

Farewell Assembly Speech by Shaun Lai 5N1

Good morning Mrs Charles, Mr Goh, Mrs Ang, Reverend Teh, teachers and fellow saints,

Let me start by sharing a story about a successful basketball coach, Pat Riley. Coach Riley led the LA Lakers to consecutive NBA championship victories in the 1980s. Before going on this incredible winning spree, the LA Lakers were just dominating in **one** of the NBA seasons. What made the difference?

In that championship winning season, behind the scenes, one player – out of sheer joy, and I daresay arrogance to have won the trophy – told Coach Riley: “Coach, we’re already the best. I don’t think we can improve anymore.”

However, Coach Riley challenged all the players to put in 1% more effort during training. It sounded very easy to achieve. For example, if one player were to take 500 shots during training, he would take 505 shots instead.

As it turned out, some players gave more than the extra 1%. Some players took 550 shots, a whopping 10% more. In fact, statistically speaking, at the end of that second championship winning season, the whole LA Lakers had improved by more than 60%. They completely blew away the competition.

Today, we sit here one last time before we go our separate ways and face the battle of our lives: the O levels. All our sweat and hard work put into our studies in the last four to five years has come to this final, crucial stage. As Sir Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister during World War II, said: “If you are going through hell, keep going.” So let us all plume our wings for higher flight: up and on!

Looking back, the year 2008 has been an interesting roller-coaster ride for my friends and I. Being older, we naturally attracted the attention of our Discipline Master because our facial hair was too long or totally unacceptable. Then there’s the constant stress over the impending O Levels. But we had our fair share of fun too: spending time with our friends, having fun – those are fond memories we’ll carry into the future. For some of us in Sec 5, in the early part of the year, we received results for subjects we took at the O level in 2007 under the Through-Train programme. We are thankful to the school for allowing us to have the sweet smell of success. It has motivated us to work harder to achieve greater success.

Lastly, It gives me great pleasure to see there are many teachers here with us today. Some have seen us grown since we first set foot into this school, while some just joined us this year. Regardless, I think it’s only appropriate that we show our appreciation to the teachers for what they have done to make us who we are: men who can stand in favour with both God and men. Reward your teachers with the best gift they could ever receive: it is not the distinctions that matter; it is the effort, the amount of hard work you dedicate into your studies – putting in your best effort – that would be the best gift.

Thank you and may God bless you all.