

8-27-2016, COTR Texarkana

Title: Eternity

Purpose: Explain the Biblical concept of eternity and provoke people to live each day with eternity in mind.

Spiritual Truth: Jesus wants us to spend eternity with Him.

Text: 2 Peter 3:18

Topic: Eternity, Time, Judgment Day, Heaven, Hell

Series: The Final Chapter

Series Purpose: Teach people about the last days and show them how to live accordingly.

Eternity

I. Introduction

- A. Video: SS Gone! <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/32341/gone>
- B. Listen to live stream @ChurchOnTheRock.org or the COTR iPhone/ Android app
- A. Today we're finishing the series "The Final Chapter". We've been looking at future events predicted in the Bible, especially the 2nd coming of Christ. Our main focus has been on how we should live in the last days. The question we'll focus on today is what happens after the last days are over. The Bible calls it eternity.
 - a 2 Peter 3:18 (ESV) But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to **the day of eternity**. Amen. (*the day of eternity* means forever, the age to come, the day that has no end)
- C. Title: Eternity
- D. Purpose: Explain the Biblical concept of eternity and provoke people to live each day with eternity in mind.
- E. Spiritual Truth: Jesus wants us to spend eternity with Him.

II. What is time and eternity?

- A. When my kids were little we'd play a game about how much we loved each other. I love you as big as the trees, sky...infinity. We described the finite and infinite. //time/ eternity
- B. Def. Time: the moment something happens, when something begins or ends. We understand everything in the context of time and use minutes, days, months and years as a reference point, e.g. on April 24, 1957 A.D. I was born, at 11:13 am a tornado struck.
 - a Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 (NIV) **There is a time for everything**, and a season for every activity under the heavens: **2 a time to be born and a time to die...** (Our whole life is measured by time.)
 - b Time gives us context to understand the past, present and future but eternity transcends time. One-day time as we know it will cease and be lost in eternity.
- C. Def. Eternity: endless time; forever and ever e.g. an unending existence after death. Eternity includes a past without a beginning, the present and a future without end. An angel told Mary about Jesus and said: Luke 1:33 (ESV) and he (*Jesus*) will reign over the house of Jacob **forever**, and of his kingdom **there will be no end.**"
 - a Def. eternity, Webster's Dict.1828: without beginning or end. The high and

- lofty one who inhabiteth eternity. Is. 57. God has existed from eternity.
- b Modern def. eternity, Webster's 11th ed.: the quality or state of being eternal; infinite time; the state after death: a seemingly endless or immeasurable time. (no mention of God but we cannot properly understand eternity apart from the eternal God.)

III. God is eternal; He exists beyond the constraints of time. Before time began, God was.

- A. Genesis 1:1 (ESV) **In the beginning, God** created the heavens and the earth. Revelation 1:8 (ESV) "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "**who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.**" Isaiah 43:13 (NLT) "**From eternity to eternity I am God. (NCV I have always been God)** Psalm 90:2 (NCV) Before the mountains were born and before you created the earth and the world, you are God. **You have always been, and you will always be. 1 Timothy 1:17 (NIV) Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

IV. The Bible teaches human beings will live forever (we have a beginning but no end)

- A. Jn. 5:28–29 (ESV) Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when **all who are in the tombs (NIV graves) will hear his voice** 29 and come out, those who have done good to the **resurrection of life**, and those who have done evil to the **resurrection of judgment**.

- a Jesus said all human beings will live after we die. The only question is where.

- B. Judgment Day will determine where I spend eternity. Revelation 20:11–15 (NIV) Then I saw a **great white throne** and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and **books were opened**. Another book was opened, which is **the book of life**. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and **each person was judged according to what they had done**. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 **Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.**

- 1. Judgment Day is the gateway into eternity; those in the Book of Life will live with God for eternity. Those who rejected God's offer of salvation will be thrown in the lake of fire. Heaven and hell are real.

- B. Hell is described as a literal place where those who reject God's offer of salvation suffer eternal punishment by fire; it is described as a place of unimaginable suffering and torment. The Bible uses phrases such as "weeping and gnashing of teeth", "outer darkness" and "the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched"

- 1. Those who say God would be unfair to punish sin for eternity underestimate the seriousness of sin, the spiritual nature of sin, and the supreme holiness of God. Mt. 10:28 (ESV)...Rather **fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.**

- C. How about those whose names are in the Book of life? What happens to them? Revelation 21:1–27 (NIV) Then I saw a **new heaven and a new earth**...2 I saw the Holy City, **the new Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God...3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! **God's dwelling place is now among the people**, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be

with them and be their God. 4 **‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away...**27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s **book of life**.

1. Solomon, the wisest man in the OT said we should live each day conscious of eternity and Judgment Day. Ecclesiastes 12:13–14 (NIV) Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. 14 **For God will bring every deed into judgment**, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.
2. He tried to find happiness apart from God and said life was meaningless. As he grew older he realized how important it is to live with eternity in mind.

V. The risk of being wrong about eternity

- A. Games of chance: Picture roulette wheel. People are gambling with their eternal soul.
 - a Pascal’s wager: Blaise Pascal, French philosopher and mathematician argued that it is in one's own best interest to behave as if God exists, since the possibility of eternal punishment in hell outweighs any advantage of believing otherwise. If God does not actually exist, such a person will have only a finite loss (some pleasures, luxury, etc.), whereas they stand to receive infinite gains (as represented by eternity in [Heaven](#)) and avoid infinite losses (eternity in [Hell](#)).
 - a Rejecting God’s offer of salvation is like playing Russian Roulette with a gun.
 - b Many modern philosophers think Pascal's Wager is the weakest of all arguments for believing in the existence of God and say it’s irrational. In arrogance, they’re spinning the chamber hoping there is no bullet.
 - c Eternity is not a game best left to chance. Psalm 89:47–48 (NLT) Remember how short my life is, how empty and futile this human existence! 48 **No one can live forever; all will die**. No one can escape the power of the grave.

VI. Conclusion: The promise of eternal life

- A. Romans 6:23 (NIV) For the wages of sin is death, but **the gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord. John 3:16 (ESV) “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have **eternal life**.”
- B. We all share a common problem, sin. It is responsible for the death of our body and will be responsible for the 2nd death if we ignore God’s offer of salvation. Jesus Christ made a simple promise: If we believe in Him we will live after we die in heaven with Him forever and ever. Believing means accepting what He said is true and following Him.
- C. 3 people I know faced death this week: Randy’s son, Jeff’s wife and Daphne’s dad. Death of our body stops everything in our earthly existence but Jesus died and rose again and promised those who believe in Him will live after they die, forever.

II. Response

- A. Souls: I want to put my faith in Christ today. I believe what Jesus said was true and I want to follow Him the rest of my life.

- B.** Prayer: Lord help me live every day with eternity in mind.
- C.** *** *Logos Bible Software and library, Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible, Lexham Theological Wordbook, Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible, Holman Bible Dictionary were used to prepare this message.*