

## Lesson 6

### God Is Eternal

“Eternal” and “eternity” are words that are incomprehensible to the finite mind. The more we think on them, the less we understand them, and we come to see our limitations as humans. The relation of eternity to time constitutes one of the most difficult problems in philosophy and theology, and a complete solution may be impossible as long as we are in these frail bodies. But thanks be to God, for He has given us the Bible, the inspired Word, to help us grapple with eternal realities.

The Bible dogmatically states that God is eternal.

***“Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”*** (Psa. 90:2)

He is called ***“eternal God”*** (Gen. 21:33), and the ***“King eternal”*** (1 Tim. 1:17) and ***“He is the high and lofty One . . . who lives forever”*** (Isa. 57:15). Eternity is because God is eternal. To say God is from eternity to eternity is to say that He is from vanishing point to vanishing point. The human mind looks backward until the past vanishes and then peers forward into the future until it collapses from sheer exhaustion. Yet God is beyond eternity past and eternity future; He is at both ends of eternity and unaffected by either.

#### ETERNAL DEFINED

Louis Berkhof defines God’s eternity as “that perfection of God whereby He is elevated above all temporal limits and all succession of moments, and possesses the whole of His existence in one indivisible present.” God has no beginning and no ending because He is eternal. There never was a time when He was not and there never will be a time when He will not be. Humans think of time in succession of events with beginnings and endings, for they are creatures of time and space, but God exists outside of time.

Even the Bible itself must explain the eternity of God in terms that we can comprehend.

***“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”*** (Rev. 1:8)

He is the true God who was, who is and who shall be. God is spoken of in the past, present and future tenses to help us understand eternity. God is eternity past and eternity future. That God appears at the beginning of time is not too difficult to comprehend, but that He appears at the beginning and end of time simultaneously is not easy to grasp.

We must train our minds to think of God as the great I AM.

***“God said to Moses, ‘I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” (Exo. 3:14)***

All past, present and future are one for God. He is not only eternity past and eternity future, but He is the Eternal Now. Time in no way affects God. God dwells in eternity, but time dwells in God.

#### ETERNALITY AND MAN’S IMAGE

Did you realize that all men are creatures of eternity as well as time? God created man for both time and eternity. The Bible tells us that God made man in His own image.

***“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him . . .” (Gen. 1:27)***

When God creates each living soul, it bears His image, and part of this image is God’s eternity. While God’s image in man has been marred by sin, each individual soul has eternal existence based on the eternity of God. Man receives his eternal existence when God creates his soul. This makes man different from God, for God is eternity past as well as eternity future. Man had a beginning; God has no beginning.

All men have eternity stamped on their hearts, and because of this, man has a faint notion that the grave does not end it all. Somehow he feels that he will continue to exist. Because man is a creature of both time and eternity, there is a great conflict set up on his life. Due to sin, he cannot view eternity right. He is aware of some kind of future existence, but the thought of physical death looms before him. Sin has caused him to have no hope beyond the grave, but he is aware that he will exist forever. The tension between the fears of time and the realities of eternity has placed him in great misery and conflict. He longs within himself for hope and permanence beyond this life, but everything around him reminds him of mortality, death, and change. He cries out for an answer, but the answer cannot be found in himself. All hope of solving this conflict cannot be found in oneself, for this only brings fear, frustration and despair.

At this point, the Christian has an answer for man’s despair. The answer is Jesus Christ. The answer is found outside of man in the person of Jesus Christ.

***“But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” (2 Tim. 1:10)***

Christ left eternal heaven and became a man to go to the cross to die for sinners. At the cross He defeated death and he now brings life and light to all who receive Him. When one receives Christ, the fear of death is taken away, and now one can face eternity with peace of mind.

## ETERNALITY AND UNBELIEVERS

All men have eternal existence because they have the image of God in their created souls, but all men are not saved. According to the Bible, a saved person is one who knows his sins have been forgiven and has assurance of eternal life because he has personally received Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. For those who are not saved through Christ, the Bible declares there is eternal punishment.

***“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”***  
(Matt. 25:46)

***“He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.”*** (2 Thess. 1:8-9)

God is eternal and men have eternal existence, and God has said that all men outside of Christ shall be judged for all eternity. Why? Because men are sinners and stand condemned before a just and holy God.

The thought of an eternal hell is frightening.

***“And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night ...”*** (Rev. 14:11)

Hell is an awful place where the damned must ever be burning, but never consumed; always dying, but never dead. Hell is eternal separation from God. Oh, eternity, eternity, who can fathom it? An endless eternity in a God-forsaken place for all those outside Christ – how awful! Think of it! As long as God is eternal, He will punish the damned for all eternity. And He will be eternal forever!!

Eternal judgment is incomprehensible to the human mind. If this whole planet earth were ground into sand and placed in a gigantic sand pile, and every thousand years a little bird came and took one grain, the time that it would take that bird to carry off the whole pile would not match the biblical concept of eternity. But if after all that time, a person could still come out of hell, there would still be hope. However, God said that hell is eternal, and this should put the unbeliever into a cold sweat.

You need not perish in eternity if you will but trust Christ. God has promised to save all who come to the Savior through faith.

***“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*** (John 3:16)

Those who obey the gospel of Christ will be delivered from the certainty of eternal judgment.

## ETERNALITY AND BELIEVERS

While all men have an endless existence, all men do not have eternal life. Eternal life is in God through Christ. Those who have Christ have a guarantee of eternal life beyond the grave.

***“For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”*** (John 17:2-3)

***“He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”*** (1 John 5:12)

Eternal life is in God and Christ is God incarnate; therefore, all who have Christ have eternal life. Eternal life is not something we get by and by, but we have it now, and life beyond the grave will be eternal bliss with God through Christ.

Beloved, every day we are traveling toward eternity future, and sometime all of us will pass from this mortal life. Some of us at this very moment are closer to the borders of eternity than others. But look up, dear Christian! Christ has defeated sin and death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Death has no hold on you; hell has no claim on you; for you have eternal life in Christ and you shall never perish. As long as God is eternal, He will bless His own eternally. What a comfort to know that the eternal God has given us eternal life through the eternal Son.

## CONCLUSION

For you without Christ, why will you perish? God has given His Son to die for sinners. If you will trust Jesus Christ, the Savior, you shall be saved from sin and hell.

If you will trust the Lord Jesus, God will give you eternal life and this life alone is in His Son. According to the Bible, where you will spend eternity depends upon what you do with Christ in your time on earth. Trust Christ and have eternal life.