

## MAKING THE RIGHT START

COL. 3:2

"START RIGHT...KEEP STEP WITH THE START  
AVOID A LAME FINISH BY LIVING BETWEEN"

The way you begin your day will determine largely what the day will mean to you and others about you. The best way to start the day is with prayer. There was a sign at the mouth of a country road which read, "BE CAREFUL WHAT BUT YOU GET IN FOR YOU WILL BE IN IT FOR THE NEXT TWENTY FIVE MILES."

The success of a religious service depends largely on its beginning: The first impression you make on a new acquaintance may shape his estimate of your whole life. Therefore, the logical conclusion we arrive at is that the way we begin a New Year may type the year for us.

Before we gather here for another Sunday service New Year Day will have passed. You will have made that list of New Year Resolutions. You will have begun the year right or wrong. Which will it be? ~~Wednesday~~ <sup>72</sup> night many of you will watch the old year out and the new one in. Let's make it our prayer that peace may come to the world and our boys return home from the front during the year. Pray that the light of christianity may come on all over the world.

All of us would do well to make the text of today our motto for the year, "SET YOUR AFFECTIONS ON THINGS ABOVE NOT ON THINGS OF THE EARTH." ✓

At ~~midnight~~ <sup>to night</sup> ~~Wednesday~~ the old year will be behind us, its record made...A record that will either shame us or honor us. We are in the closing hours of the old year and there is not much we can do now to change what we have done. But ~~Thursday~~ <sup>Friday</sup> morning we will be given a clean new page on which to begin our record of 1954. At that moment we will be ready to make the start, keep step with the start, and enter the opportunity of avoiding a lame finish by living between.

1. Let us make a straight start. Matters not how well we did 1:

last year let us start out this year to beat our best of 1953. You will hear criticisms of New Year Resolutions but do not let critics get you down. Just think of that Cloud of witnesses watching us from the other shore and the Christ that offers to help us carry out worthy resolutions.

It is grand to have an hour when the best stirs your heart. To come to the summit of a year's rough road. A time when you say, "I WILL BE A MAN I WILL CHOKER OFF SHABBY HABITS, LUSTS, AND CLEANSE THE HEART OF FILTH."

I like to see a person who climbs peaks, enjoys ecstasies, has his mount of transfiguration experience, and with an upward look. So enter the New Year with some high resolution. What if you do come to a lame finish? No stagger in the right direction is ever lost.. no good deed ever wasted. No high motive is ever penalized and nothing beautiful ever perishes.

The fragrance of every flower, the glint of every sunbeam, the sanctity of every sob of pity, the challenge of every song, the courage of every battle, and the breath of every prayer ARE living somewhere BECAUSE good never dies.

2. The lame finish. The old saying, "A bad start and a good ending has no logic in it. It is more sensible to say that a good beginning contributes to a good ending. A car gathers momentum until it takes less to keep it going than to start it in proportion to time.

We have help along the way. Christ is with us and gives us strength. Then why should we not gain as we go and finish well instead of poorly. We can gradually climb a little higher every day growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Christ. So go on and make some sensible resolutions. You need not resolve that you are going to the moon this year. Some resolve for things they want but things they are not willing to pay the price for.

3. MOTIVE. Some one has grandly said, that motive is the big thing in your life. It is not what you do but why you do it that counts. It is not how long you live but how you live that adds up. The girl receiving \$30 per week and religiously <sup>gives</sup> a part of it to Christianize the world is doing more living than rich man who spends

thousands on himself for flesh pleasures.

It is not how high you climb but how hard you struggle to get there that usually measures the worthwhileness of the climb. It is not who moves the fastest for a while toward a goal but the one that over comes all obstacles and arrives that counts.

It is not what worldly success you have obtained  
It is not how much money you have earned  
it is not how many honors you have captured that finally counts but rather did you play the game clean.

4. The secret of a straight start..
  - a. Repent for the past and begin again.

He came to my desk with quivering lip  
The lesson was done.  
Have you a new leaf for me dear teacher?  
I have spoiled this one.  
I took his leaf all soiled and spotted  
And gave him a new one all unspotted  
Then into his tired heart I smiled:  
"Do better now my child."

I went to the throne with trembling heart  
The year was done  
Have you a new year for me dear master  
I have spoiled this one  
He took my year all soiled and blotted  
And gave me a new one all unspotted  
Then into my tired heart he smiled:  
"Do better now my child."

last but not least the living between will be of such nature as to bring us to a good ending if we will set our affections on things above...Walk our road by the light in the sky.

