

W454D_Finish_Work_of_Christ_2.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book at the Wednesday Dinner Hour services and is number two of a series entitled The Finished Work. This arises out of a study we had just previously. We were looking at the 10th chapter of John and the first few verses Our Savior speaks about a sheepfold and the door of the sheepfold and the shepherd and the disciples were puzzled. And you might have said at first, Well, why should they be so puzzled about something they knew so well? Well, that was the reason they said, Why is he telling us this? We know all about it until he slipped two words in and then the whole thing shone with beauty. He said, I am the door. I am the good Shepherd. Oh, I see. Well, I believe that is true of the whole word of God. We may come to a scripture. We acknowledge that it's a word of truth and we leave it. But, oh, if we can, by the grace of God. See, it's possible to slip the two words I am. It may shine with a light that we've never seen before. Of course, on the other hand, this is opening a door for all sorts of fantastic ideas which we must watch very severely. It is it seems almost, almost too much to attempt in the brief time we have. By step by step, to draw your attention to scriptures which at first do not appear definitely to speak so of Christ and His place in the scheme of things.

[00:01:32] But when we've got the whole Bible in front of us and look back, we can see much more in many a scripture than was, first of all, appreciated, perhaps even by the writer himself. For you remember, Peter says that after the Old Testament prophets wrote what they had to say. They then searched their own writings to see what the spirit of Christ that was in them did signify when it spoke of the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow. None of us, I think, would think or agree that Moses, when he wrote Genesis one, verse one and gave it to the children of Israel, expected that they should appreciate what we may be able to see when we've got the whole Bible in front of us from beginning to end. It's sublime in its simplicity. In the beginning, God created heaven and earth and they needed that, for they were coming out of a land of idolatry. Now, is that all that it says? Well, my hope is to just drop a few hints in these meetings, trusting that you will not let them stay there, but take them as fingerposts and search and see that there's much more in these than meet the eye at first. May I remind you of a simple fact? In ordinary, everyday life.

[00:02:46] That an event before it can become an event. Must be at some time in some place. Now that's not enough because time and place are waiting for an agent to start something. Movie. Time, place and agent. In the beginning is the time. Heaven on earth is the place. And God who created is the agent. Well, when they say, well, all right. That we leave that, but I'm going to stop there because this word of God repays patient search. And the first thing I want to do is to remind you that the particular word translated beginning. Russia. H. I'll give you that in case you're searching occurs three times in the book. Genesis one, verse one. In the beginning, God created. Genesis ten. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel. And Genesis 49. Jacob, speaking about his children, speaks of Reuben, his firstborn. The beginning of my strength. There's a three. So there's the first one in chapter one. There's the fourth one, Babel in chapter ten. There's the poor, fading, frail, frail one. In chapter 49. I'd like you to turn to Genesis 49, just to see what Jacob says about this word first in connection with himself. Genesis 49, verse three. Reuben, thou art my firstborn. My might and the beginning of my strength. The Excellency of dignity and the Excellency of power. But he was unstable as water and would not excel. He was a firstborn. He was the beginning.

[00:04:38] But he was a failure. And so we find in one chronicles chapter five that although it recognizes that Reuben was the first born, it says so the Birthright went to Joseph. It had to be spread. No one person could hold this burden. Christ himself. Yes, but no one else. But here's the point. There's a definite insistence of this word beginning in connection with the word firstborn. You may not see, of course, at first sight. When it says the Excellency of dignity. Do you know that that's what the Lord said to Cain, who was the first born? Who quarreled with his brother. And God said to Kyrie, If thou do is not well, shalt thou not have the dignity. Our version, says shalt thou not have the Excellency. Shalt thou not have the dignity of the first born that you have lost it. Cain. So now we're beginning to quicken. Perhaps I hope that this word in the beginning doesn't really mean only time, but is related to this word beginning, which you say you can't call a person a beginning, can you? It depends on just what the word is, of course. But if you turn straight away to the last book in the Bible and of course, that assumes, I suppose it's rather too much to ask, but that assumes that every one of us are red, white, solidly through from Genesis to Revelation. So we've got all there is to know.

[00:06:03] Here we get these words. Revelation Chapter 314. And unto the Angel of the Church of the Layer.this aeons. Write these things, saith the Amen, the faithful and true

witness, the beginning of the creation of God. So here's his title. He is the beginning and he says, I'm the ending. So we are not drawing a long bow when we say that word was used with purpose. He is the beginning, not merely at some time, but he himself is the beginning. And before we go further with that, I'll look at Colossians chapter one, where you'll find it repeated. Speaking of Christ in verse 15, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by him. And the word by is the preposition in. And it is so translated in the next few lines. For in him were all things created that are in heaven and are in earth visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. You see, there's nothing here about trees and animals and birds and fish. All these are the mighty powers of heavenly glory. Now associated with his creative power. All things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church who is the beginning. So is the beginning. In the early first creation.

[00:07:40] It is the beginning of the new creation. He is the beginning. And without him, no end of God would ever be reached. For is another word, a relative term. Nothing is a beginning which hasn't an end in view. Can't be. It's like I've said before, a great heap of concrete may be a foundation for a building, or it may be an awful nuisance. But if it's a great heap of concrete and the builders never put a building on it, it's not a foundation. It's only a foundation if it's built on. And I think it's only a beginning. If there's an end in view that is rich ultimately. So God's purpose wanted right in the very first verse of the Bible, to have someone as the beginning in which all this could be invested and ultimately brought to its end. So you do know at the other end of the story, one Corinthians 15 it is and then cometh the end when God shall be all in all. Well, now I want to turn to one Corinthians 15, because there's another word there in one Corinthians 15, which this very word beginning translates in the Old Testament. One Corinthians 15. Verse 20. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. And again in verse 23, but every man in his own order. Christ the first fruits afterward they that are Christ at his coming.

[00:09:05] Then cometh the end. Now the word first fruits is the word that is translated translates this very self-same word in the Old Testament. When you read that on a certain day of the week. In the book of Leviticus on the first day following the Sabbath. After Passover, the high priest offered in the temple a first fruits and a very selfsame

moment. Christ was raised from the dead on the first day after the Sabbath of the Passover. The first fruits in the temple, the first fruits in reality. And that's the word beginning. Say what? So you see, there's more in this than first meets the eye. I don't say you should translate Genesis as a first. Fruits. God created heaven and earth, but that's what it implies. The very creation in Christ was a pledge that a new creation was yet to come. Where there shall be no more tears and no more sorrow. But in the interval, the battle of light and darkness, good and evil had to be waged, fought and won. Well, now I think I'll have to leave that aspect. Or there's ever so much more and just turn you to 1 or 2 passages which sort of bring this a little bit together. I won't turn to the passage in Job because of time, but do you remember in the 38th chapter of Job, God said to him, Were you there when I laid the foundations of the earth? And job, if you get any sense.

[00:10:36] Of course he would say No, Lord, I wasn't there. But if you remember that then and turn to Hebrews chapter one. And listen to these words. Verse ten. And now, Lord, in the beginning hath laid the foundation of the earth. And the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish. But thou remainest. And they all shall wax old as doth a garment. And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed. But thou art the same. And Isaiah shall not fail. Who is he speaking about? The Son of God. Their Lord in the beginning hath laid the foundations of the earth. You know who then is spoken of in Genesis one, Verse one, You must say he it is. Or will you turn again to John, the first chapter where the figure is not the image of the invisible God, but is the word. And it's a strange thing at first to think a person is called the word until we reflect that there would be no. Movement. No business. No earning money, no spending money, no travelling, no whoring, no telling you the peace has come. Nothing. Nothing without a written or spoken word. After all said and done, some of your friends have given up a part of your dinner hour to come and listen to what words. And of course, we might say in some cases it might be very much like Hamlet said when he pretended to be going insane.

[00:12:17] And old Polonius said, Oh, what are you reading? He said, Words, words, words. But after all said and done, Shakespeare knew the power of the word. And we should realize that he is a title that means something. In the beginning was the word and the word was with God. The word was God the same. This same one was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything

made that was made. So here again is another statement. This one was in the beginning. And Colossians says is the first born of all creation for in him were all things created. Hebrews one says Thou Lord in the beginning has laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the work of thy fingers. If you accept the Word of God as telling you the truth. You've got to see that Christ is there in Genesis one, verse one. So the last word I give you this morning, time is beating me is that when you look at the first verse, the word God is ye know Him. Now I am on the end of a word in the Greek. Hebrew is a plural like cherub cherubim. Now it's the ruling grammar and it's observed in the scriptures that if you have a singular noun, you have a singular verb.

[00:13:38] And if you have a plural noun, you have a plural verb. But it isn't. So here Moses has to break. A vital role because he can't help himself. He's dealing with something which is outside the limitations of our logic and our grammar. For the very first verse of the Bible says In the beginning, God in the plural created. Singular, the heavens and the earth. And you may remember there's another one in Ecclesiastes where he says, Remember thy creators, plural, in the days of thy youth. Scattered through the Bible are enough hints to tell you it's not quite so simple as it looks on the surface. And the whole purpose of the Bible is not to teach us about creation simply, but it is to prepare us for the great redemptive purpose for which the Son of God came. And before the foundation of the world, Peter says that that Son of God was verily foreordained to be a lamb without blemish and without spot. That's anticipating redemption. And so we get the beginning in Genesis one. And I'm going to conclude in the last half a minute I have in reading the end so that we've got the one end and the other to sort of enclose our thoughts for the next few meetings we have on this subject. One Corinthians 15. Then cometh the end. When he should have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.

[00:15:02] When he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he set all things up or done to him, it is manifest that he is accepted, which did put all things unto him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him, to put all things unto Him that God may be all in all. That's the gold of the ages. That's the purpose of creation. That's the object of redemption. And this raises the question which we should have to meet when we come together next time. The

enemy is they are right to the very end to be put down and subdued. He comes in in Genesis one, verse two. There is no word enemy in Genesis one, verse two. But it's there. So if you care to come next time and say, Well, we are moving rapidly, we've done even one verse of the Bible and we're going to look at the second or may God grant that we may value the fact that we have a guidance in this book that the the words we are dealing with are words which the Holy Ghost teaches. And our responsibility, says the Apostle Paul, is to compare spiritual with spiritual.