

THE CHURCH'S BEGINNING

Daniel 2:31-35

INTRODUCTION

- A. Reading Homework Material.
 - 1. Understanding what you read.
 - 2. Must identify the pivotal point, crucial ideas, main thoughts.
- B. Same for Bible Study.
 - 1. Must place in appropriate contexts.
 - a. Verse – paragraph – chapter – book – Bible.
 - b. Patriarchal – Mosaic – Christian.
 - 2. Rightly dividing the Word, 2 Timothy 2:15.
 - a. Handling accurately.
 - b. Lit., to cut straight.
- C. Rightly Dividing – First 5 books of N.T.
 - 1. Birth of Jesus.
 - 2. Preparatory preaching of John the Baptist.
 - 3. Baptism and Temptation of Jesus.
 - 4. Ministry of Jesus.
 - 5. Death and Resurrection of Jesus.
 - 6. *Perhaps the high point of significance – beginning of the church.*

I. ITS BEGINNING PROPHESED.

- A. Daniel 2:36-44.
 - 1. The great image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Dan. 2:31-35.
 - a. Head of gold.
 - b. Breast and arms of silver.
 - c. Belly and thighs of bronze.
 - d. Legs of iron.
 - e. Feet of iron and clay.
 - 2. The prophesy was not just for Nebuchadnezzar – a larger audience.
 - 3. Break down of the kingdoms, Dan. 2:36-43.
 - a. Head – Babylonians.
 - b. Breast/arms – Medo Persians.
 - c. Belly/thighs – Greece.
 - d. Legs – Rome.
 - e. Feet – divided empire of Rome.
- B. God's Kingdom Established, Daniel 2:44.
 - 1. An eternal kingdom.
 - a. Never destroyed.
 - b. Put an end to all kingdoms.
 - c. Endure forever.
 - 2. Matthew 16:18, *"I will build My church..."*

II. ITS BEGINNING PLANNED.

- A. Laying the Foundation. (At least 600 yrs. later.)
 - 1. John's ministry was *preparational*.
 - a. Two themes:
 - i. Repent, kingdom at hand [near], Matthew 3:2.
 - ii. He who comes, Matthew 3:11.

2. Christ's ministry was *foundational*.
 - a. Christ was born under law.
 - b. Christ lived his life under law.
 - c. But, His words [teachings] pointed to the kingdom to come.
- B. Recognize Four Facts:
 1. The establishment of the kingdom was not far away, Mk. 9:1.
 2. The establishment of the kingdom would occur in Jerusalem, Lk. 24:46-49.
 3. The establishment of the kingdom would be accompanied with power.
 4. The Apostles would receive the power, Acts 1:8.
- C. Christ's ministry was to lay the foundation of His kingdom, the church.

III. ITS BEGINNING PICTURED.

- A. The Day of Pentecost, Acts 2.
 1. Prior to Pentecost – the church always spoken of in future tense.
 - a. Mark 9:1 – the apostles (until it comes...).
 - b. Luke 24:46-49 – Jerusalem (until you are clothed).
 - c. Acts 1:6-8 – (you shall receive...). *Happened, Acts 2:1-4.*
 2. After Pentecost – always spoken of in present tense.
 - a. The church in existence, Acts 8:1, 3; 9:31; 11:22; Colossians 1:13-14.
- B. Peter's Preaching.
 1. Evidence that Jesus was Lord and Christ, Acts 2:22-24, 36.
 2. Response of multitude, Acts 2:37.
 3. Repent and be baptized, Acts 2:38.
 4. Three thousand baptized, Acts 2:41, 47 (added to their number).
- D. Faith Based on the Word.
 1. God's Word provides the testimony of true faith.
 2. Romans 10:17, "*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*"
 3. If it's not in the Bible, then it must not be true.

CLOSING

- A. If in the church, blessed beyond measure.
 1. Ephesians 1:3, "*...with every spiritual blessing.*"
 2. 1 John 5:13, "*...you know you have eternal life.*"
- B. There is no earthly kingdom comparable.
- C. Entered into only by the new birth, John 3:5, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"