

THE

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## BEGIN THE YEAR WITH GOD.

“The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.” To begin the year with God will have a powerful influence on the whole of its days, and weeks, and months. The setting up of the Tabernacle on the appointed day is an act suggestive of works of dedication to the only living and true God, at the commencement of a New Year. It shows that there is an appropriateness in a calm review of the past, and a fresh devotion of ourselves to Him that claims the redeemed powers of our nature. In the first month of the year business men strive to have their books balanced, and their accounts settled, in order to proceed without embarrassment in their future operations. Is it not also a suitable time for the determination of an answer to the question, “How much owest thou unto thy Lord?” Can we not make a commencement in some good and holy enterprise which we have planned? Many show their affection at this season by presenting tokens of love to their friends. A renewed dedication of the heart and life to Him who above all others deserves the name of friend, would have great significance at the present season, as involving a recognition of His right to have all our days given to Him. Behind the rising curtain of another year how little can be seen. Curiosity cannot pry into the secrets of the future. Whether the arrow of death may speed to lay us low this year, or whether we may still enjoy days and seasons of goodness and mercy, is unknown to us. Well is it, however, to have our house in order. “Occupy till I come,” is the Master’s charge. Embracing then the time given, let the heart be applied to wisdom. To build up ourselves to a higher degree of Christian life, is an object worthy of effort. The past, no doubt, presents much to be regretted. Amendment is needed, perhaps, to some of our plans for our own private devotions, or in our habits in regard to the public services of religion. Evils that have crept into the family, or into our own hearts, must be uprooted. Improvements on many points may be made in the observance of duties, namely, those of family worship, of bible-reading, of parental discipline, of acts of brotherly kindness, and in the support of gospel ordinances. In these, and all matters requiring reformation, is there not a power to abandon that which is wrong, furnished by the thought, that the time past has been more than sufficient to have erred. The past may be dark—let the future be bright. Resolutions formed in the strength of divine grace, and kept by