to go to church on Sunday. In college you don't have to go to church and no one will make you go. The impetus to go will now have to come from you. Get up and go! Oh, by the way, attendance at St. Sony's by the Sofa communing on wine coolers and cheese nabs does not count as church.

Neither does going to Couch Christian, Bedside Baptist, or Saturday night services at Club Ch-zurch.

10) **A JUST MAN FALLETH SEVEN TIMES, AND RISES UP AGAIN**

Proverbs 24:16

College can separate the men from the boys and the women from the girls. When the chips are down, boys take their ball and girls grab their dolls and go home; men and women muscle through and fight to stand back up. You may get knocked down, but don't stay down. College is hard; life is harder, but God is with you and on your side. Please. Don't ever give up.



by Joy Colter