

3 Great Finishes (Genesis 2:1)

Introduction:

1. As you probably know, the Daytona 500 is scheduled for this afternoon.
 - a. 43 cars will begin the race, but 43 will not finish it.
 - b. However, the car that finishes first after 500 miles will win the race.
 - c. In racing, the objective is to finish and to finish in first place.
2. Perhaps this is a good time for us to concentrate on "3 great finishes" that we read about in the Bible.
3. These finishes relate to:
 - a. God's creative power
 - b. the work that Jesus came to accomplish
 - c. the confidence that Paul had when his life ended.
4. Let us begin with . . .

Discussion:

I. GREAT FINISH #1: GOD FINISHED THE CREATION

- A. God began by creating "*the heaven and the earth*" (Genesis 1:1).
 1. According to vs.2, "*the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.*"
 2. God did not leave the earth in that condition.
 - a. On the 1st day He created light (vs.3-5).
 - b. On the 2nd day He created the firmament (vs.6-8).
 - c. On the 3rd day He created the dry land, the seas, and plants (vs.9-13).
 - d. On the 4th day He created the sun, the moon, and the stars (vs.14-19).
 - e. On the 5th day He created birds and marine animals (vs.20-23).
 - f. On the 6th day He created land animals and man (vs.24-30).
 3. Notice the condition of everything at the end of the 6th day (vs.31).
- B. We learn from Genesis 2:1-2 that God finished the creation.
- C. This finish deserves our careful attention.
 1. There are 2 possibilities about how everything came into being: "creation" or "evolution."
 2. The Bible declares that God created everything; therefore, we reject evolution.
 3. There are some who try to join creation and evolution: "theistic evolution."
 - a. The idea is that God created certain things at the beginning, but they have evolved into their present state.
 - b. This theory tries to put long periods of time into Genesis 1.
 - c. The Bible does not allow these long periods of time (Exodus 20:8-11; 31:16-17).
 4. Evolution and theistic evolution are false -- God finished the creation.
- D. By the way, Jesus endorsed the creation account as it is revealed in the Bible (Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6).
- E. Great Finish #1: "God finished the creation."

II. GREAT FINISH #2: JESUS FINISHED HIS WORK

- A. Jesus was present at the creation, and He was involved in it (John 1:1-3).
- B. When the time was right, Jesus came to earth in the flesh (John 1:14).
- C. When Jesus came to earth, the Father gave Him a mission to fulfill (John 5:36).
- D. Jesus was dedicated to finishing His mission (John 4:34).
- E. At the end of His ministry, Jesus stated that He had "*finished*" [completed] His mission (John 17:4; 19:28-30).
- F. This finish deserves our careful attention.
 1. We know what Jesus went through as He finished His work.
 2. By keeping our eyes focused on Him, we can finish our race without giving up (Hebrews 12:1-3).
- G. This brings us to . . .

III. GREAT FINISH #3: PAUL FINISHED HIS COURSE

- A. In Acts 20:22-24, Paul told the elders of the church in Ephesus that he was determined to finish his course.
- B. At the end of his life, Paul said that he had been successful (2 Timothy 4:6-7).
- C. He was looking forward to receiving his reward (2 Timothy 4:8).
- D. He was confident that the Lord would continue to stand with him, strengthen him, deliver him, and preserve him (2 Timothy 4:16-18).

Conclusion:

- 1. We have examined 3 great finishes from the Bible.
 - a. God finished the creation.
 - b. Jesus finished His work.
 - c. Paul finished his course.
- 2. In closing, we need to consider one other finish, and it involves us.
- 3. Jesus wants us to become His followers, and He wants us to finish the race.
- 4. He lets us know that there is a price to pay, and He wants us to count the cost (Luke 14:27-30).
- 5. If we will pay the price and finish the race, we will receive a great reward (2 Timothy 4:8).