

## Before You Leave for Summer...

By Dave Weeden

*Are we here already?* Sometimes it felt like it would take forever. But now that we're here, we wonder how we got here so fast. A whole year of college... full of memories... lived to the fullest... and gone so soon!



You know, in the future, you're going to spend many, many nights thinking about what you've experienced this year... remembering the friends (and even those "other characters") who were such an important part of your life. As a person who spent seven semesters as a university senior (not because I didn't pass, but because I still wanted to learn more), I can assure you—that is an absolute fact!

I know you've been up to your neck in quizzes and tests all year. When I see a list of questions today, I have to fight the instinct to turn and run. But just for fun, I've listed a few things I think you'll enjoy looking back on now that will continue to warm the tender pockets of your mind for the rest of your life.

You really should take the time. For me, there were so many people who were important... who played a special role in my life... who I'd give my right arm to be able to tell **how much their lives affected mine!** But I didn't think about telling them then... to be honest, I was so busy then that I didn't even know myself how important they were to me!

And I wonder: would it have changed anything in my life—or in theirs—if I had said something then? Would it make any difference, anywhere, if I could tell them now?

You're probably still on campus. Your friends may still be around. Go over this slowly, leisurely, when it's convenient for you. How can you lose, by looking back on fond memories of the obvious (and sometimes not-so-obvious) treasures you've come across this year. I'll leave room for you to write in your personal answers. Look them over when you're through, and think about whether you want to share anything on the list with anyone special. Then, you can decide if you should keep the list, shred it, or burn it!

### *What will you remember most about this year?*

- Was there a time, perhaps in class, when something that was said suddenly "jumped out at you" and put a lot of other things into perspective?
- While you were listening to someone argue a different perspective on something you had always been sure about... did what they said make so much sense, that today you see things "just a little differently?"
- Do you feel you see things more clearly now... or has what you learned this year simply raised more new questions?
- Did you learn anything new about yourself, or about what you want to do with your life?

***What will you remember most about your friends?***

- Did you have comfortable friends “of like mind” who shared your convictions... who encouraged you and affirmed your perspectives?
- Was there someone who “grated on you like #9 sandpaper,” but still enriched your life by challenging your perspectives?
- Who were those faithful, “cheerleader friends” who drove you to be your very best by applauding your successes?
- Who was that person who unknowingly pushed you to a higher “level of excellence” by becoming your chief competition?
- Has somebody new entered your life, who has been a real blessing simply by being part of it?

***What (and whom) have you changed?***

- Have you changed any lives that you know of... modified their perspectives or told them anything about God?
- Speaking about God, what do you believe about Him, about life, and about your purpose in life?
- Has any of that changed over the year?
- Are you stronger, or has your perspective been shaken?
- Are you comfortable with that? Is there anything you want to change?

This isn't for anyone else but you. You don't need to turn it in to anyone, get a grade on it, or worry about getting the right or wrong answers. But since these questions are about you... putting the answers on paper could help you discover something about yourself... which could be a huge benefit.

What a year this has been! And whether you knew it or not, God has been there with you, right by your side, ready to help and reach out to you whenever you called on Him. More than anything else, I hope you know Him personally, and have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior.

I pray that this year has been valuable to you as a person, productive in preparing you to reach your goals, and fruitful as a time of growth in your spirit and your relationship with God! Please feel free to write or e-mail us if we can answer any questions you have about God, the Bible, or what life's really all about.

Keep safe through the summer! God bless you!

Dave Weeden, for *The Collegiate Letter*