

## Beginnings & Endings

Ecclesiastes 3:11-14 & Revelation 1:8, 22:13

April 15, 2018 ~ Confirmation Sunday ~ Pastor Jo Ramsey



If you ask the confirmation class how I began every single class this spring, they would tell you, besides a game and a prayer, I always said, “We have so much to cover, and we just don’t have enough time. There’s just no way I can go over everything!” As the class moved along, I would begin glancing at the clock---“Ok, we’re definitely going over. I’m telling you right now, we’re running out of time!” It became kind of a joke---and it’s true, we always did run out of time. But it’s just because I love it---the topics, the teaching, the discussing, the joking around, and mostly the kids themselves.



These kids are such great people. They are funny, quirky, smart and talkative. They stand at the threshold between childhood and adulthood---one moment innocent and goofy, the next engaged and insightful! They are navigating this time of transition with grace.



Not only are they in a unique phase in their own lives, this Confirmation class also occurred during a unique time in our world. We’ve faced the Parkland shooting, the mobilization of our youth culture, a polarized political climate, serious tensions with North Korea and Syria, and many other confusing and challenging social issues.

### 50 Most Important Scriptures to Memorize

- Colossians 2:10 | 2 Corinthians 9:8 | 2 Peter 1:3
- Ephesians 3:20 | 2 Corinthians 3:4-5
- Hebrews 2:1-3a | 2 Corinthians 2:14
- Philippians 2:13 | Isaiah 41:10
- Deuteronomy 30:11-14 | Numbers 13:30
- Joshua 1:3 | Zechariah 4:10 | 2 Chronicles 16:9a
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 | Proverbs 24:16
- Romans 8:6 | 2 Corinthians 12:9 | Proverbs 3:5-6
- Philippians 4:8 | Colossians 3:1-3 | Ezekiel 36:26
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 | 2 Timothy 1:7 | Ephesians 6:10
- 1 John 4:18 | Romans 5:8 | Ephesians 3:17-19
- Isaiah 26:3 | Joshua 17:17-18 | Joshua 17:17-18
- Philippians 4:13 | Deuteronomy 2:24
- Ephesians 1:18-19 | Titus 2:11-12 | Romans 8:1
- Lamentations 3:22-23 | Psalm 90:14
- 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 | 2 Corinthians 6:2
- Ephesians 1:3 | Ephesians 2:12-13
- Colossians 1:21-22 | Psalm 1:1-3 | Psalm 19:7-8
- Psalm 19:9-11 | 2 Corinthians 4:7
- Jeremiah 29:11 | Galatians 2:20 | Romans 12:1-2

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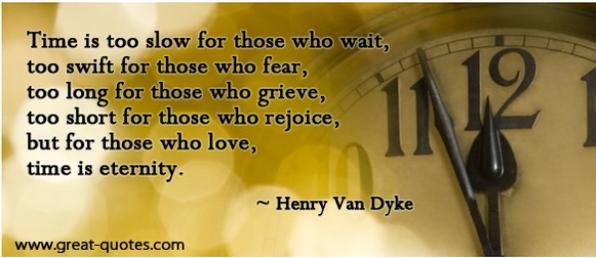
This context informs their thinking and learning. One of their confirmation assignments was to pick 5 favorite scriptures from our Big 50 list. I found it really striking—one after another chose the same scripture--the Alpha and Omega text we read this morning.



It’s no coincidence. Given the realities these kids face, and everything going on in the world right now, I think they feel particularly drawn to God’s bigness, to the alpha to omega—A to Z, to a God who is beyond all we can imagine, who is transcendent, eternal and who holds our beginnings and endings in His hands. No wonder they seek a God who is vast and powerful, yet who creates and cares for them. We all do.



Confirmation, like all of our God moments, is just one step along the faith journey. Like a snapshot, their Expressions of Faith capture what they think about God at this juncture in their lives. So as we listen to and watch them, I invite you to think about what you might say about your relationship with God at this moment in time.



They say “Time is too slow for those who wait, too swift for those who fear, too long for those who grieve, too short for those who rejoice, but for those who love, time is eternity.” So kids, as you confirm your faith, remember that God loves you and holds all of your days in his hands. He stands beyond time, yet is alive in this very minute.

He makes new beginnings out of our endings. So may your Confirmation be a wonderful new beginning. And now, if I don't get on with it, we really will run over, so let's watch together and see how God makes everything beautiful in its time.

