

## **HC 58- What is Eternal Life Look Like, Now and later?**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There have been hundreds of songs written about heaven and heavenly feelings. According to some of those songs you will get heaven or heavenly feelings if you use a certain shampoo, or if you drive a certain type of BMW, or if you eat a certain type of ice-cream, or if you marry the right person. I know what the songs are trying to do: They want to exaggerate 夸大 the greatness of the joy from a thing or person so you would desire it or the person.

But can we really grasp what heaven is truly like? We will consider today from God's Word what he teaches about heaven and everlasting life. And as we did the last time, we will be guard ourselves not to go beyond what Scriptures say and remember to stymie 阻碍 our curiosity 好奇心 into areas in which the Lord does not allow.

Our headings are: **Everlasting life in this world, Everlasting life out of this world, and Everlasting Life: How do you prepare?**

Our goals are: **That you will rejoice in the future blessings you will find in Jesus Christ and that that will motivate 刺激 you to diligently 用心地 work for him now.**

58 Q. HOW DOES THE ARTICLE CONCERNING "LIFE EVERLASTING" COMFORT YOU?

A. Even **as I already now experience in my heart the beginning of eternal joy**, so after this life I will have **perfect blessedness such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no man has ever imagined**: a blessedness in which to praise God eternally.

### **Everlasting Life in this World**

**1. Eternal life begins in this world.** You have that guarantee now. It is absolutely certain. God was willing and he was able to give you eternal life. God's Holy Spirit worked in you causing you to received God's promise of eternal through faith. The Holy Spirit convinced you that you had eternal life. Nothing is able to separate you from the love of God and the promise of God...not persecution...not poverty...not anything...is able to separate you from God's love.

John 10:28 "And **I give them eternal life**, and they shall **never perish**; neither shall anyone snatch 抢夺 them out of My hand.

1John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you **may know** that **you have eternal life**, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

The doctrine of eternal life is horribly understood and taught by Arminians. Arminians believe they can have eternal life and then lose it. Does that make any sense? If one has eternal life...how can eternal life be lost? The phrase "eternal life" means "life which cannot end." Maybe this is a good way to challenge an Arminian. Tell him: You don't believe in eternal life. If he says he does, then ask him how can that which is eternal cease 停止 to be eternal? Let him defend 捍卫 his error. Remember John 3:16-18.

**2. There are additional blessings you can receive in this world as part of your eternal life. Your blessings of eternal life are not limited to when you die and go to heaven.**

Mark 10:29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 **who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time**—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

I know the Lord was not saying that you will get 100 mothers or 100 houses. There is no guarantee that you will be rich, or healthy, or famous in this life. The Lord meant simply meant that you will get something worth more than a house, or a brother, or a sister, or a mother, or a wife, or a child, or property. What then are some of those blessings you will receive on top of your place in heaven? If you have eternal life **you don't need to worry about anything**... You **can never lose your eternal life**. When people are panicking 惊慌失措 from unemployment...**you won't panic because you know that Jesus Christ has provided greater things for you already –so a job is a small thing**. When others fear a terrorist attack, **you won't fear**. You know that the worse terrorist is limited by your God. When people are afraid to die, **you will smile when death comes** to you... **You won't fret 烦恼** when a Christian who is close to you dies. You know that is best for them. Your whole view of life changes when you become a Christian. God graciously strengthens you every day...and reconfirms that you are eternally secured.

2Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the **inward man is being renewed day by day**.

**3. You will show the evidence for eternal life in this world by grabbing hold of Christ's promises** and living with that ardent 殷切的 hope.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

So if you find that you are despondent 沮丧的 and dejected 萎靡的 from time to time, see if you are failing to grab hold of promise of eternal life. Like Arminians, you can be a Christian but yet rob yourself of the joy that God offers to you. Let God remind you daily that you are his for eternity. Go to his Word. Your Father has your future sown up 播种, don't live in poverty and eat husks 糠 like beggars.

## **Everlasting Life out of this World**

**1. Having established that you have eternal life in this world and that it is not just** some future activity, but a present reality, let us now examine the fullness of eternal life out of this world. Every believer in Jesus Christ will be taken to heaven and enjoy the fullness of life there.

### **2. First, look at the biblical basis of this doctrine in the New and Old Testaments:**

John 17: 1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that **He should give eternal life** to as many as You have given Him. 3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

John 6:54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood **has eternal life**, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God **is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 25:46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into **eternal life.**"

John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that **where I am, there you may be also.**

There was always the sure hope of heaven among the Old Testament saints. The Psalmist said in Psalm 73 that there is not a time that he is not with or will not be with the Lord. Another example is Job. He knew and longed for heaven!

Job 19:27 **Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!**

**3. What will you not have in heaven?** There will be no tears in heaven. There will be no sorrows in heaven. All will be glorious in that land. There with your Savior you'll live and reign forever. There will be no dead bodies there...not half-eaten corpses. No child will whine 抱怨 about who looked at him and who didn't. No civil judge will tell you if you speak the truth of God's Words is evidence of hate. No husband will ever forget to take the garbage out. No one will struggle to communicate in foreign languages. No husband/wife arguments. All things will be new there.

Psalms 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.

10 For **You will not leave my soul in Sheol**, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

**4. What will characterize eternal life in heaven?** When God gives you something it is of the **perfect quality**. His gifts are always good...the best. So everyone in heaven will be perfect. Each one will listen enough and talk enough. No one will bottle up 抑制 and no one will give the silent treatment. Every single one of your needs will be met. And then there will be **incredible blessings that you cannot fully understand or imagine then**. You will have unspeakable joy. If you think a child has joy when he sees his birthday cake...or opens a present...or if you think that joy is seeing your bride come down the aisle...you "ain't see nothing yet."

1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

The thing for which the Apostle Paul was waiting was beyond anything anyone had seen on earth before. Consider his sense of awe.

Psalm 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. 10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 11 You will show me the path of life; **In Your presence is fullness of joy**; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 17:15 As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; **I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.**

You might be joyful with your children, but that joy is quickly shattered when they do something wrong. But now the Psalmists describe heaven as pure joy. Don't try to pry 窥探 into the details. Just know that it will be so good...indescribable.

**4. There are some who will live but in hell in torment 痛苦. It is rightly called eternal death because they will be eternally separated from God.** But you will be able to enjoy the richest blessings of God forever. You will see Jesus Christ there. What an amazing thing-to be able to see the face of Jesus Christ when you wake up from your death! It is wonderful to wake up and know that your husband or wife...or parents are there to care for you and love you, but imagine what it is like when you open your eyes and see your loving Savior – a Savior who gave his life for you! And then he says: “Come, your warfare has ended...your struggles are over...rest in eternity with me!” Yes, **everlasting life is greater and sweeter than the best spouse you can have in this world,** regardless of what they say in the love songs. This is why there is no marriage in eternal life. There you will be like the angels...and you will be in the presence of your Savior forever...

### **Everlasting Life: How do you prepare?**

**1. Desire eternal life. Look forward to being delivered from this body and be taken to heaven.**

Philippians 1:23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

When you keep your hearts thinking on heaven it will incentivize 激励 your work in this world.

**2. Since your blessings of heaven will be commensurate 相称 with how faithfully you serve your Savior now, work hard.** And don't worry. No one will be jealous if you have more rewards than they. And keep in mind that since your good works are not pure, they only earn you a reward because you offer them through Christ. So do not become proud of what you accomplish.

Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

What works can you do to prepare for heaven? Pray. Help the poor. Be patient. Care for the weak. Know God's Words. Daily confess your sins. Speak of Christ's love and justice.

### **Conclusion:**

As a blood-bought believer, you can begin to enjoy eternal life in this world, not by how much stuff you accumulate, but by the blessings and comforts you have in your heart. Later, you will enter into eternal life in fullness in heaven. There you will find no night, no pain, no betrayals, no death, no destruction, no disaster, no boredom, no fear, and no dissatisfaction. There in heaven you will find peace and joy beyond present human ability to understand. You will enjoy friends in fullness. You will be in that household of God and praise God in perfection.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: 1. Knowing what is waiting for you, how then shall you live? Don't worry. Don't be bothered by the fact that the wicked intoxicate 使陶醉 themselves with the excesses of life 过度的生活 and seem in good health, while your life seems hard. Remember, their pleasures vanish like the dew in sunshine. 2. Instead, love him and rejoice in hope. 1Pe 1:8: ...whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory..." 3. The show that love by your faithful obedience.

Finally, eternal life is a reward only for those who have peace with God through Jesus Christ. If you don't have that peace, pray. Pray and ask God to accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as a substitute 替代 for your judgment. If you sincerely ask, he will hear. He will respond and receive you and give you eternal life.