



ROCK CEREMONY

At the end of each school year Grace Academy holds its annual "Rock Ceremony." Those of you who have been at Grace in previous years know how meaningful this is in the life of the school and in the life of every participating family. For those of you who are new to Grace this year, here is a brief explanation:

We are told in Joshua, chapters 3 & 4, that as the Israelites crossed the Jordan going into the Promised Land, the Lord caused the waters to be cut off so His children crossed on dry land. He ordered that one stone for each tribe be taken from the dry riverbed, carried in to the Promised Land and built into an altar, so that when the Israelite children saw it, they would be moved to ask about the stones, giving the Israelites the opportunity to reflect on and speak about what the Lord had done for them.

In a similar way, we are building an "altar" to the LORD. Each year we ask our parents to select a stone and inscribe on it one character trait that they have seen the Lord grow in their child (ren) over the course of that year. Parents have an opportunity to speak a blessing over each child when they publicly present the rock and explain how the character trait was chosen. By the end of the child's time at Grace, he/she will have a visible reminder of God's work in his life. Just as the Israelites' stones were to serve as a memorial of the mighty works the LORD did in Israel, at Grace Academy, the rocks we use at our Rock ceremony are to serve as a lasting memorial of what the Lord has done in the lives of our children.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

First, the Grace Community will meet corporately for a brief word from the Head of School and prayer. After that, families will break into smaller groups across campus and gather in designated areas. Parents will have with them the rock(s) they've selected for their child(ren) with the character trait already inscribed. Families will take turns presenting the rocks to their children with a brief (one minute) description of why that trait was chosen for the specific child, including a scripture reference if desired. After the small group Rock Ceremony presentations families may gather for photos, fellowship, and celebrating outdoors at the picnic tables.

FAQ'S

1. Will Grace provide a rock at the ceremony, or do we bring one?

You need to pick a rock to present to your child ahead of time and bring it with the inscribed character trait the evening of Rock Ceremony.

2. How big should the rock be?

Please remember that you will be handing the rock over to your student. The size of an adult hand is a good general size. You can go smaller or larger- it is whatever your preference is. Please remember that these are rocks that will be around for many years, so keep storage in mind when picking a rock!

4. Do I decorate the rock?

That is your decision. Below is an example of some Rock Ceremony rocks.



4. What type of character traits are typical?

We're glad you asked. We've included a list of sample character traits below as well as corresponding scripture references. Please feel free however to use a trait not listed below. We encourage you to spend some time thinking about how the Lord has worked in your individual child over the school year.

SAMPLE CHARACTER TRAITS

ALERTNESS vs. Unawareness Being aware of that which is taking place around me so that I can have the right responses to them. Mark 14:38	ATTENTIVENESS vs. Unconcern Showing the worth of a person by giving undivided attention to his words and emotions. Hebrews 2:1	AVAILABILITY vs. Self-centeredness Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to wishes of those I am serving. Philippians 2:20-21	BOLDNESS vs. Fearfulness Confidence that what I have to say or do is true and right and just in the sight of God. Acts 4:29	CAUTIOUSNESS vs. Rashness Knowing how important right timing is in accomplishing right actions. Proverbs 19:2	COMPASSION vs. Indifference Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others. I John 3:17	CONTENTMENT vs. Covetousness Realizing that God has provided everything that I need for my present happiness. I Timothy 6:8
CREATIVITY vs. Under-achievement Approaching a need, a task, an idea from a new perspective. Romans 12:2	DECISIVENESS vs. Double-mindedness The ability to finalize difficult decisions based on the will and ways of God. James 1:5	DEFERENCE vs. Rudeness Limiting my freedom in order not to offend the tastes of those God has called me to serve. Romans 14:21	DEPENDABILITY vs. Inconsistency Fulfilling what I consented to do even if it means unexpected sacrifice. Psalm 15:4	DETERMINATION vs. Faint-heartedness Purposing to accomplish God's goals in God's timing regardless of the opposition. II Timothy 4:7-8	DILIGENCE vs. Slothfulness Visualizing each task as a special assignment from the Lord and using all my energies to accomplish it. Colossians 3:23	DISCERNMENT vs. Judgment The God-given ability to understand why things happen. I Samuel 16:7
DISCRETION vs. Simple-mindedness The ability to avoid words, actions, and attitudes which could result in undesirable consequences. Proverbs 22:3	ENDURANCE vs. Giving up The inward strength to withstand stress to accomplish God's best. Galatians 6:9	ENTHUSIASM vs. Apathy Expressing with my spirit the joy of my soul. I Thessalonians 5:16,19	FAITH vs. Presumption Visualizing what God intends to do in a given situation and acting in harmony with it. Hebrews 11:1	FLEXIBILITY vs. Resistance Not setting my affections on ideas or plans which could be changed by God or others. Colossians 3:2	FORGIVENESS vs. Rejection Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and allowing God to love them through me. Ephesians 4:32	GENEROSITY vs. Stinginess Realizing all I have belongs to God and using it for His purposes. II Corinthians 9:6
GENTLENESS vs. Harshness Showing personal care and concern in meeting the needs of others. I Thessalonians 2:7	GRATEFULNESS vs. Un-thankfulness Making known to God and others in what ways they have benefited my life. I Corinthians 4:7	HOSPITALITY vs. Loneliness Cheerfully sharing food, shelter and spiritual refreshment with those God brings into my life. Hebrews 13:2	HUMILITY vs. Pride Recognizing that God and others are actually responsible for the achievement in my life. James 4:6	INITIATIVE vs. Unresponsiveness Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked to do it. Romans 12:21	JOYFULNESS vs. Self-pity The spontaneous enthusiasm of my spirit when my soul is in fellowship with the Lord. Psalm 16:11	JUSTICE vs. Fairness Personal responsibility to God's unchanging laws. Micah 6:8
LOVE vs. Selfishness Giving to others' basic needs without having as my motive personal reward. I Corinthians 13:3	LOYALTY vs. Unfaithfulness Using difficult times to demonstrate my commitment to God and to those He has called me to serve. John 15:13	MEEKNESS vs. Anger Yielding my personal rights and expectations to God. Psalm 62:5	OBEDIENCE vs. Willfulness Freedom to be creative under the protection of divinely appointed authority. II Corinthians 10:5	ORDERLINESS vs. Disorganization Preparing myself and my surroundings so that I will achieve the greatest efficiency. I Corinthians 14:40	PATIENCE vs. Restlessness Accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it. Romans 5:3-4	PERSUASIVENESS vs. Contentiousness Guiding vital truth around another's mental roadblocks. II Timothy 2:24
PUNCTUALITY vs. Tardiness Showing high esteem for other people and their time. Ecclesiastes 3:1	RESOURCEFULNESS vs. Wastefulness Wise use of that which others would normally overlook or discard. Luke 16:10	RESPONSIBILITY vs. Unreliability Knowing and doing what both God and others are expecting from me. Romans 14:12	REVERENCE vs. Disrespect Awareness of how God is working through the people and events in my life to produce the character of Christ in me. Proverbs 23:17-18	SECURITY vs. Anxiety Structuring my life around that which is eternal and cannot be destroyed or taken away. John 6:27	SELF-CONTROL vs. Self-Indulgence Instant obedience to the initial promptings of God's spirit. Galatians 5: 24-25	SENSITIVITY vs. Callousness Exercising my senses so that I can perceive the true spirit and emotions of those around me. Romans 12:15
SINCERITY vs. Hypocrisy Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives. I Peter 1:22	THOROUGHNESS vs. Incompleteness Knowing what factors will diminish the effectiveness of my work or words if neglected. Proverbs 18:15	THRIFTINESS vs. Extravagance Not letting myself or others spend that which is not necessary. Luke 16:11	TOLERANCE vs. Prejudice Acceptance of others as unique expression of specific character qualities in varying degrees of maturity. Philippians 2:2	TRUTHFULNESS vs. Deception Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts. Ephesians 4:25	VIRTUE vs. Impurity The moral excellence and purity of spirit that radiate from my life as I obey God's word. II Peter 1:5	WISDOM vs. Natural Inclinations Seeing and responding to life situations from God's frame of reference. Proverbs 9:10