



Volume 6, No. 1, January, 2018



I Am Resolved

*I am resolved no longer to linger,
Charmed by the world's delight;
Things that are higher,
Things that are nobler,
These have allured my sight.*

*I am resolved to go to the Savior,
Leaving my sin and strife;
He is the true One,
He is the just One,
He hat the words of life.*

*I am resolved to follow the Savior,
Faithful and true each day,
Heed what He sayeth,
Do what He willeth,
He is the living way.*

*I am resolved to enter the kingdom,
Leaving the paths of sin;
Friends may oppose me,
Foes may beset me,
Still will I enter in.*

Chorus:

*I will hasten to Him,
Hasten so glad and free,
Jesu, greatest highest,
I will come to The.!*

Words: Palmer Hartsough (w 1896)
Music: James H. Fillmore (w 1896)



1 Corinthians 2:2
For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.



NOW WHAT?

It's that time of year again. The hurrying to get all the Christmas shopping done, with just the right gifts for each person on our list, is over. The holiday cooking and eating is over. The final notes of the last caroling have faded away. All the Christmas cards and letters have been sent that will be sent. Trees, ornaments and decorations have been packed and stored away until next season. The stress, fatigue and pressure are finally over and done. Now what?

Most of us find ourselves looking at this brand new year with anticipation. There will be new challenges ahead. New friends may come into our lives. Long postponed thoughts of where to travel on vacation this year can now at least be considered. What new surprises will this year hold? What kind of changes will we make in ourselves?



For Christians, this is the time of year to set new spiritual goals. Will we commit to reading our Bibles every single day? Will we make an effort to memorize scriptures? Will we be diligent in prayer? How many people will we invite to visit our worship services? How many Bible studies will we set and conduct? How many children will we pray for this year? How many college students will we encourage? How many shut-ins will we visit and encourage? Who will we hug when they are feeling discouraged? Will we console the grieving? Will we rejoice with the newlyweds? Will we rejoice with new

parents? What will we do with this new year that is before us?

Last year is over and done, and we cannot change our words spoken and deeds done last year. Now is the time to make spiritual commitments and changes so that when January comes next year, we can look back and know that we have given it our best and that we have spiritual growth to show for it.

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, MO



IN THE BEGINNING

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. Gen 1:1-5

With this act of speaking, God started the creation our world and set physical time into motion. God created



and blessed man and gave him a mission. Genesis 1:28 states, *God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

In our missions of life, we all experience many beginnings and many ends. Have you ever thought back saying, "Wow, that was the moment when my life changed?" Some of those experiences we would classify as good (such as the first time you saw the man of your dreams—the man God gave you to share your life experiences. I can still remember the very first time I saw Gary. It was to be three more years before I knew what he would bring to my life, but it was my "in-the-beginning moment" with him), and others we would classify as bad or trying or, in retrospect, character building.

Abram (later to be called Abraham) experienced an "in-the-beginning (life-changing) moment" when God said in Genesis 12: *The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the*

land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

It was not an easy road Abram took; but in faith, he followed God. He had such a fear of being killed that he asked his wife to say she was his sister. God was with Abram; and in spite of Abram's weakness of fear, God blessed Abram and prevented Pharaoh from taking Sarai as his wife. From the long awaited birth of Isaac to the request for Abraham to kill his promised son, God kept His promise and plan in motion that ***all peoples on earth would be blessed through Abraham.***

Joseph experienced an "in-the-beginning moment" when, due to their extreme jealousy, his brothers sold him into slavery. Joseph had many beginnings and endings of sorrow, contentment, and even joy through his journey of faith. In whatever valley or hilltop experience, Joseph always knew God was with him. When he had the opportunity to do great harm to those who had done him wrong, he realized that he was a part of God's promise and plan that ***all peoples on earth would be blessed through Abraham.***

Moses experienced an "in-the-beginning moment," as told in Exodus 3, with the burning bush. Try as he might to convince God that he was not the right man, God knew that He had prepared Moses for the task at hand. He had been raised in Pharaoh's house. Hebrews 11 shares that, *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.* Moses, the most humble man on the earth, had a moment of anger that altered his life. The man, who was chosen to lead God's people out of Egypt, was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. Moses continued to serve God and the promised plan that that ***all peoples on earth would be blessed through Abraham.***

The thing about those "in-the-beginning (life-changing) experiences" (whether happy moments or molding moments) for a child of God/a disciple of Christ is that our **Lord is always there with us—walking beside us, holding our hands, and—at times—carrying us through it.** (Read Romans 8:28 and 8:31b)

Through the years, many men and women have faithfully walked with God. They have brought the good news message to us, and we, in turn, are His instruments for work today, as another mission has been assigned. Matthew 28:18-20.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the



name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

My hands are to be His hands; my voice is to be His voice; and my heart is to be His heart as I do my part to

ensure God's promise and plan that ***all peoples on earth would be blessed through the seed of Abraham, our Lord, Jesus Christ***, is shared to all peoples on earth providing them with an opportunity for an "in-the-beginning (life-changing) moment" of becoming a child of God.

I close with this quote I heard from a sermon. It is from a poem by C.T. Studd:

Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

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NEW BEGINNINGS

Perhaps over the holidays you had the opportunity to see Charles Dickens Classic "A Christmas Carol."

The main character, Scrooge, is disgusted with the poor, treats his employees inadequately, and has a distaste for the merriment of Christmas. Alone on Christmas Eve, he learns he will soon be visited by three spirits. Spirits of the past, present and future.

The ghost of Christmas future shows Scrooge the final consequence of his actions. His solitary life and disdain for those in need will ultimately lead others to find comfort and even happiness when he dies. No one will mourn his passing. No one will feel a loss. There will be no tears of sadness. His final legacy will be that of a cheap tombstone in an unkempt graveyard.

Scrooge weeps over his own grave, and begs for a chance to change. Given that chance, Scrooge does change. He becomes a man full of love, generosity and kindness.

This story delights us each year during the Christmas season as we see the transformation in Scrooge's life. Once Scrooge saw the reality of what was to come, he lived differently.

As this new year begins, we too often think of "new beginnings" as what's ahead and how we might live differently this year than we did last year. Perhaps, like Scrooge, we need transformation to take place in our own lives.

Paul, in his letter to the Romans, talks about a change we all need. *"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (Romans 12:2)

As the new year begins, we need to evaluate ourselves. Like Scrooge, if we continue in the direction we are going, what will ultimately be our legacy? Are we fitting into our culture? Are we conforming to the pattern of this world?

While the world wants to control our minds, God wants to **transform** our minds. The change is from within. If God controls our thinking, we will be transformed into the women he wants us to be.

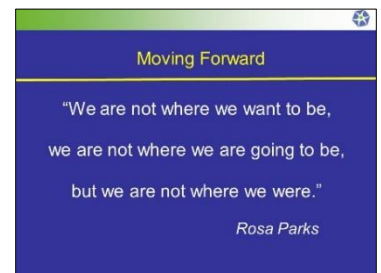
Our minds are changed by what we put into them. We are all bombarded daily with the carnal, the unholy, the sensual, the wicked, and the corrupt. From our morning newspapers to the late evening news, we read, hear, and see our world filled with sex, greed, materialism, power and evil.

How can God transform our minds when we are regularly filled with the sinfulness of the world, even when we are not intentionally seeking it? God transforms us by His Word. As we spend time reading, meditating and memorizing God's Word, our minds will be renewed and refreshed. Putting God's words and thoughts into our minds is the renewal process that transforms the inner person.

As 2018 begins, let's be intentional about who or what is controlling our minds.

Is it the world or the Word? Satan is well and alive and knows how to distract us from God's words. This year let's commit to spending some time

each day immersed in the Word. Paul reminds us what to do and the transformation that will occur.



“Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.” (Romans 12:2, The Message)

Sally Shank, Vienna, WV



New Beginnings

As a grandmother, the idea of new beginnings takes on a different perspective. As each of my married daughters began their families, I eagerly anticipated those new births. Grandchildren! Is there any better word in the English language?

I get to watch new little ones come into the world, and watch them grow and learn, without the parental burdens of responsibility. I get to enjoy them, love on them, and send them back home with Mom and Dad. It is a joyous part of getting older.

As grandparents, we develop a different kind of relationship with our children, as they now come to us for advice as they go through the stages we did as parents. This time around, though, we realize how little we know on the subject and just offer support and encouragement.

As we begin a new year and people are thinking about changes in their lives and making new beginnings, let’s take the attitude of grandparents and offer our love and encouragement to them. We don’t have all the answers,



but God does! He is the perfect heavenly Father; and, through the gift of His Son and the written word He

provided to us, He has shown us how to make the most of our lives. His children will have struggles and times of discouragement. That’s when we love on them and direct them back to their Father.

Lorna Smith, Lubbock, TX



FROM WHO WE WERE TO WHO WE ARE

Maybe we just hear too many stories, and maybe it's difficult to distinguish a real story from a made-up story. Our lives are real stories, not made for TV stories, not scripted movie stories, not fictional book stories. They're real "this actually happened" stories. Sometimes we ignore or forget our stories. We shouldn't. Our life stories are our path to deeper understanding. They help clarify our journey from who we were to who we are. That which shapes us should not be taken lightly – the accidents of childhood that left scars, the thrilling victories, excruciating defeats, the tough teachers, the crazy classmates, disappointments, family adventures, pets and postcards, love and broken hearts, graduations, friendships that came and went, and so many other stories. I believe our stories are ways for God to give us insight and perspective. Our stories are the building blocks of our personalities and our view of God. Your stories are important. Consider them carefully, remember them, learn from them.

Chuck Hicks
Searcy, Arkansas



Sunrise
The Newsletter For Women By Christian Women

Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by members of the Rolla Church of Christ. All previous issues can be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserveandlove.org>. Click on the Resources tab, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

