

After Tomorrow

SESSION THIRTEEN / WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2011

ETERNITY

In this 4-month study, we have covered some key issues:

- The Rapture
- The Tribulation
- The Anti-Christ and the False Prophet
- Babylon
- Armageddon and the Second Coming of Christ
- When the Nations Meet Their King
- The Millennium
- The New Creation
- and other related subjects

Today we close this general study with a glimpse into ETERNITY. **“Infinite time: duration without beginning or end / eternal existence contrasted with mortal life / the timeless state into which the soul will pass at death regarded as timeless or eternal”** - Webster’s College Dictionary

This year has been a historic one in that the weather around the world has been on the “attack.” According to a recent poll (Public Religion Research Institute), 59% of all evangelicals believe natural disasters are a sign from God. According to Jenese Silvey, writer for the Columbia Tribune, “...the year began with reports of red-winged blackbirds dropping dead from the skies over Arkansas, Louisiana and Sweden. February brought blizzards that crippled the country. Then the disasters struck Japan and flood waters rose across the United States, followed by the outbreak that has made this year among the deadliest tornado seasons. A recent study warned cell phone signals are killing off honey bees. Because the insects are responsible for pollinating most of our food crops, it has been suggested that when the bees die, so do we. There is even a plague of locusts invading the Midwest - actually they are cicadas.”

VIDEO: I show you now a video sent me this week of an entire town in Japan being

1 wiped out in six minutes - which is the length of the clip. This is one of the most
2 frightening videos I have ever seen. Watch:

3
4 VIDEO

5
6 So then....do we live in fear? Of course not. Jesus, our Master, said: John 14:1-4
7 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. [2] In my Father's
8 house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place
9 for you. [3] And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you
10 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. [4] And whither I go ye know, and the
11 way ye know.

12
13 It is amazing how many people live in fear. The news frightens them. Situations
14 around them make them uneasy. BUT WHY SHOULD THE CHILD OF GOD NOT BE
15 "TROUBLED?" NOTE HOW THE BIBLE ENDS:

16
17 Rev. 22:1-21

18 **And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of**
19 **the throne of God and of the Lamb. [2] In the midst of the street of it, and on either**
20 **side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and**
21 **yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the**
22 **nations. [3] And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the**
23 **Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: [4] And they shall see his face;**
24 **and his name shall be in their foreheads. [5] And there shall be no night there; and**
25 **they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light:**
26 **and they shall reign for ever and ever.**

27 **[6] And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of**
28 **the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must**
29 **shortly be done. [7] Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of**
30 **the prophecy of this book. [8] And I John saw these things, and heard them. And**
31 **when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which**
32 **shewed me these things. [9] Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy**
33 **fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings**
34 **of this book: worship God. [10] And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the**
35 **prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. [11] He that is unjust, let him be**
36 **unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let**
37 **him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. [12] And, behold, I**
38 **come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work**
39 **shall be. [13] I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the**
40 **last. [14] Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to**

1 the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. [15] For without are
2 dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and
3 whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

4 [16] I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I
5 am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

6 [17] And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.
7 And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life
8 freely.

9 [18] For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this
10 book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues
11 that are written in this book: [19] And if any man shall take away from the words of
12 the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and
13 out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

14 [20] He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so,
15 come, Lord Jesus.

16 [21] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

17 18 GOD IS THE GOD-CREATOR OF ETERNITY

19
20 It is difficult for us mortals to conceive of eternity because we are so bound up in “time.”
21 But a basic comprehension of God’s infinity in relation to time will help us. These next
22 paragraphs are “heavy” so open your thinking abilities to receive some amazing truths.
23 Here are some highlights of basic theology as originally written by Dr. Henry Thiessen in
24 his marvelous book *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, published by Eerdmans press (page
25 122).

- 26
27 • God is without beginning and without ending. He is free from all succession of time.
28 • God is the very CAUSE of time.
29 • He has always existed and will always exist.

30
31 *Genesis 21:33*

32 *And Abraham ... called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.*

33 *Psalms 90:2*

34 *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the
35 world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*

36 *Psalms 102:27*

37 *But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*

38 *Isaiah 57:15*

39 *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy.*

- 1 • God is free from all succession of time. For example, we say, “I am so many years
2 old - and next year I will be one year older than that.” We understand succession of
3 time. But God has a simultaneous possession of his total duration...the whole of the
4 divine knowledge and experience is ever before the divine being so that they are not
5 parts succeeding parts.
- 6 • To God, a billion years ago is just as relevant as this very moment - and the same can
7 be said about a billion years from now. It is all the same to Him.
- 8 • God is, further, the CAUSE of time.

9 Hebrews 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath
10 appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds

11 Hebrews 11:3

12 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that
13 things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. TIME WILL
14 SOMEDAY MERGE INTO ETERNITY!

15 QUESTIONS ABOUT LIVING IN ETERNITY

16 1. How do we know anything about Heaven and eternity at all?

17
18 There are many books that have been written in which the authors talk of near-death or
19 actual death experiences and claim they have been in Heaven or - in cases - Hell. I do
20 not question their sincerity or even the validity of their claim. HOWEVER, I NEED A
21 BETTER SOURCE FOR MY INFORMATION. I have a very good friend who has
22 been in Heaven - without question! - and has given me much information about the place
23 and the eternal experience. My friend's name is Jesus, and His information can be found
24 in His written Word, the Bible.
25
26

27 2. Will we recognize our loved ones in Heaven?

28 1 Cor. 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know
29 in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.
30
31

32
33 In the Gospels we find the story of Christ's transfiguration on Mount Hermon (see Luke
34 9:26-36). Note that immediately, the disciples recognized Elijah and Moses. [30] And,
35 behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: [31] Who appeared
36 in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. [32] But
37 Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake,
38 they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.
39

40 Jesus' men recognized those who “giants” of the Old Testament even though they had

1 never seen them in person. If they could recognize those whom they had NEVER seen,
2 how much more will we recognize those with whom we have lived and worked.

3
4 3. Will there be anyone in Heaven who has committed suicide?

5
6 I believe the answer is “yes.” Not across the board, to be sure; however, it is conceded
7 even by many theologians that some who take their lives were not rational or in their right
8 minds when the suicides happened. Someone has observed from Scripture that it
9 appears that only UNREPENTED SIN locks Heaven’s door. God judges the heart and
10 not necessarily the act of someone who acts under the stress such emotional conflict.
11 Just as God will not condemn a child who has not come of rational age, so I believe He
12 will not condemn an adult who didn’t have full range of his or her faculties. However,
13 bear in mind that suicide undertaken by a rational person is a sin, without question.

14
15 4. Will we have emotions in Heaven?

16
17 St. Augustine observed, “In Heaven the joy that we receive from God in our souls will
18 overflow into our resurrection bodies in a voluptuous torrent of pleasure.” Jesus
19 anticipated joy in eternity: Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher
20 of our faith; **who for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the
21 shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

22
23 Joy is only one of the emotions we will enjoy throughout eternity; but, thankfully missing,
24 will be sadness and heartache. Rev. 7:17 ... and God shall wipe away all tears from
25 their eyes.

26
27 5. Will we not mourn for our loved ones who are lost?

28
29 It sounds almost heartless, but I don’t believe we will. There is a fascinating insight into
30 the mind of Jesus in Matthew 7:23: And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew**
31 **you**: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Jesus actually says He never knew the lost
32 person. Blotted from memory! Think of it! If you miss Heaven and ignore God’s
33 salvation - paid for by Christ’s death on the cross, all memory of you among your friends
34 and family will be blotted out for time and eternity. The citizens of eternal Hell will be a
35 forgotten race - by God and man.

36
37 6. Will we become “little gods” in Heaven?

38
39 Never! There is only one God. So we won’t know everything - even in Heaven. We
40 will still be living by faith. Only God Himself is omniscient. But I believe one of

1 Heaven's greatest joys will be an eternity of gaining knowledge. We will never learn it
2 all, but our joyful education will be everlasting, continual, and full. There are religious
3 groups who teach that one day humans will become little gods; such teaching is heresy
4 and certainly cannot be substantiated by scripture.
5

6 7. Will we all be equal - or the same - in Eternity?
7

8 Wouldn't that be dull! Yes, we will be equal in value and dignity and in God's love for
9 us. But our abilities and interests will more varied than ever before. Someone has
10 written, "One of the chief pleasures of this life, as of the next, is the mutual sharing of
11 different excellences, the pleasure of looking up to someone who is better than we are at
12 something and learning from him or her." I think that's true. I love the great paintings,
13 great sculptures, great musicians. I enjoy watching a golf pro drive the ball 320 yards
14 down the middle of the fairway. Or the magnificence of a master architect. In eternity
15 we will celebrate variety, for God Himself is the Creator of variety. Consider a massive
16 African elephant; now consider a duck-billed platypus. Variety? I should say so. Why
17 would it be any different in Eternity?
18

19 8. What kind of bodies will we have in Eternity?
20

21 Some religions teach that we will be mere spirits, or angels. But Christians know from
22 the Bible that we will be blessed with transformed BODIES, just as Jesus had following
23 His resurrection. His body could be touched. Jesus could eat. Yet it could also pass
24 through solid walls and even ascend into the clouds. Our bodies will be eternal and
25 perfect.
26

27 9. Will nature play a role in Eternity?
28

29 I have been so blessed to visit many of the natural wonders of this planet: the Grand
30 Canyon, the islands of the sea, Victoria Falls, Mount McKinley, and so many other of
31 Earth's grandest vistas. Would eternity be less than this? I think not. In God's new
32 Heavens and new Earth, His wonders will transcend anything we have ever known here.
33

34 10. Will there be music in Heaven?
35

36 Many have considered Phil Driscoll as the greatest trumpet player in the world. (Among
37 them Doc Severinson, former leader and trumpet player on the Carson Tonight Show.)
38 Driscoll has given concerts in this sanctuary on several occasions. On one of those
39 occasions, Phil told me he had a vision of Heaven. He spoke of unlimited abilities to
40 sing and play, with ranges of both vocal chords and instruments that transcend anything

1 we have known here. Furthermore, he said, "In my vision all the music was in actual
2 color. You could not only hear it, but see it."
3

4 The book of Revelation teaches us about songs. Rev. 5:9 And they sung a new song,
5 saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast
6 slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and
7 people, and nation;
8

9 11. How old will we be in Heaven?
10

11 The question is impossible to answer since there will be no more "time." But I believe
12 that no one in eternity will ever grow old, or sick. Perhaps it could be said that we will
13 be both young and old - young in vitality and health while wise in the wisdom of years.
14

15 12. What language will we speak?
16

17 Pastor Tito Gonzalez has told me repeatedly that it will be SPANISH. I suspect that we
18 will both speak and understand any and all languages so it won't really matter. One
19 thing can be assured of: there will be no misunderstanding, no confusion.
20

21 13. Isn't all this talk about Heaven and Eternity just "escapism?"
22

23 C. S. Lewis observed that the only person he ever met who was against "escapism" was a
24 jailer. "Is it escapist for a baby to wonder about life outside the womb? Is it escapist
25 for someone on a long ocean voyage to wonder about landfall? Is it escapist for the seed
26 to dream of the flower?" Call it what you will: our talk and dreaming of Heaven is of
27 the place God has prepared for us. Do we want to go there where everything is perfect
28 and there will be no pain, no death, no tears? YES!
29

30 These questions are but a few of the scores, yes, hundreds, of questions we could ask.
31 One thing is sure, all our questions will be answered more than satisfactorily when our
32 knowledge is complete.
33

34 There is an old Gospel song that tells it as it truly is:
35

36 *Often I'm hindered on my way / burden so heavy I almost fall*
37 *Then I hear Jesus sweetly say / Heaven will surely be worth it all*
38

39 *Many the trials, toils and tears / many a heartache may here apall*
40 *But the dear Lord so truly says / Heaven will surely be worth it all*

1 *Toiling and pain I will endure / till I shall hear the death angel call*
2 *Jesus has promised and I'm sure / Heaven will surely be worth it all*

3
4 ***Chorus***

5
6 *Heaven will surely be worth it all / worth all the sorrows that here befall*
7 *After this life with all its strife / Heaven will surely be worth it all*

8
9 THERE WILL BE SECOND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SALVATION WHEN
10 ETERNITY BEGINS:

11
12 Rev. 22:10-12

13 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is
14 at hand. [11] He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be
15 filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him
16 be holy still. [12] And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every
17 man according as his work shall be.

18
19 Our lives will by then have been sealed in eternal stone. What is done is truly DONE.

20
21 NOTE THE DIVINE INVITATION THAT IS STILL IN EFFECT EVEN NOW:

22
23 Rev. 22:17

24 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let
25 him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

26
27 ONE FINAL NOTE:

28
29 Rev. 22:20

30 He which testifieth these things saith, **Surely I come quickly**. Amen. Even so, come,
31 Lord Jesus.

32
33 Our Lord was not telling John He would return at any moment at that particular time;
34 rather He was saying that when He comes, it will be without warning - QUICKLY!

35
36 Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus! Amen.

37
38
39 *Next Wednesday: we start a brand new series: THE JESUS NOBODY KNOWS! I*
40 *believe this is the most important study we have done so far. How much do you really*

1 *know about Jesus? The Jesus of the Scriptures is a far, far cry from the One often*
2 *preached in our pulpits. I think this study will surprise you. And I know it will bless*
3 *you.*

4
5 *Please come and bring a friend with you.*
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