

In The Beginning God . . .

*An In-Depth Study of the
First Three Chapters of Genesis*

All Truth Begins Here



Pushing Back the Darkness

INTRO: Most recently we have considered the implications of eschatology (the doctrines of last things and the return of Jesus Christ to this earth) in Genesis 1-3. As important as it is to have an understanding of the end of this age, it is also important to understand that history has a direction: it is moving toward a pre-determined end, and if it is moving toward something then it has a process: there is on-going activity that brings us closer and closer toward that end. There is an unfolding plan and we who are joint heirs with Christ to the Kingdom are a vital part of fulfilling God's purposes.

I. Sovereignty and Freedom: God and man in the course of human history

- A. Understanding rightful dominion in Genesis 1:27-31
 - 1. Mankind was not made sovereign and autonomous, nor ever intended to be
 - 2. The dominion of Adam and Eve was under the all-encompassing sovereignty of God
- B. The essence of the temptation in Genesis 3:5 was to become like God
 - 1. The desire for personal autonomy and sovereignty is diabolic
 - 2. Salvation includes coming again under the authority of Jesus Christ as Lord
- C. True freedom comes when we willingly submit to God's authority over our lives
 - 1. The power of sin is broken so that we may not be forced to do what we ought not
 - 2. The will is restored by the Spirit so that we are free to choose what we ought to do

Transition: Once restored through the new birth to be free in Christ, our freedom of choice lies largely in the decision of whether we wish to be active participants in God's redemptive process and the coming Kingdom or not. Our freedom does not lie in the capacity to do as we please or to change the course of God's eternal purposes through magical praying.

II. The Most Important Kingdom Activity is Intercessory Prayer

- A. Jesus announcement that the Kingdom of God had come was most clearly demonstrated in reversing the effects of sin and the works of the devil.
- B. Jesus committed to His followers this same task and opportunity and empowered them by giving them the authority to act in His Name.
- C. This powerful prayer-action invites God to work on this earth what He desires and wills to do. It brings the Kingdom of God and of Light to bear upon the darkness and ravages of sin and in the power of the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of people to see the Living God.
- D. Intercessory prayer is not learning how to get what we want from God, but learning what God wants to do in the situations and people we face and then inviting Him to do it with the confidence that He surely will (faith).

- C&MA Council 2011 Examples:**
- 1. The obstetrician in Mali & Stage IV cancer
 - 2. The missionary family in a closed country
 - 3. The testimonies of the healing service
 - 4. Ravi's story of the ambassador from an atheistic nation

