

Make Church a Part of Your Life

WEEKLY SERMONETTE

"In The Beginning, God"

By Preacher/Teacher Terry Laughlin, CrossRoads Ministries

When your life seems empty, chaotic and darkness surrounds you, to whom can you turn? Is there anyone who can help?

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void (empty), and darkness was over the surface of the deep..."

What happened next? "God said, 'Let there be...'"

By the sheer power of His Word, the triune God brought order and beauty out of chaos, emptiness, and darkness. He spoke the universe and all that is into being, from the tiniest atoms and living things unseen by the human eye to the great creatures of the sea to the awesome galaxies deep in space.

When we human beings "create" something, we must gather the materials we need. We may get some paints, a palette and easel; or we may buy the necessary ingredients for an elaborate dessert; or we may stock up on the lumber, nails and tools needed for a building project.

But when God created "in the beginning," He did so "ex nihilo," meaning "out of nothing" in latin. God didn't have a super cosmic mud pie mix with which to begin. There was no "primordial soup" can to open. Romans 4:17 says it this way "...God who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist." God

spoke and, over six days, the entire creation was formed, literally, "out of nothing."

God is in a different kind of creating business, too. God's Word says that the one who believes, accepting Jesus Christ into his or her life is a "...new creature (cre-

ated being), the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God..."

God is still creating things "ex nihilo." You can bring nothing to the Lord Jesus to receive eternal life. No church membership re-

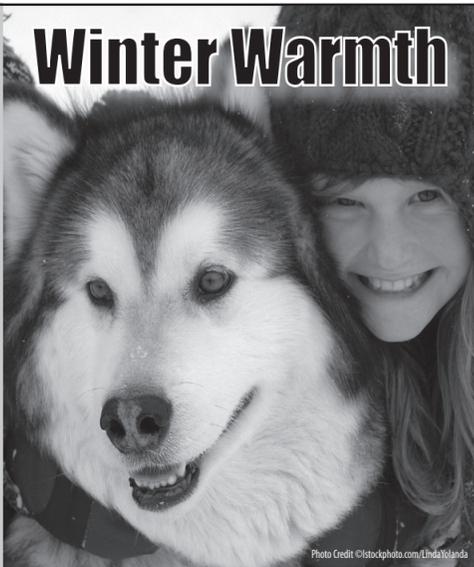
ords, or baptism records, or offering receipts will impress the Creator God. Such things will not earn you one brownie point toward salvation and eternal life with God.

Salvation comes ONLY because of who Jesus is and what He has already done. He gave His life to pay the penalty for your sins. Jesus paid a debt He did not owe, because you owe a debt you cannot possibly pay. Until you have asked God for forgiveness in Jesus's Name through true repentance and are born again, your debt of sin and selfishness keeps you separated from God. Eternal life is a free gift, but you must accept the gift on the Giver's standards. God loves you with an everlasting love. Bring to Him all the "nothing" you have and He will give you everything you need! He will cleanse you from sin and create in you a pure heart.

You can be a brand new creation this very day!

"Come now and let us reason together," says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be white as snow..." Isaiah 1: 18a

Jesus said, "...no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again... You must be born again!" John 3:3, 7



Winter Warmth

Our Creator makes sure our canine friend's coat grows even thicker than usual to protect him in a chilly habitat. A fur coat keeps him warm when he is out in the snow. What about us? Is it not soul-warming to have the assurance that God knows our needs? He will protect us and help us find a solution to any challenge if we let Him. Visit your house of worship this week; share your concerns with God. Let Him shelter you.

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Weekly Scripture Reading

- Luke 6:20-49
- Luke 7:1-17
- Luke 7:18-35
- Luke 7:36-8:3
- Luke 8:19-39
- John 17:1-26
- Luke 8:40-56

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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Sudoku Solution #2782-M

S	L	O	G		N	I	N	O		C	H	R	I	S	
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Sudoku Solution #2782-M

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3	2	4	1	5	8	9	7	6							
9	6	5	7	3	4	8	2	1							
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5	9	8	2	7	3	6	1	4							
4	7	2	6	8	1	3	9	5							
6	4	7	8	1	9	5	3	2							
8	1	3	5	6	2	7	4	9							
2	5	9	3	4	7	1	6	8							