

The Right Starting Point

Typing is by no means one of my strong points, but having been to college and then grad school I was pretty much forced into a proficiency of sorts. My wife did most of my typing until the end of my sophomore year in college, but since my handwriting leaves much to be desired and reading hieroglyphics isn't one of her strong points, I decided to start doing my own. Although I knew I wasn't the fastest typist in the world, I knew I was capable. So my male ego and I sat down one day to tackle the task before me. I placed my fingers on the "home keys," fixed my eyes on the material and jumped right in. I typed and I typed. I typed the entire section in "record time" and was ready to gloat over the assumed flawlessness of my work. Now for the moment of truth! I looked up. WOW!

I was finished. Boy was I finished! I had typed in some kind of secret code – or something. In "record time" and without any help from my wife, I had made a 100% bona-fide mess that featured an entire page of squiggly red lines and senseless gibberish.

It didn't take a genius to discover my problem. I had typed the entire section before me with my fingers just ONE letter to the left of the "home keys." Just one simple letter!

I realize that one measly little letter doesn't sound like much but believe you me; it was enough to throw the whole process out of whack. The problem, in the simplest terms, was a wrong starting point. The home keys, as I discovered, are non-negotiable to the typing process.

I can't understand it. I typed with such ease. I typed with such sincerity and even with all my might, but the end-result was the same – absolute failure. If a right starting point is that important with something as "trivial" as typing, can you imagine the value of "beginning right" with those things that matter most? Think about the existence of God. Consider the importance of truth, our relationship with God and the numerous ethical issues that face our nation. A right starting point isn't only important but absolutely essential in such matters.

Try to make sense of suffering or try to make "heads or tails" of the tragedies and hardships of life without the certainty of God's existence. Untangle the complexities of losing a loved one and untie the knotted emotions associated with aging parents coupled with wayward children. Balancing life with suffering and hardship is difficult at best, but to do so from the wrong starting point is ultimately destined for failure.

Saint Augustine said it well, "you have created us for thyself, oh God; and we are restless until we rest in thee." Follow your own way with all your might or follow other religious leaders with all the sincerity you can muster; but, in essence, no amount of religious sincerity can replace the right starting point – "the way, the truth and the life" – Jesus Christ.

Here is the essential starting point without which life and eternity is unbearable. Carefully and intelligently place your hand into the hand of the resurrected Christ. Then, transfer your trust from your own religious intentions to his finished work. Now you are ready to write upon life's pages with the purpose for which you were *created*.