"Christ Our Starting Point,"
Sermon at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church

[21 December 1958]
[Montgomery, Ala.]

In this handwritten outline for a sermon he delivered at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, King emphasizes the importance of beginning life with Christ: "When you start with Christ you go the second mile; you give a cup of cold water; you stop on the [Jericho] road and help your brother; and you even love your enemies."  

Rev. 1:2

I Intro:
(A) The necessity of the right starting point in life. The starting point determines the ending point.
(b) Our starting point should be an absolute. We must not begin with relativism.

II Christianity has always insisted that Christ is the proper starting point. Some

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1. The 21 December 1958 Dexter program indicates King preached "Christ, Our Starting Point." He also wrote "Preached at Dexter Dec. 21, 1958" on the file folder containing this sermon.

2. "Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." King wrote this biblical citation in a second pen.
would argue with this by saying God is the starting point. But if we start with God we will start with our ideas about him

A But Christ tells us what God is like. God is Christlike.

B Christ is the moral and spiritual ultimate.

III When we start with Christ several things happen

A We place a new value on ourselves and our possibilities. We are never hopeless about our plight. Christ reminds us that we can be better than we are. We place new value on the dignity and worth.

B When you start with Christ, you go the second mile, you give a cup of cold water, you stop on the Jericho road and help your brother, and you even love your enemies.

C We come to see that there is a reliable dependable God in the universe whose purpose changeth not.

1. We are not thrown out as orphans on the planet. We are not alone in our struggle. We can depend on him.

2. So we can live without fear. If we are always worrying about death, or the future, or what will happen tomorrow, we have the wrong starting point.

D Conclusion So we have a hope. Old securities may fall, but we have a hope. Fried may desert us, but we have a hope. Even western civilization may crumble and decay, but we have a hope.

I can hear you asking now what is it. Is it your economic security, no.

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

When darkness seems to hide his face I rest on his unchanging grace, in every high and stormy gale, My anchor holds within the veil — On Christ

AD CSKC Sermon file, folder 94, “Christ, Our Starting Point”

3. King may be referring to John 10:36–38 “Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.”

4. King wrote this sentence in a second pen.


7. King quotes Edward Mote’s hymn “My Hope Is Built” (1834). He added this entire reference to the hymn in a second pen.