

WHY IS GENESIS 1:1 SO IMPORTANT?

by Danny Tunnell

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Genesis 1:1 is fundamental to our faith. It is imperative that we believe in the power and ability of God. If we accept Genesis 1:1, the rest of the Bible is easy to believe. But if we doubt the creation account, we’ll have trouble with the remainder of the Bible. It happened the way the Bible says it happened.

The correct stance for the Christian is to always stand on the word of God. We don’t have to understand something fully to believe it.

Satan has fought hard to get people to doubt the first verse of the Bible. Evolutionists, perhaps unwittingly, are instruments Satan has used to his advantage. The devil uses people to undermine faith in God and His word.

Many so-called “educated people” call the Genesis 1 account of creation a “creation myth.” Unfortunately that view exists in school classrooms. Satan wants people to reject Genesis 1:1, then the other supernatural events in the Bible can also be doubted: the great flood in Noah’s day (Genesis 7:7-24);

the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14); the widow’s oil multiplying (2 Kings 4:1-7); Daniel’s friends being saved from the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:8-25); Daniel in the lion’s den (Daniel 6:16-22); Jonah surviving in a fish for three days (Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40); the virgin birth of Jesus (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18); Jesus feeding the multitude (Matthew 14:25-26); the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:38-44); the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:6); the ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:9). Just to name a few.

What’s impossible with man is possible with God (Luke 18:27). With God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26). It’s far better to teach children the Genesis account of creation than to teach them what scientist Carl Sagan espoused: “The cosmos is all that is or ever will be.” It is accurate to teach children that God made them in His own image (Genesis 1:26).

We don’t have to come up with some erudite or sophisticated argument to prove that Genesis 1:1 is true. Billy Graham stated it simply: “I look into a telescope and know there

is a God. I look into a microscope and know there must be a God.” Nature all around us attests to God’s handiwork (Psalm 19:1) There’s the beauty of a newborn child, the wide expanse of an ocean, a gorgeous sunset, the splendor of stars on a clear night, or a majestic mountain range.

The Bible says, “God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good.” It wasn’t just good, it was very good! The word for “very” is also the word for “mighty.” It was mighty good.

How do we know that Genesis 1:1 is true? Because from the beginning to end the Bible is true (Psalms 119:160). God’s word is truth (John 17:17). All scripture is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16).

There is no excuse for doubting Genesis 1:1. “Go ahead and give God thanks for all the glorious things He has done. Go ahead and worship Him! Tell everyone about His wonders!” (Psalm 105:1, Passion Translation).

— Miami, OK

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: WE ALL NEED IT!

By Milton Smith

We often read of incidents in the Bible that involved the sending forth of certain men for different reasons. One of the things that intrigues me is the fact that it was a rare occurrence when a person went alone. When John the Baptist was in prison, he sent two of his disciples to the Lord to inquire if he was, indeed, the promised Messiah. On another occasion, Jesus sent two of his disciples to fetch the donkey that he would shortly use to make His triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. When Jesus appointed the seventy, he sent them out “two and two.” When Tabitha died, the disciples heard that Peter was nearby and sent “two men” to find him. Most will recall that Joshua sent two men to spy out the Promised Land. It seems that the Bible strongly emphasizes the need for human companionship - even if that companionship consisted of only one other person.

After Paul’s conversion, we are told that he “assayed to join himself to the disciples” at Jerusalem. He obviously desired their fellowship! Shortly after the establishment of the church, we are told that the early disciples “continued

steadfastly” in “fellowship.” When we read through the book of Acts and Paul’s epistles, the blessed fellowship shared by the early church is clearly present. Those oft-persecuted men and women found great solace and comfort in the fellowship they shared with each other. All of God’s children need good Christian fellowship. This is why membership at a congregation is so important. We need each other! And how blessed it is to gather together with those of “like precious faith” during times of public worship. Those who choose to go without this wonderful fellowship are cheating only themselves. God didn’t create men to be alone; this is why God made sure that Adam had a special companion in the Garden. I’m reminded of this clever little poem that speaks of the sadness of being alone:

I had a little tea party, this  
afternoon at three;  
T’was very small - three guests  
in all,  
Just “I, myself and me.”  
Myself ate all the sandwiches,  
while I drank the tea;

T’was also I who ate the pie, and  
passed the cake to me.

Do yourself a favor: come and be  
a part of the wonderful fellowship we  
share together during regular services  
of worship!

— Tulsa, OK

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:23-25).

“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers . . . praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:42,47).

Old Paths

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“ask for the old paths” (Jer. 6:16)

PATIENCE IN THE HOME

By Joshua Ortiz

It may be easier to show patience to a random stranger than to a family member. Perhaps this is because we know it is easier for a family member to forgive us. But God demands patience from all of us in the home.

In 1 Peter 3:4, God commands wives to have “a gentle and calm spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.” Wives, this will help you submit to your husbands (Ephesians 5:22). And for wives with unbelieving husbands, your gentle and quiet spirit will enhance your husband’s desire to become a Christian. So whenever you want to lose patience with your husband’s decision, remember these verses. Some ladies will look at this and say, “God is oppressive toward women.” But God turns right around to husbands and forbids them from being oppressive.

1 Peter 3:7 says, “Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.” Husbands need to take time to understand their wives.

“Being heirs together” means a Christian husband views his Christian wife as a sister in Christ. If there is ever a time you want to raise your voice to her, then ask yourself, “Would I treat the sisters of the church this way?” Also, husbands are to honor their wives. Whenever you make a decision, have her best interest in mind. A husband who is patient will take time to think about his decisions and consider his wife.

Ephesians 6:4 commands, “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children unto wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” One way we train our children is through our actions. Patient fathers help their children to be patient. Fathers, think about how the Almighty Father has patience with you.

Children need to have patience with their parents. Ephesians 6:1 commands, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.” But Paul also says, “Honor your father and mother” (Ephesians 6:2).

Why does Paul say obey and then honor? It is possible to obey grudgingly and angrily. Patience allows you to obey and honor at the same time.

Let us work on patience in the home.).

— Lebanon, MO

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged” (Colossians 3:18-21)

THE BIBLE STANDS ALONE

By Dalton Key

Many of history’s most celebrated personalities have been effusive in their praise of the Bible:

“The faith will totter if the authority of the Holy Scriptures loses its hold on men. We must surrender ourselves to the authority of the Holy Scripture, for it can neither mislead or be misled.”.

— Augustine

“The New Testament is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known to the world.”.

— Charles Dickens

“It is impossible to govern the world without the Bible.”.

— George Washington

“The Bible is worth all other books which have ever been printed.”.

— Patrick Henry

“I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this book upon reason that you can find and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better man.”.

— Abraham Lincoln

“There is no other book with which the Bible can be compared, and no other reading that means so much to the human race. It is the support of the strong and the consolation of the weak; the dependence of organized government and the foundation of religion.”.

— Calvin Coolidge

“There is no other book so varied as the Bible nor one so full of concentrated wisdom . . . As a nation we are indebted to the Book of Books for our national ideals and representative institutions.”.

— Herbert Hoover

“Within the covers of the Bible are the answers for all the problems men face.”.

— Ronald Reagan

Jesus referred to God’s word as truth (John 17:17). The Hebrew writer affirmed the Bible’s power (Hebrews 4:12). Peter declared the writers of Scripture as having been “moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21).

And who would dare argue with the Bible’s clear assessment of itself: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

Are you a regular Bible reader?



THE SAVED  
AND THE CHURCH

by Bobby Key

People are often heard to say, “Now, the church doesn’t save anyone.” This statement is true. The church is made up of people, and people can’t save us.

However, though the church does not save a person, one must be in the church to be saved!

It is Christ who saves, but He is the Savior of the body, which is the church (Ephesians 5:23). He purchased the church with His own blood. It is in Christ that we have “redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7).

When one reads the second chapter of Acts, he reads about three thousand people who heard the gospel for the first time. They learned that Christ was the Son of God, and that God demanded of them repentance and baptism “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). The text goes on to say, “Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them” (vs. 41). These same souls “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (vs. 42). The chapter ends with the words, “And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (vs. 47).

Please notice that those who were being saved were added to the church. Surely this means one must be in the church to be saved.

Has Christ promised to save anyone outside His church? The answer is, “No.” When we are saved we are added to His church. In fact, the very same things we do in order to be saved makes us a member of the church.

While it is true that the church does not save, it is also true that the saved are in the church!

Are you? - (1929-2018)

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church” (Ephesians 5:25-29).

EDITORIAL . . .

FIRST THINGS FIRST

By Dalton Key

Is your life wrapped up in money and the things money can buy? Remember the inspired wisdom of Solomon: “Whoever loves money will never have enough money; whoever loves wealth will not be satisfied with it. This is also useless” (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

Jesus shows us a better way: “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33). When we get our priorities in line with the Lord’s - when we truly begin putting first things first - God will see to it that our physical needs are provided.

The story is told of a crane who was pecking for snails along the muddy bank of a small farm pond. A beautiful swan alighted by his side. “Where are you from?” asked the crane. “From heaven,” answered the swan, who then began to extol the endless glories of that celestial land. The crane showed no interest. After allowing the swan to speak a bit longer, the crane interrupted with a question. “Are there any snails there?” When the swan answered in the negative, the crane refused to listen to another word. He simply had no interest in anything - including heaven - that wasn’t snail-related.

Aren’t we all a little bit like that foolish crane? We become so involved in living here that we lose interest in living with the Lord “over there,” beyond death’s valley of the shadow. We become so engrossed with our snails of temporary power and pleasure and possessions in this life that we forget about the eternal joys of the better life God has promised to those obedient to Him and saved by His grace. How sad.

We live in a carnal world but we must never, as God’s children, become carnally minded. “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8:5,6).

Our treasure is not to be laid up here, but in heaven (Matthew 6:19,20). As those risen with Christ, we “seek those things which are above,” and set our minds “on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1,2) . We are but pilgrims here (1 Peter 2:11) . Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

How is your spiritual appetite? Do you have a wholesome hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6; 6:33), or are you satisfied scouring for the snails of this world?



BUILDING BETTER HOMES

By Wayne Robbins

difficulties and problems!

If husbands and wives could only see that the most important things in this life are spiritual and not material! When the spiritual is lived and maintained, it brings happiness and peace now. But it provides so much more - eternal blessings.

The desire for material things and social status never brings real joy. In fact, pursuing temporal things robs us of the time needed to build a strong spiritual life. Jesus made this quite clear when He said, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:19-21). Paul also wrote that one who pursues material things will pierce themselves through with

Over the course of my ministry I have counseled many couples with marriage problems and I have conducted many, many funerals. As I reflect back on these occasions, I wish I could get one point about funerals across to troubled couples. In all the terminal illness cases that I have been associated with, the only thing in that person’s mind has been the spiritual. That is the point that I would like to drive home to young couples today.

It seems that married couples today involve themselves in so many material and social things. They are working so hard in trying to maintain a certain lifestyle that they do not have time for the basics that make for a strong marriage and family. They are chasing elusive rainbows of happiness - things that are temporal in nature. Thus, happiness is always in the future.

Worldly pursuits burden today’s homes with so many

What Christians Ask Others To Believe

by Joe Slater

We, as Christians, are under divine mandate to tell the Good News to the world. Have you ever considered just what it is that we’re asking folks to believe?

First, we’re asking them to believe in a Supreme Being we can’t see, hear, touch, taste, or smell. We’re asking them to believe that this God created from nothing everything that exists in the universe.

Then we’re asking them to believe that God has revealed Himself to humankind, both in the written volume we call the Bible and ultimately in the person of Jesus Christ. We’re asking them to believe that this Jesus was God in the flesh, that He lived an absolutely sinless life, that He bled and died on the cross of Calvary as the ultimate atonement offering for our sins, and that He came forth alive from the tomb on the third day.

We’re asking them to believe that Jesus ascended back to Heaven where He reigns on the throne of David at the right hand of the Father. We’re asking

them to believe that He will return to raise the dead and to judge the world.

Do we have the right to ask people to believe these things? Emphatically Yes! God has given us abundant evidence. Our faith is not “blind faith,” but evidenced faith. The question is, “Are we, as Christians, informed and equipped to explain why people ought to believe things that seem at first glance to be not only unreasonable but outrageous?” In other words, “Can we defend our faith?”

“But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15).

— Justin, TX

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. I charge you therefore before

many sorrows (1 Timothy 6:10).

I believe I can prove the point rather easily. Just imagine that tomorrow you received word that you had only three months to live. What would be your most prized possession at that moment? Would it be your car, home, or bank account?

Or would it be your soul?

Solomon spent much of his life indulging in material and social things. His conclusion though, at the end, was that mankind should “fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Understanding life’s true purpose will go a long way in making marriages stronger. - Arkansas City, KS

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

Old Paths

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