Commencement Talk: To Finish is to Begin.

Topic: To Finish is to Begin.

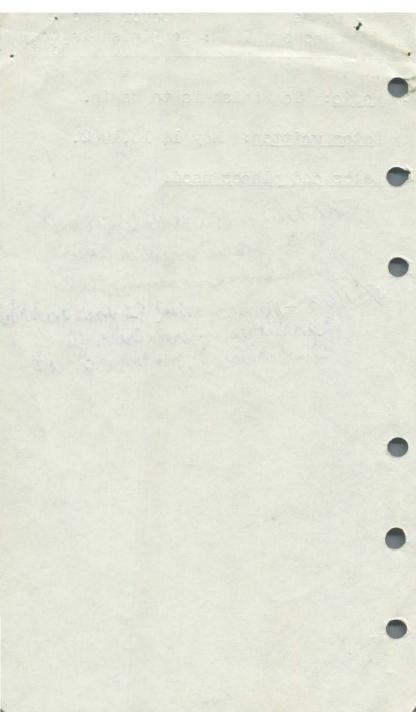
Dates written: May 14-16,1962.

Dates and places used:

5/18/62 - Riverside School 82 graduation, montrose county, Color.

1/24/63 - Memoren School 82 grade graduation

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## Introduction:

1. A long funeral procession was slowly turning a corner. Uncle John, one of the older inhabitants of the little town, asked, "Who they buring today? I ain't heard of anyone being dead."

"Poor old Abner Brown," answered a bystander.

"You don't say," exclaimed Uncle

John. "Is Ab dead?"

"You don't think they're rehearsing with him, do you?"snapped the by-stander.

- 2. We're not rehearsing with you here tonight, either, even though this isn't your funeral. This commencement is the real thing. Some of you are finishing the eight grade. This is you first commencement exercise.
- chosen as your class motto the words
  "To finish is to begin." That is a
  fitting motto to go with an exercise
  of this nature, for the word "commencement" means "the beginning," of
  course. I sort of doubt that you are
  thinking of beginning again at the
  first grade, or that you want to

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## I. To quit, to stop, is to die.

- 1. I can remember once when I was in school sitting by a window and watching the adults outside going back and forth about their business. How I envied them. I thought that here were people who hould spend their time as they wished, who had nobody telling them what to do. How mistaken I was! As I got out on my own I found out that there are mighty few people who are their own bosses, who don't depend on other people or take orders from others, or have to do things for others. When you refuse to work with and for other people, you'll die, literally, because just to eat these days demands cooperation with others.
  - 2. Often there are older people who worked so hard all their lives at becoming successes that they never

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## i. To out, to see, its to the

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- developed hobbies, and never learned to relax. When they retired they didn't know what to do with themselves so they sat around uslessly until the first gave up to the first bad illness that came along and died.
  - 3. This sort of thing happens frequently, not only with aged people but with youthful people too. During the Korean war many an American soldier being held by the enemy in a prison camp just got fed up with it all; so he would lie down, turn himself away from others, and be dead in a few days, even though there was really nothing wrong with hisxing body. To quit is to die.
    - 4. Well, at the end of the 8th grade you don't expect to quit, but to begin.
  - II. To begin something new is the important thing.
  - l. New things are almostma always more attractive than are familiar o ld things, at least to young folks. There is meal thrill and adventure in seeking answers to questions

all other expenses.

2. You never grow too old to find something new to learn and do. My parents since they have become over 70 have travelled more than in all the rest of their lives put together.

Dad has travelled around the world, riding on freighter thips, buses, river boats, railways, airplanes, and even bicycles, and done it on not much more than \$200 a month including transportation, lodging, food, and

3. You are not quite that far along yet, however. If you made such a journey now you wouldn't have enough understanding to enable you to get the most enjoyment and information out of such travel. You still need something which can help you get the most out of life's happenings. That something, of course, is further education. However

III. In education you are never finished.

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- It is the next logical step following junior high. In high school you can learn some skills, I suppose, which will enable you to support yourself and others as far
  as making a living. In high school you can take shop courses, agriculture course, home economics courses, and cettainly be better prepared to begin making a living than you are now at the end of the eight grade.
  - 2. In High School you can also prepare for college. If you do this you'll probably take more general courses, such as English, math, languages, physical sciences and social sciences. These things are the bacground for more advanced studies in college.
- 3. However you take it, if you go on to High School, there you will stil be preparing to begin.
- only more so. You may come out of college 8 years from now as an engineer, a chemist, a teacher, a farmer. You may simply be prepared to begin still another school: medical school, a seminary for the ministry, law

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- school, graduate school for a master's or doctor's degree in a supject of special interest to you.
- 5. When all the required schooling is over and you are in the job or profession of your choice you'll find that education must still go on. New discoveries and inventions and improvements are being made so fast that a keeps
  - lot of a fewlow's time must be spent just studying and keeping up, if he is to practice an trade or profession successfully. The doctor of today, for instance, in most cases uses far different medications and methods from what a doctor did when I was born some 42 years ago. Similarly, the farmer must keep up on the new fertilizers good strains.
- fertilizers, seed strains, machinery, and marketing. Reading the professional and trade magazines isn't the only way to keep up, of course.
- Ever so often I go to a conference or a school for a refresher course of a week, or three weeks, or even several moths or more, to learn new things to halp me be a better minis-
- things to help me be a better minister. People of most of the other professions do likewise.

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Conclusion:

You're so right: "To finish is to begin." You dare not stop where you are, or you're dead, mentally at least. You've got to keep going. You are to be congradulated that you've come this far. But this is a bare start on your way. Keep going. You've a lot ahead of you to do.

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