

## “THE END...AND THE BEGINNING”

There are fundamental truths that people know but do not think about *enough*. We know about gravity but we don't think about it much until we fall down. The thing I have in mind is this: *the end of one thing is always the beginning of something else*. One year ends, but another will follow, missing nary a beat.

This little intellectual formulation is a reliable description of life. We begin as children at home and the next thing we know we are in school. Elementary school ends and then comes middle school and high school. That all ends and we go off to college or work. One job runs out and so we go find another. Poverty is followed by prosperity, though sometimes it is the other way around. An old car wears out and we get a new one which begins immediately to wear out just like the old one. One thing ends and something else begins.

Think of other ways this principle holds true. There are cycles of failure and success, weakness and strength (followed by weakness again), and the ultimate application: life followed by death. This is the most important *end and beginning*.

We mark the time by days and weeks, months and years. God made the physical world in such a way as to allow us this convenience. I admit to being a bit of a “time nut.” I like to be on time and I appreciate it when others do the same. I like to keep up with what time it is and I even have a watch that gets a radio signal from the atomic clock in Colorado Springs so that I can know with precision what time it really is. It drives me crazy when someone says they keep their watch set so many minutes ahead, “so they won't be late.” They are usually late anyway! So I know I am a nut about time. But I also know when the matter is seriously considered, time does not matter. This is so because as soon as one thing ends, another begins.

Life ends and death follows. For most creatures the something of life is followed by the nothing of death. But not for us, not for those who have been created in the image of God.

Our death here is just the end of one aspect of our existence. It will be followed by another life, eternal in Heaven. It may be that the endless cycle of change will cease then...the Bible doesn't provide a detailed description of life in Heaven with God, except to leave the strong teaching that it is infinitely preferable to life in Hell with the Devil. The point here is easy to make: We must live so as to prepare for the end of this life because it is the beginning of the next.

It seems to me that the best way to deal with all the ends and beginnings of life is to concentrate on being ready for the *big one*. Thus we live so as to be faithful children of God. The rewards of a life of faith are tremendous. God loves and blesses His faithful children (1 John 1:5-10, Matthew 5:3-12, Philippians 4:4-8, 13, and 19).

But what if we are not? The day of salvation is now (2 Corinthians 6:2). People may protest that there is plenty of time for that. How much time we have, we cannot tell. I do know that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night (2 Peter 3:9) and by then it will be too late to do anything about the soul.

Life here ends. Are you ready for the next beginning?

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