

The Right Beginning

by A.W. Pink

A.W. Pink's sermon emphasizes the necessity of starting right in spiritual matters, highlighting God's central role in salvation and the importance of surrendering to Him.

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Psalm 16:5-22, Luke 2:49, Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 8:5, 2 Peter 1:20-21, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Commitment to God", "Spiritual Foundations"

Description

A.W. Pink emphasizes the critical importance of a right beginning in both spiritual and practical matters, asserting that a faulty foundation leads to insecurity in faith and life. He argues that true spirituality begins with acknowledging God as the source of all things, as stated in Genesis 1:1, and that salvation is entirely God's work, not dependent on human effort. Pink warns against the dangers of erroneous teachings and the neglect of Scriptural discipline within the church, which can lead to spiritual failure. He encourages believers to renew their commitment to God at the start of a new year, making 'In the beginning God' their guiding principle in all endeavors. Ultimately, Pink calls for a heartfelt surrender to God, recognizing His sovereignty in every aspect of life.

Transcript

How much depends upon a right beginning. If the foundation be faulty, the superstructure is insecure; if the babe be undernourished the child will be unhealthy; if the child grows up uneducated, the man is handicapped for life. Doubly so does this hold good in spiritual matters. If the preacher ignores the Law and presents only the Gospel, his "converts" will be as worthless as wheat sown upon ground which was neither plowed nor harrowed. If the babe in Christ be erroneously indoctrinated, he is disqualified from fighting the good fight of faith. If the local church fails to maintain a Scriptural discipline, and instead spends its energies in home and foreign "missions," then disastrous will be the outcome. In like manner, if we enter upon a new year without beginning it properly, then we cannot expect to enjoy spiritual prosperity therein.

"In the beginning GOD" (Gen. 1:1). Thus opens the Sacred Scriptures, and since they are of Divine authorship what other frontispiece could they possibly have! This is the very essence of their inspiration: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation (human origination), for the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:20, 21). Not to human skill nor to human goodness is the Bible to be attributed but rather to the wisdom and superintendence of the Spirit is it to be ascribed. So, too, of the contents of the

Scriptures: "In the Beginning God"--He is the Alpha as well as the Omega of their subject matter. From Genesis to Revelation He has the precedence and the pre-eminence. The precepts, the promises, the predictions of Holy Writ are alike prefaced with a "thus saith the Lord."

"In the beginning GOD" is the explanation of salvation. Alas that this is so faintly recognized and so feebly insisted upon today. True, that in most circles reputed as orthodox it is still allowed that the planning and providing of salvation is of the Lord, but when it comes to the actual reception and enjoyment thereof, proud man determines to place the crown of honour upon his own head, by insisting that that which made him to differ from the unsaved was his willingness to accept Christ. But from whence did such willingness originate? Certainly not from mere nature, for the heart of every unregenerate person is stubbornly steeled against its Maker. God must take away the heart of stone and impart a heart of flesh before there will be any yielding to the gracious influences of His blessed Spirit. The fact is that we love Him because He first loved us. Had He never chosen us to be His sons, we should never have chosen Him to be our God.

"In the beginning GOD" is the essence of all genuine piety. The fear of God and the love of God are the springs from which all true yielding of ourselves unto Him proceeds, and where there is not that, real spirituality is absent. Hence we read of the Corinthian saints that they "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8:5)--for the Lord wants no man's money till He first possesses his heart. Until we have surrendered ourselves to the authority of God our profession is worthless and our religion is vain. Hence it is that the hortatory section of the first Epistle of the New Testament opens with, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). It is here we must begin, and it is to here we must constantly return.

"In the beginning GOD" was the keynote of the life of Jesus Christ, and throughout the whole of His course everything was in perfect keeping therewith. He could say, "I was cast upon Thee from the womb: Thou art My God from My mother's belly" (Psa. 22:10). Herein we perceive His uniqueness, for none other could make such a claim. From the very first breath that He drew, His whole being was completely yielded to God. Hence it was that as a Boy of twelve we hear Him exclaiming, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49). "The LORD is the portion of Mine inheritance" (Psa. 16:5), was His unqualified testimony, and therefore could He affirm, "I have set the LORD always before Me" (Psa. 16:8). Even in the midst of His crucifixion agony He cried, "My God, My God," and into His hands He trustfully committed His spirit, assured that His soul should not be left in Hades nor His body suffered to see corruption.

"In the beginning GOD." Is not this the word we particularly need to take unto ourselves and lay to heart as we enter upon a new year? Should we not begin by solemnly renewing our covenant with God and consecrate ourselves afresh to Him? His claims upon us are paramount: gratitude for His countless mercies calls for nothing less. Review the past, my reader: can you discover any cause for regret whenever God was given the first place in your life? Ah, is it not because other things were allowed to displace Him from the throne of your heart that you now find most occasion for sorrow and shame? Then should we not seek to profit from these disastrous lapses and prevent their recurrence? And how can we do so but by contritely confessing our sinful failures and by begging Him to come in and sup with us afresh.

"In the beginning GOD." Is not this our desire and resolve as we enter upon a new cycle of time? Should not I, and you, my reader, make this our motto for 1940--that we prayerfully determine to acknowledge the

Lord in all our ways; to embark upon no undertaking (great or small); to enter into no fresh relationship; to essay no task--without first seeking God's help and blessing? Let, "in the beginning God," characterize each fresh day by our turning to Him from whom all our help comes. In perplexity, in sickness, in sorrow, let us turn to God first, and not to human counselors, doctors, or loved ones. Yes, and when we have sinned, let us promptly and penitently seek the face of Him who delights in mercy. And should this be the year when death sends us a solemn summons to depart hence, let us submissively place ourselves in His hands and then we shall "fear no evil" as we pass through the valley of shadows, and in a far grander sense will it then be true, "in the beginning (of our new experience) GOD," for "absent from the body, present with the Lord."

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