

IN THE BEGINNING

The book of Genesis is often called the book of beginnings and the very word "genesis" means beginning. However, this being somewhat a beginning time, just after new years day, let us consider a "few" beginnings in the Bible.

Of course we start with "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). God existed prior to this, but none of these material things around us, not even man himself existed prior to this beginning.

In fact, the next "beginning" that we might notice is that of Matthew 19:4 which references the same beginning as that of Gen. 1:1. This verse says, "...he which made them at the beginning made them male and female". This beginning shows us the male and female relationship and that marriage is made up of one of each of the two genders.

Another "beginning" verse that also points back to the first is John 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". Along with verses three and fourteen of the same chapter we learn that (1) The "Word" was the second member of the Godhead and is Christ Jesus, (2) As the Father, He too preceded the creation, (3) It was He who made all things and (4) God came in the form of flesh and blood in the person of Jesus.

In Luke's gospel account of the great commission, Jesus states, "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). This is the beginning of the church, the kingdom of God. The fulfillment of this beginning is found in the second chapter of Acts when the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit, preached the gospel to the people and "...they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

One more important passage about "beginnings" is: "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever" (Psalm 119:160). God's word has always, is and always will be true. "Sanctify them through thy truth: they word is truth" (John 17:17).

As you can see, many beginnings are extremely important. Let's make this annual beginning an important one too.

Robert

BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

We have probably all heard and used the above phrase on occasion when everything just happened to work out for us even though we had not specifically worked at putting everything in place for success. Yet, most of the time if one is in the right place at the right time, it is because they have purposely placed themselves in that place and at that time.

We all understand that life on this orb called earth is temporal. We shall not live in this life forever. However, there is existence after physical death. The account of Lazarus and the rich man clearly shows this to be true (Luke 16:19-31). Now there are only two options concerning the "place" one will be after this earthly life; heaven or hell. Both are places that have been prepared for the souls of man. Concerning a heavenly abode, Jesus told His apostles, "...I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). Now, concerning the place of eternal torment, it too has been prepared. When Jesus portrayed the judgment, He said "...unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

The main point that we wish to make is that we are now living in the time in which we can be placing ourselves in the right place at the right time. When the time shall be is not known, for we know not when we shall die (Prov. 27:1; James 4:14), nor when the Lord shall come again (Matt. 24:36). What we do know is that we wish to be in the right place when the right time comes and it is up to us to assure that we are.

It is not really that complicated or difficult to figure out how to be in the right place. Jesus said, that we have to "do the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). Paul said that we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and "that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). So really, all that is involved in being in the right place when that right time comes is to learn the gospel of Christ and then while you are alive on this earth, conduct yourself in harmony with that word. John summed it up pretty good when he wrote, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (I John 2:3). Please make sure you are in the right place. *Robert*