

of all visions. As we do this, we'll find the light of success, contentment, and blessings shining on life's way and all shadows of doubt, distrust and despair are gone.

NEW YEAR Remember that this new year holds tremendous blessings for you. It is the first day of the rest of your life. It is the mid-point of eternity - behind you stretch all the long years of the past and before you the potential years of the future.

What a day it is. Reach out fearlessly and begin to accept and to release your blessings. Take inventory of yourself and of your position in life - your habits of thought, speech and action. If there is anything that you would like to change, get busy with it by checking into your mental habits to see which side of the ledger they're posted - negative or positive, desirable or undesirable. By the renewal of your mind in the "Christ-spirit" you're on your way to a higher level.

Remember, too, that it is God's year. It is a good year - fresh, unused with lots of love flowing through it, redeeming it from failure and futility. Press on confidently in the "Christ-spirit" with courage, and faith and hope and love, making the most of every hour in what is going to be the best year of your life!

PRAYER O Lord, our God, who art the beginning and the ending, in thy great love thou hast brought us to the start of another year. Forgive what we have been. Correct what we now are. By thy grace direct and empower us in the days which shall be. In the spirit of Christ, we pray.

Certainly, many of the troubles that beset us and our world are caused by our stubbornness, our willfulness and our inability to consider change. If we want to have dominion in 1977, then we must rise in our spiritual strength by looking for the trouble within ourselves - not condemning ourselves, but trying to find out where we are falling short, praying for guidance to improve ourselves. This is we can do in this hour as we kneel at the altar and receive the elements of Communion, those elements symbolic of the new life "in Christ".

LOOK BACK So often at the milestones of life, we look back over the year we have come. It's human to look back over the year as we turn the page into a new year. Sometimes we say to ourselves,

"Oh....if only I could go back, and do it
all over again....it would be different".

But I say, "Regret not the past. Just determine to profit in the future from the experiences of the past".

Take the attitude that the way ahead in 1977 offers you more than the way that has just closed behind you. Don't cry over the lost opportunities of yesterday that you end up passing by the opportunities of today. And we might just end up missing those opportunities by getting stuck in the rut of the past.

The new path. The new day. The new year - these are not meant for lamentation and regret. We are designed to go forward - on in faith and with courage, making the most of every hour, the best of every day, remembering as someone has put it, "that we pass this way but once".

STARTING OUT All right then...let's start out this new year as if there were no such thing as failure.

We can forget hate, fear, doubt, selfishness, intolerance, bitterness. Forget them as completely as the Prophet says,

"God forgets our sins; though scarlet they may
be; we shall be seen as white as snow!"

So, we turn away from the closed gate of yesterday and yesterday-year, and as we do let us take no regrets with us - but only hope, faith and encouragement.

And somewhere in this new year, I hope that we may all come upon the great thing that our life was meant for.

As we enter this new year, let's make some preparation for success in it. Throw out the rubbish and cleanse and purify ourselves. Let us arrange our graces and abilities to the best of our advantage. This year, let's use those God-given talents that are ours; let's determine to accomplish more than we have every accomplished in the past.

This year, let's free ourselves from old habits and hang-ups and our hampering thoughts of the negative. Add some positive thoughts to the zest of living. Let Christ's spirit provide you with the right perspective, the best of

"BEGINNING AGAIN"

INTRODUCTION

The year is young, and I take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a happy new year.

The beginning of a new year seems to be the right time to start anew, the time to have fresh courage and renewed hope, the time to continue on in the higher aspirations of life. This weekend many persons are thinking of new beginnings. It's good to do this. Resolutions. New starts.

I believe that each one of us must find the joy of the new year within himself. Certainly, a happy new year can never come from just a date on the calendar. Since New Year's Day is hopefully still in your thinking here this hour, one should actually celebrate the beginning of a new year in trying to renew the mind to a new concept, a new awareness, a new level of vision.

DEVELOPMENT

In one of his Epistles to the Corinthians, Paul taught us a way to renew our minds when he said,

"Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. The old things pass away; behold, they are become new".

"If any man is 'in Christ'". Let's think about this verse. "In Christ.... a new creature". It's pointing us in the direction of the "Christ spirit", to the Christ consciousness - an expanded awareness of one's whole being. And so, if anyone is in this expanded awareness, in this Christ spirit, he is something of a new creature and the old things are passed away.

I think it's saying something like this to us. When we permit our thoughts to run along in the same old muddy and murky channels of material and selfish thinking day after day, year after year - they grow stale and tired. Our thoughts need renewing. And this is the great need that we all have at the beginning of a new year.

MORE THAN

Therefore, I would remind you that we are more than just body and mind; we are also spirit! These three - body, mind, and spirit - are all necessary parts of the complete person, the total being. A person is not complete unless he is conscious and concerned about this wholeness - of the spirit dwelling in him, as well as of his mind and body. Spirit is the rightful leader of his mind and body. Spirit is the original and permanent part of every person. Spirit is that part of you that is created in the image and the likeness of God.

Paul is saying to let that spirit be touched by the spirit of Christ. And it is fitting that those whose aspirations for a larger, expanded life include in their new year's celebration a quiet period devoted to the renewing of mind and body by realizing the indwelling spirit within them.

Get started on the road today with the Master of Life; get started to being "in Christ". Help the God activity within you to manifest and find releasement in your body and mind.

Let the Christ-spirit have a chance to make you a new creature.

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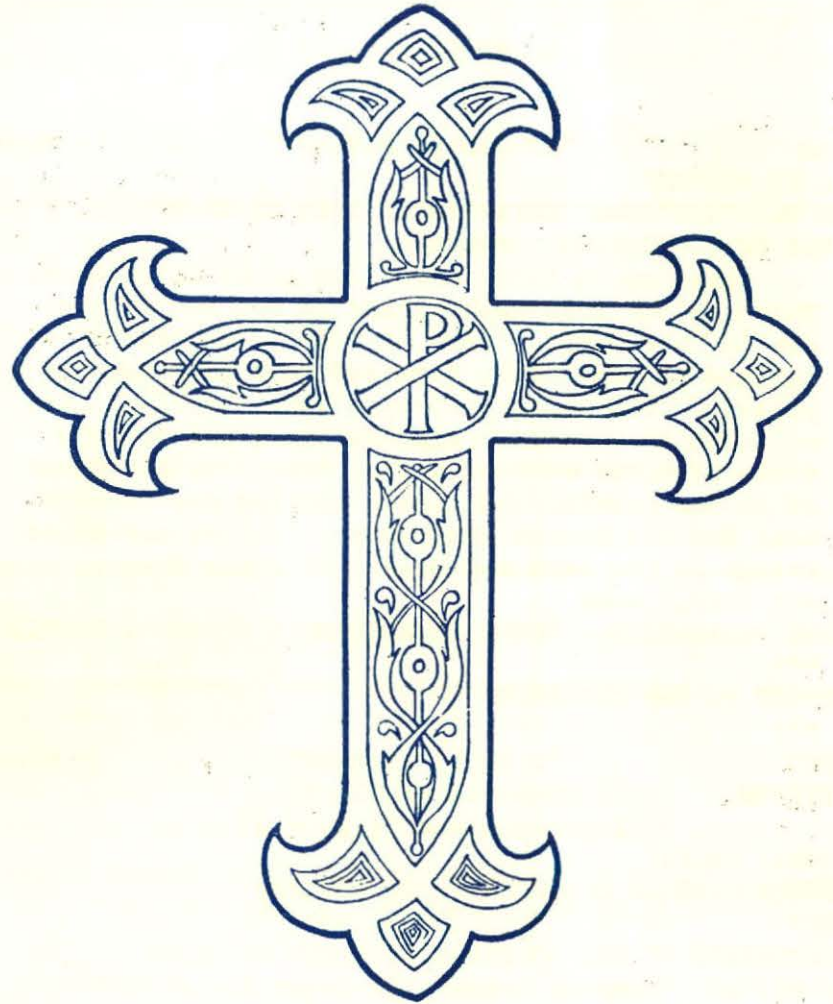
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The scripture today is taken from the book of
GENESIS Chap. 8 vs. 6-12 + Paul's 1st letter to
the Corinthians, Chap 3, vs 18-23 [PAUSE 5]

(PAUSE)

Thus endeth the readings taken from the
Holy Scripture, May God add his blessing
to the reading of the word and to our
understanding of it.