

THE COLLEGIATE LETTER
P. O. Box 7
Hillsboro, KS 67063

January 2005

Dear Collegian,

A brand new year has broken upon us, filled with bright possibilities for each and every person. Especially is that true for intelligent and perceptive students like yourself. With the holiday break now firmly in the past, a new year stretches out before you filled with wonder. Watch for events that, if we could see them all at once, would surely boggle the imagination!

It is a time of new beginnings, both in the classroom and in our personal lives. Undoubtedly, many of your friends have made New Year's resolutions - perhaps you even find yourself in that number. Be encouraged. This is not entirely a futile practice. Although the great majority of New Year's resolutions fall by the wayside, there are those which do take root and become an essential part of how we will define ourselves in the days to come.

The setting of goals is a good practice. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Church at Philippi: *"this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:13-14).

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." That is an attitude which is highly to be commended. We cannot rest upon the laurels of our past accomplishments, nor should we be shackled by the chains of our past failures. Living in the past is at best a waste of time. At its worst, it can be quite debilitating, hampering and even destroying our hopes for the future. A well-known entertainer once asked in song, "What have you done for me LATELY?" In a spiritual way, that may be a challenge well worth considering.

"I press toward the mark for the prize." That wouldn't make a bad sign, by the way, to place over your study area as you move forward in your efforts to excel this year. I encourage you in the strongest terms possible to set down on paper the lofty goals to which you aspire. Then develop a logical plan by which they may be attained.

A wise man once said that the impossible can only realistically be attained by achieving

smaller increments of the possible. It is impossible to jump unassisted from the ground to the rooftop of a five story building. But by taking the smaller steps of the stairway, climbing five stories is not that difficult a task at all. Set your goals high, and then *“press toward the mark for the prize.”*

May I also make one very pointed suggestion? Do not be too quick to accept the new and often intriguing ideas which will come your way this year. Much is said at our universities and colleges about providing an environment in which students can discover the truths of life for themselves. Yet, when all is said and done, there is often an atmosphere which is almost antithetical to that. Many students enter college as free thinkers, but somewhere along the line they succumb to the strong-arm, hair-brained theories going today. Remember that something is not automatically true just because it is new to you or is espoused by someone you enjoy or respect. Be sure to investigate every new idea for yourself.

This year should be quite interesting. Have you read the outlandish predictions that have been made by those who claim to have special insight into the events of the future? Most people write them off as ludicrous, to say the least, but there are those who are easily led. They are influenced to their own detriment by what they read and believe in those tawdry “news-pretenders” that are found in the grocery store aisles.

The desire to know the future is almost universal in the minds of men. But why do so many gullible souls turn to such questionable sources when there exists an irrefutable record of future events, namely, the Word of God? If I wanted to know the future, I wouldn't put much credence in the word of Swami Knows-It-All or the Out-Of-Work, Lesser-Celebrity, Psychic-Con-Artist Network. I would want God's Word on it! When these silly people with their vain imaginings and vast financial empires have all turned to dust, the Word of God will still stand as the beacon of eternal truth. As I'm sure you have heard, a reporter is only as good as his sources. Let the one immutable source in your life be the Word of God!

What is it that lights the fires of enthusiasm in your fellow students? Is it one of the sports, such as football, basketball, baseball, soccer or others? Or is it perhaps something more cerebral, such as the debate team, chess club or computer science? One of the most enjoyable things you will discover in your college experience will be the camaraderie you will share with your classmates as you cheer your favorite college team on to victory. Believe me, those are feelings and memories you will cherish for the rest of your life.

However, very few of us have our lives fundamentally improved or even altered by the achievements of our fellow classmates, as salutary as those victories may be. It is, in the final analysis, our own victories that will impact upon our lives. Especially at this time in your life, it is important to remember that we were each intended to be in the race, not simply observers on the sidelines.

I guarantee that you will face many challenges in life, not the least of which will be the

matter of how you deal with the world in the midst of which we live. Especially in the halls of academia, there exists a misconception that Christians are supposed to back off when it comes to political involvements and activism. But consider for a moment how people of other faiths are treated. Do they expect Buddhists, Jews, or Muslims to eschew political activity? Of course not! It is your political right as an American to be as active in politics as you desire to be.

Above all, we do well to remember that human resources or earthly knowledge will be insufficient for the challenge of these days. Rather, we need, as our closest personal possession, the Word of God. Knowing the Bible produces wisdom that cannot finally come from the insufficient and often deliberately subversive thinking of this world.

The popular book *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown is still the subject of many conversations and has been on the best seller list. The movie will come out this summer. This book condemns the Bible as the product of a manmade conspiracy to hide the truth! We would like to make you a special offer; at no cost to you, we will send you a copy of the booklet *Cracking The DaVinci Code by Dr. Ed Hindson*. Find out for yourself why we need to stand up for our faith and be prepared to answer these bold and obvious lies of the Devil.

As we have seen, the year ahead is bound to be complicated and most challenging. It will be filled with opportunity--along with danger and challenge. Therefore, we promise to be praying for you in the year to come. May there come to you many thrilling opportunities and the rich rewards of living up to life's opportunities. If I were to make three suggestions as to living a successful life in these days, they would be as follows:

- 1. Take the time to read the Word of God.** The Bible will be an infallible guide that will lead us aright in the midst of the many challenging experiences the year ahead is bound to bring.
- 2. Pray daily.** Tennyson said, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of" and that is really true. Pray for yourself, pray for others, and pray that a lost world will come to faith in our wonderful Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- 3. Be a witness for Christ.** You already have many friends who have never really heard the Gospel and who don't know about the joy of salvation. You may be the very person whom God is appointing to be a witness to that friend so that they too may come to know the Lord. It's remarkable what God can do through one voice, your voice, lifted for Him.

We'll be praying for you in this year ahead that God will bring to pass some great occasions in your life. Have a great year and when you have the time, drop me a note and let me know how you are doing.

The Collegiate Letter Staff

