

Eternal Life - Not Some Day, but NOW!

I have spent almost all of my life as a Believer, like many of you may still find yourselves, with a very significant misunderstanding of what these two powerful words actually mean and how understanding this meaning correctly can impact our lives in the NOW on this side of the grave and not just on the other. I humbly pray that as we begin this expedition into His mighty Word that what I share is His heart and wisdom and not my own because His Word is alive, powerful and sharper than a two edged sword. In comparison, my words are not worth the paper that you printed this and are reading it on.

Let's start what we do know and understand -

Eternal Life Is a Promise and Gift From the Father:

- And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. **1 John 2:25**
- as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. **John 17:2**
- and I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. **John 10:28**
- For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 6:23**
- And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. **1 John 5:11**
- in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, **Titus 1:2**

Secured by the Son

- For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **John 3:16**
- “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. **John 5:24**
- “The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” **John 3:36**

OK, I believe that we can all agree on those basics and they are clear and specific. Now, I want to get to the part that I have misunderstood or more correctly, feel like has been mis-taught in our churches. Let me start with what I believed to be true and then we will dig into why this just is not the case.

Eternal life for believers begins when your life in this body ends. In other words, eternal life begins when our spirit returns to Heaven.

While that is definitely a very significant part of our eternal life, there is so much more to it than that. And that is what I want to spend the remainder of this message sharing with you. Let's first take another look at some of the above verses and the tense of the verbs around them and then we will look closely at the definition and original language for the “eternal.”

- And the testimony is this, that **God has given** us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. **1 John 5:11 (PAST)**
- and I **give** them eternal life, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. **John 10:28 (PRESENT)**
- “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me **has everlasting life**, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. **John 5:24 (PRESENT)**

- "The one who believes in the Son **has eternal life**; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." **John 3:36 (PRESENT)**
- These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. **1 John 5:13 (PRESENT)**
- so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs **having the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:7 (FUTURE)**
- and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This **inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 1 Peter 1:4 (FUTURE)**

Merriam Webster defines eternal as:

- having infinite duration : everlasting. Having no beginning or no end.
- continued without end or interruption : perpetual

Similarly, the Greek that is often translated "eternal" is αἰώνιος - aiōnios can mean - eternal, everlasting, forever or perpetual. Aiōnios can describe that which transcends temporal limits and endures without beginning or end.

HELPS Word Studies puts it this way -

"Eternal (166 /aiōnios) life operates simultaneously outside of time, inside of time, and beyond time – i.e. what gives time its everlasting meaning for the believer through faith, yet is also time-independent.

So, what do we get when we take all of this into consideration?

You are free to come to your own understanding, but my understanding of these passages and specifically these 2 simple but immeasurably powerful words is this - "Eternal Life has no beginning or end. Thus, we are not limited to experiencing the power and benefits of having it in the here and now.'

I believe it is within this concept that we can come to understand and truly walk in verses like -

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. **Galatians 2:20**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **2 Corinthians 5:17**

By the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, we now have the fullness of who God is, now living IN and THROUGH us.

I know the following statement is hard to wrap our earthly minds around, but I believe that IF we can and WILL fully and totally submit to His Lordship, we can live a life of complete and utter victory.

One final thought - What does the Bible say that eternal life is? I will reference one verse.

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. **John 17:3**

Jesus is not referring to a simple knowledge and knowing about who God is, but a tangible knowledge that is the result of experience and personal relationship.

Thus, Eternal Life is a deep personal relationship with our Heavenly Father and His Son by the power of His Holy Spirit that has no beginning or end and can be experienced and lived out in our lives NOW.

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