

A person wearing a white athletic jersey with the number "1001" on the back is running on a track at night. The scene is illuminated with a strong orange-red light, creating a dramatic and intense atmosphere. The runner is captured in mid-stride, splashing water on the track surface. A chain-link fence is visible in the background.

STARTING STRONG

1 John 3:18-24

1 John 3:18-24

STARTING STRONG

18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

1 John 3:18-24

STARTING STRONG

²⁰ in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; ²² and whatever we ask we receive from Him,

1 John 3:18-24

STARTING STRONG

because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

²³ This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ,

1 John 3:18-24

STARTING STRONG

and love one another, just as He commanded us.

²⁴ The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

A person is running on a track at sunset. The scene is bathed in a warm, orange-red light. The runner's legs and feet are visible, wearing athletic shoes. The track has white lane markings. The overall mood is one of determination and action.

1. We Start by Doing

...but in deed and truth.

It's easy, when the heart has been moved, to settle for talking about the need instead of doing

Nothing gets started by talk alone.

Our actions confirm the Truth within.

2. We Start with Confidence

... we have confidence before God; ²² and whatever we ask we receive from Him, "We have confidence before God." Not because we have done something meritorious but because Calvary takes care of our sin.

Thus we can personally appear before God.

2. We Start with Confidence

... we have confidence before God; ²² and whatever we ask we receive from Him, The secret of getting answers to prayer—asking in confidence and doing in obedience.

"What is that in your hand?" God asked Moses.

"What have you in the house?" Elisha asked the widow.

"Take away the stone" Jesus asked at Lazarus' grave.

3. We Start in Obedience

... because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

The second part of previous point.

John is saying, it is little use praying if we are lazy, careless, and lax in our personal discipline. We cannot expect God to answer our prayers unless we "do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

3. We Start in Obedience

... because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

The second part of previous point.

John is saying, it is little use praying if we are lazy, careless, and lax in our personal walk and obedience.

We cannot expect God to answer our prayers unless we "do those things that are pleasing in His sight."

4. We Start/Finish in Him

²⁴ The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him.

He abides within us; He talks to us, shares with us, leads and guides us, disciplines us, convicts and convinces us. All that is involved in living, the Spirit of God does within us.

For us to start strong we must begin to respond to the Holy Spirit.

Let's Start Strong in 2012

²³ This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ.

John points out that if we believe in His name, we will behave with His nature.

The name is the power that enables and love is the proof of our start.

Let us get up and be obedient.