

K-489 the Eternal Perspective (2 of 2)

by Art Katz

The eternal perspective is a view of life that sees the world as temporary and the afterlife as eternal, requiring a radical shift in mindset and lifestyle.

Duration: 52:23

Scripture: Hebrews 11:9-12

Topics: "Eternal Perspective"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker criticizes the prevalent focus on worldly benefits and personal decisions in evangelism. He argues that this approach lacks an eternal perspective and may not lead to true salvation. The speaker shares his experience of preaching about the day of the Lord's judgment at a university, which was met with hostility and resistance. He emphasizes the need for a lifestyle that reflects an understanding of the impending judgment and the end of the world, rather than being consumed by worldly pursuits and concerns.

Transcript

I would call this second portion Implications for Lifestyle. Don't think you're going to entertain a view as grand as this and not have it to have some consequence for your lifestyle. There has got to be.

We will be the world's worst phonies. This requires something. And who can find in the text that we have already been considering the statement of that? Chapter 11 of Hebrews.

Of course, we've already read in chapter 10 about those that took their spoiling joyfully. But there's one pregnant statement. In chapter 11, I would finger verse 13.

These all. These all not only died in faith, not having received the promises, but were persuaded of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Verse 9 too? That's right.

He said, during the land of promise, dwelling. This changes our whole status. Our whole earthly tenure is radically altered if we really embrace this view.

And I would just raise it as a rhetorical question. How many Christians see themselves, desire to be, or are seen by others as being pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners in the earth? And I want to just go on record as saying that must be the inevitable consequence of an embracing of this view in truth. What does that

mean? Why are you made a pilgrim and a stranger? What does that suggest, pilgrim, stranger, sojourner? You're permanently ruined to be one of the boys.

You'll never be comfortable in the world. You'll be chafed by it. You can never succeed in it and be at home.

You're always looking for something beyond another. If that's really the description of true church, it's got to be necessarily a small number. Who knows what it feels like to be strange? How prickly a feeling that is.

Because everything that is in modern society is to win you to feeling like others and being accepted and being approved. But to feel yourself odd and strange and never able comfortably to fit in is not something that is gratifying for the flesh. And in the earth, for those of us who are fascinated with messianic things or other expressions of religious culture that is really more earthly than it is spiritual, that's one of the things to which you will become strange.

It will lose its fascination, its allure. It will not mean to you what it did previously when you take into your spirit the eternal view. When you're heavenly minded, I made here a little note to myself.

It's not that we have not believed that there's an eternity, but that we have agreed with the world that it is applicable only when this life is ended. We do not mentally inhabit the world of the scriptures as the real world. To bear upon our discussion of human affairs, we do not cultivate this as a mindset.

We do not bring to the implication in our conversation and the things that we address. We do not require men to choose for or against God. There's something about taking this in that enables you to stand on Mars Hill and to say to the philosophers, God has appointed a day in which you will judge all men by that man whom he has raised from the dead.

And that God has winked until now, and times passed, but now commands all men everywhere to repent. Paul, being the citizen of heaven, could speak to Greek philosophers these things as being utterly real. He wasn't just expressing a religious category.

This was reality. And he wasn't saying that you had to have a background in scripture to understand it. He required an understanding.

He announced it as being the declarative truth. He made it to bear upon all their categories. They would be held accountable from that day forward.

In the day of eternity, having heard Paul once, they would be held liable for that one statement of the truth that God has appointed a day, that there's a judgment day. This whole view must reckon on the day of the Lord and upon judgment and upon heaven and upon hell. We've talked about heaven, but we've not talked about hell.

And the reason we have not considered hell is because we've not considered heaven. If hell is nothing more than the rejection of heaven or the loss of heaven, it's hell enough. But we've lost both the sense of reward and the sense of penalty.

And therefore, unlike Paul, we cannot persuade men knowing the terror of God. How has the absence of this eternal perspective affected our contemporary evangelistic practices? Is our present evangelism consummate with this apostolic view of things eternal? Think of it. What is the drift? What's the main

theme of our evangelism as a rule? Membership? Making a decision? Sales pitch? God has a plan for your life, the benefit that you'll receive.

It's this world-oriented and this present life-oriented. Not to say that there are not those benefits, but I can hardly imagine that anyone who is, quote, saved on that basis is saved on a foundation that will enable them to endure and to overcome until the end. It may well be that the whole queasy character of the church and the carnal character and the tremendous fallout rate has something to do with the kind of message that people are hearing from the beginning that is not centered in an eternal view of the kind that Paul had.

Why would the church itself shrink from it? Have you noticed how some minister is called to initiate the sessions of Congress by opening in prayer? That there's a kind of dalliance between the world and the church by which we sanctify this present world and endorse it. We do not challenge its assumptions, which is that it is good or it will get better and it will go on forever. We are not bringing to the attention of the world that its time is up, that its time is limited, that God has established a day in which he will judge all men, that the world is under judgment, and that God is not slack concerning his promises that the day of the Lord will come, but he's not willing that any should perish.

Instead, in not voicing that message and condescending to bring a religious dimension to the secular world for which we get tax-deductible benefit, we reinforce the world in its life. We allow them to go on without any consciousness of eternity and the eternal issues of heaven and hell. And because we ourselves are not that persuaded of heaven, we're not equally able to persuade men of hell.

If you're robbed of eternity, if eternity is only a category and not a passionate conviction, how do we address the world? There are really tremendous practical implications and if the church is not evangelistic in the apostolic sense, how is it the church? For what is the principal function of the church but to proclaim the gospel of this kingdom? We would have to take a week to... We threw a stone into the water and now the ripples are going out. We'd have to consider the church, its purpose, how it functions, its mentality, its message, and see that in every area it has been affected by the absence of the view that we're speaking of today. And probably the reason is that few of us have a stomach for being strange.

Pilgrims, separate from, looked upon differently, not only in the world but even by other Christians. Probably the greatest place where the church is ridiculed is the issue of the last day as judgment. There's nothing that the world likes to lampoon than some guy with a beard and a sandwich board announcing that the day of the Lord is at hand.

It's really the most foolish of all of the church's message is a day of judgment. And yet it's the most critically needed. And there's never a time historically when we're closer to it than now.

But who can embrace that message? That the judge is at the door. It's distasteful even to us, let alone to proclaim it to others. And so it goes with the whole thing.

If we're going to appropriate and restore the view of eternity, the day of judgment and God as judge has got itself also to be restored. But not just as a category or something that's technically true, but with an abiding conviction that can convey it. God would hold all men who heard Paul that day on Mars Hill accountable.

Why? You know the wording there in Acts 17? And they clave unto Paul and believed. Some scoffed and said we'll hear again of this. Some said, you know, they turned this babbling away.

But some clave unto Paul and believed. Just hearing him once. What's the implication of that? To bring the message of judgment is an uttermost requirement.

Have you ever felt your faith fail? Have you ever felt the virtue go out of you? You can pray for somebody with a cold, but you can't pray for a demon deliverance when someone is farthing at the mouth or writhing on the floor. You can pray for healing for someone who has an abscess, but if someone is sitting in a wheelchair and has not walked for 30 years and you have to pray for them, you can just feel the strength go out of you, the virtue and the power go out of you. Your faith is not sufficient to the requirement.

We're all in a different place of faith. And what I'm saying by that is, to proclaim the message of judgment requires an ultimate faith, requires an apostolic faith. It requires where the man must be the message.

And I don't say that I've attained. When we had the outreach at Bemidji State University, after 10 days of fasting and prayer, 24 hours around the clock here at Ben Israel, that series of meetings began in uttermost absurdity and foolishness. Setting up our little microphone outdoors and then coming into the student union building in the cafeteria at noon when everyone was breaking and coming in, faculty and students, and the message that the Lord had given me to begin was the day of the Lord's judgment.

You want to feel like a jerk? You want to feel like an ass? You want to feel like a turd? You want to feel strange? Preach judgment in a university setting. That the Lord has appointed a day in which he will judge and that you will be accountable for that on the basis of hearing me now, this day, in this place. I watched a steam smoke come out of the ears of men.

We had one brother with us who was a black belt in karate and he was just chomping and nervously pacing, wondering when the moment would come when he would have to come out of the woodwork and defend me against an outraged mob. There's something about that that brings a people to a fury. They want to put their fingers in their ears and rush upon you and gnash with their teeth.

Why? You're reading a death toll. You're saying what you guys are about is deception. You've been sold away.

There's an end at hand. There's a God you must know or you will suffer an unspeakable eternal consequence. And the only thing that will save you is believing the message coming from me because it's pleased God to... How does he say it? By preaching to save them that will believe.

It's pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them who will believe. You know what I'm getting at? I'm trying to show you why it is that the Church over the course of time has moved away from the apostolic orientation. This view of eternity is not a luxury.

It's a precious and emancipating view, but it carries implications that are fearful and require a real faith. And it will make you a candidate to be spoiled. Maybe not only your goods but yourself because those who don't want to hear will not only put their fingers in the ears but mash upon the speaker with his teeth and remove him from their sight.

This might actually precipitate a violence against us. Can you understand the sense of offense? This is scandal. It's one thing to be religiously pluralistic and talk about many great faiths and different schools of

faith and cultures that we need to respect, but to be so absolute in the insistence on your faith and to say that except you receive my view, you shall assuredly perish is the height of offense against modernity, against the world, against everything that is liberal and reasonable and intelligent and sensible.

Many paths to truth. Are you willing to bear that offense? Not only in your words but in your person because if you don't have it in your person, your words will not succeed. If you're not bearing eternity with you and in you, your words will not succeed.

Remember, what does it say in Hebrews 10 about those who joyfully took the spoiling of their goods? Knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and an enduring... They know something in themselves. The thing that made Paul so effectual is that he not only spoke of the things that were eternal, he was himself the demonstration of it. So I believe that the issue of eternity needs to be pressed on the consciousness of an unbelieving world because it has been robbed of it, but it's going to take something to persuade men.

Paul said, Knowing the terror of God, I persuade men. So the same one who saw the things that were invisible and eternal saw the issues of hell as much as he understood the issues and the blessings of heaven. And when we speak of it, do we speak of it as an opinion or as a conviction? Are we living in the reality of those things or just subscribing to the biblical truth of it and can express it to men as an opinion of what we believe is true? What's required is men who will come out from the eternal place to persuade men of its truth.

What one thing has God given that we can taste the powers of the age to come now? Remember the scripture that speaks about having once tasted of the power of the age to come and then turned, that for them there's no remedy, something like that? How do you taste, in this life, how do you taste of the power of the age to come? The resurrection life, experience in the spirit that is given to us as a token or a, what's the word? A down payment of the fullness of that glory that comes with the millennial age. We are already at the eschatological frontier. We are already tasting and moving in the spirit of what will be pronounced in the age to come in the measure that we have it.

But I want to say, if you can understand me, that even the spirit of God and the gifts of the spirit and the power of the spirit does not carry the apocalyptic future sense that it should because we have turned it fully to being fitted into the purposes of this present age. I've just given you a definition for the charismatic movement. The thing that is given of God as the foretaste and the token of the age to come has become very much fitted in to the religious purposes of men in this age to renew denominations or to improve meetings or however else it's understood.

So even the issue of the spirit, pneumatology it's called, needs to be fitted into the context of this whole apostolic view of things eternal and things future which was God's original intention. Paul could speak of that God has appointed a day in which he will judge all men by that man whom he has raised from the dead and when they heard of the resurrection some scoffed and said, others said we will hear again but some claimed unto Paul and believed because the issue of the resurrection is the issue of judgment is the issue of eternity. Resurrection is already the power of the age to come and we could not receive the Pentecostal blessing of the spirit until there was a resurrected and ascended Lord to send it down from heaven and what we have received is the spirit of the same power that raised him from the dead and is exhibited in our own resurrection reality.

The whole issue of men hearing Paul on Mars Hill was the degree to which he could convince them that though they knew nothing of the resurrection of Jesus historically that they would see the reality in Paul himself. Paul himself was a man raised from the dead. Is that true? He lay three days neither eating nor drinking and he was blind after his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus.

He had to be led away by the hand as a child until hands were laid upon him he had no light, he had no life he was like a dead hulk. Biologically his heart was still beating but the life had gone out of him and it was supremely the life of the world Judaistic full of the wisdom of the world in which he was a superb expression and he lay like a dead man emptied until life and light were conferred by the laying on of the hands of a simple believer Ananias. He was raised from the dead.

Paul said for me to live is Christ in him I move and live and have my being. He was eminently the man of resurrection. There's no other way to understand Paul.

I'm grieved to the death by anyone who applauds Paul as if he were the thing in himself. The genius of Paul is the life of Christ that had a continuance in another vessel completely surrendered to that life. That's why he said I count all things as done.

And he was talking about Jewish intellect religious background learning erudition that I might win Christ. When people say well Paul's attitude toward women I disagree with this. Well you're disagreeing with Christ.

All that came out of that man was the life of Christ in him and through him. I think that we can walk as men of the resurrection right from the inception of that life in us if we're willing to forsake any dependency upon our natural life. That possibility always exists.

And God brought Paul to places of despairing for his own life that the only thing that could succeed would be the life of God. Because to walk apostolically is to always be beyond measure. How long it took for him to come to that place I don't know.

But many believers never come to that place for they will not forfeit the security and the assurance of what is available to them out of their own life. They would much rather trust in their own ability to get by than to forfeit that dependence and trust for the life that has come down from above. And I'm saying that if we're going to proclaim the message of eternity persuasively in these last days it can never be done religiously out of our own ability but must be eminently out of that life.

And that life is the testimony to the message. That life is already the statement of the ages to come. It is the power of the age to come.

So there's a whole, not only an adjustment of our mindsets to embrace a view of the faith but a whole requirement to shift gears and come into the actuality of that faith which is beyond the charismatic dimension. And that's what is so fearful and that's what makes us strange. You remember in that place where it says that they vowed that they would neither eat nor drink until he were dead? Or they threw dirt on their heads and they cried out, this man is not fit to live.

See, not only must the scandal of this gospel be registered on our soul, we've lost the sense of this. What we call the gospel today has been so world accommodating another kind of religious alternative amongst other religious options in a world of religious pluralism. But the scandal of the apostolic gospel, the exclusive absoluteness of it, the issue of eternity that rests with it, that we'll not consider any

condescension to any other religious thing, we don't know that.

That's the scandal. And when we will begin to proclaim that in apostolic authority, by resurrection power, they'll be saying of us, they're not fit to live. We need to understand why Paul was so detestable.

He was despised. He was loathed by the Jewish community. They could not stand his guts.

The man is not fit to live. They threw dust in the air upon their heads and they vowed not to eat or drink until he was dead. Why was he so offensive? Because he was not only proclaiming, he was the personification, the demonstration of the life to come, of the ages to come, of the kingdom to come that threatens the kingdoms of this present world, even that purport to be in God's own name, called Judaism.

You understand that? And that's our calling. That's what we're going to represent and express in the last days. Nothing has changed.

I think that the gospel is the wisdom of God. I think the gospel is the counsel of God. I think the gospel is what we've been talking about today.

It's the good news of a coming kingdom, of a theocratic rule, of a millennial reign and glory, of a new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. And hurry now because the age is coming to an end and be saved out of it while you can and be separated from this untoward and unregenerate generation. That's the gospel.

But because we've lost the setting, we've reduced it to a formula. And a formula does not require apostolic authority or resurrection power to proclaim and to demonstrate. Paul not only was the proclaimer, he was the demonstrator.

He was a living embodiment of what he was speaking. He himself was the issue of the resurrection. Or else what was he? He was a babbler.

He was a despised Hebrew there in the midst of the most affluent and erudite Greeks, the Epicureans and the Stoics, the highest statement of civilization. And yet what saved him from being just a foolish little curiosity or an oddity? He was the man who came to them from eternity, from the world that is to come, saying, look, what I'm telling you is true because I'm coming to you from that world and that is the true world and the one that you are occupying is a phantom. It will soon dissipate away.

And when this eternal moment comes, you'll be found eternally embarrassed and you'll shriek that you've been barking up the wrong tree, seeking for some new knowledge, hearing of some new thing. I'm telling you what alone will save you and I'm the evidence of the truth of it. This is apostolic preaching.

This is the apostolic message and it can only be performed in the apostolic power, which is the power of the age to come, not only who believe in the truth of eternity, but who already occupy it and come to men from that place. Eternity is in there now. It has come into their present consideration and their present living and to that degree, it makes them strange in this world.

It makes you a Sojourner. It makes you a pilgrim. It's painful for me to go to Israel.

I was telling somebody this morning or last night, the visible corruption of Jerusalem comes right through the cracks of the street and the cheap sleazy construction and the whole sense of it is so unbecoming to the seat of royal and eternal rule. It shouts at me that this cannot be it. This must be transfigured.

Something must happen to bring a resurrection out of a death of what I'm presently seeing. The very message that those that live there do not want to hear, though they believe. See how resurrection itself has become only for us a doctrine.

We give, we accede to the truth of it doctrinally and think that we have satisfied the requirement of God. But the issue of the Holy Spirit as the token of the age to come, the Spirit seen in the eschatological context of God, the issue of resurrection as the statement of that life which we have already tasted and which will be the life of that kingdom, these are the realities in which we should now presently move, live, and have our being. But imagine the dislocations.

Imagine the consequences. We might find ourselves at odds with our own families. So I'm just scratching at something, lest you be deceived to think that we enjoyed a nice first session this morning in a really liberating view of the faith without thinking that necessarily there must be profound implications of how we would necessarily live if we embrace it.

So what are the implications for lifestyle? Is there an apocalyptic lifestyle? If you think that this world is under judgment and is doomed and is soon to end, how then ought you to be living? And the greatest mock that we have performed in recent generations is to speak about the last days. We love the last days. We're talking about last days, truths, and blah, blah, blah, blah.

But at the same time, we're seeing through it that our kids are going to college, that they're going to obtain a career. We're concerned about our retirement. We're talking out of two sides of the mouth at the same time.

We say we subscribe to the end times, but we're living as if there is no end, that the world will not only go on, but hopefully go on in a better way. We are not so much apostolic as we are ameliorists and believe and hope for improvement. The world gets uglier and uglier, more and more vile, but can you improve what God has condemned? Guys, we are at the threshold of the end of the age and of the commencement of the millennial and eternal glory of God.

And what do you think will be the requirement of that church that will affect this transition, that will conclude the age of human government, long ruled over and manipulated by the powers of darkness, who to this hour know that their time is short and will not let go without a fury, and the bringing in of these things through a restored Israel? We don't have a message for Israel and we will not bring Israel to jealousy except we be the eschatological, apocalyptic people who are living in the eternal realm. Nothing less than that will move them to jealousy. Nothing less than that is going to impress them and God has calculated that it should be that way.

This is something that requires a totality toward God. This requires an utterness toward God. Nothing less than confessing that I am a stranger, pilgrim, and sojourner in the earth.

And for those who say such things, God is not ashamed to be their God and has prepared for them a city. Have you ever said such things? Hold fast the confession of your faith? Have you confessed this apocalyptic faith? Fearful, there's believing and believing. Now the just shall live by this faith.

And the invisible cloud of witnesses that are around us today are waiting because without us they are not yet made perfect. I don't think we've heard from God yet. Certainly we're not going to plot this ourselves.

Like I'm now an end-time saint and I confess that I'm a pilgrim and stranger and now we're not going to make a game of this. But I believe that the Lord knows those that are his. Well, how did we come to this place? How did we leave a 17-room house in Plainfield, New Jersey with two Valvos to come to this mud hole? Because somewhere along the line I had said to the Lord, whatever it takes for your last day's fulfillment, save me from being a bright Jewish personality that is going to make a splash and reserve me for your finest last day's true work, whatever it takes.

And the Lord then unfolded supernaturally, spoke on that piece of ground, end-time teaching center, community refuge, and that's all, and that word set things in motion that have resulted in what's going on now. The Lord is able. The Lord knows those that are his.

He has... Look at the text. Hebrews 11, verse 16, But now they desire a better country that is a heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. That's more than what the ultimate thing, if he's taken pains to prepare for them a city, that is to say a place in the millennial glory, what about their present pilgrimage? Was he mindless about Abraham's when he said, Follow me in the land that I will show you? So it's a whole more radical being thrust upon God.

How should we live? But the Lord is looking for sincerity of heart. He's not satisfied that we subscribe to the vocabulary of the end times as some new plaything, but that we have realized the utterness and seriousness of it, and we're not going to make conventional decisions and go on as if the world will go on endlessly. How ought we to live in the sense of an impending judgment on the world? The time is short.

Paul said, I would have that you would not be distracted. Let those that be married be as though they were not. That would be insane counsel today.

Anybody who would preach that from the pulpit or any pastor who would proclaim that would lose himself a job. And Paul said that 2,000 years ago because that's when this end-time dispensation began. What ought we to say 2,000 years later? Israel ready to explode in its unhappy situation.

Anti-Semitism accelerating the world over. The last day's dealings of God sifting with that people ready to explode at any moment. The world coming unhinged.

Countries exploding before our sight. There's no such thing as Yugoslavia anymore. Systematic destruction, genocidal destruction, rape as a wholesale policy.

I can't pick up an issue of Newsweek magazine or anything. It's a scandal from beginning to end. What's happening in Hollywood and prostitution, the films, the whole filth and muck, it's at an end.

How ought we to live and what ought we to be doing? How much time is left to confront the dying world? To blow the whistle, to say, hey, wake up. You're in a fool's paradise. You think this is going to go on.

The Lord's at the door. The world is under judgment. Can't you see that the UN, that there's not a... The nations are hamstrung.

We don't know what to do about Serbia. There's nothing we can do. There's a certain kind of hopelessness that has come upon the world.

Maybe I know it better than you guys. I've lived longer in it. And I grew up in generations that had yet some hope, politically speaking, when JFK was president.

It was when he was assassinated that I was hitchhiking in Europe in the trip that culminated in my conversion. And when that happened, something snapped like... That's the end of hope for political... in a political way. And the world then was so much simpler and clearer and purer than it is now.

Now filth and perversion are celebrated. Now they are advanced as being superior to biblical modes of living. That is deprecated and denigrated and mocked.

Wherever you look, I mean, the world is... is at total impasse, staggering and lurching like a drunken thing moving toward its doom. Peter saw more biblically and more apocalyptically what the sign of the spirit meant. The sun will be darkened and the moon will turn to blood.

He saw the apocalyptic context. And therefore, why did 3000 come to the kingdom in his preaching? Because they also had grown up in the mindset of the scriptures that had been lost to us. They were expecting an end.

And they thought it was coming then. Here was the sign of the spirit. He's warning them from Joel.

What must we do to be saved? How do we get saved out of this destruction that's coming upon the world? Believe and call upon the name of Jesus and be baptized for the remission of your sin. That's what gave that message that urgency. That brought such a remarkable response and harvest of souls.

What he didn't understand was that there was yet a 2000-year parenthesis for the development of the church and then the final conclusion. So was God deceiving that generation? Where Peter says, the day of the Lord will come. God's not slack.

There was a certain sense of imminence, immediacy, urgency that made the apostolic church of the early times church. Its message was urgent. Its consequence was effective.

They shook the world. They turned it upside down because they expected these things. Was God deceiving them? Knowing that there was yet a 2000-year interlude before the end would in fact come? Well, evidently for the development of a church that would be his instrument for Israel's deliverance and also the proclaimer of the message of the last days to a dying world.

And why it takes this long, I don't know. But what does it say in the scriptures? And he who will come will come in a little while. So for the Lord 2000 years is a little while.

But if you begin to see apostolically, you know what you see? Nothing has changed. We are in an unbroken continuum of the issues of the faith as it was struck then and is still and is now coming to conclusion. That's what we need to see.

Knowing that there was going to be a parenthesis in the 2000-year interval, why did he allow the church at the first to go on in that sense of urgency and that dynamic of expectancy of the urgent issues of eternity that persuaded their generation? Was he allowing them to operate in a lie, in a deception? Why didn't God straighten them out? If the issues are the same, every generation faces those same issues. We're faced with anti-Christ opposition. We're faced with the issue of Israel and the Jew.

We're faced with the coming of the Lord. It's as if God would have the church of every generation to live in an expectancy of the end as being normative to true church living. That this is the apostolic mentality that should characterize the church in any generation, how much more so the last.

Now, contend for the faith once and for all, given the saints. And I want to say, if you don't even know it in your own experience, except you contend for it, you'll never obtain it. And once obtaining it, you'll lose it.

Because everything is calculated against it. I gave this message in Lausanne, Youth with a Mission, I don't know, seven years ago? And as I was looking over my comments, I said, even here, I can't get up in the morning, they're asking me, what do I want to eat for breakfast? What will I have for lunch? That everything that is coming at me is this world, this life, this hour now. And here I'm speaking the message of eternity, but even the religious world is not allowing me to be in the realm of eternity, but keeps bringing my attention back to now, to this earth, this body, this life.

That's the nature of the thing. Everything that is in the world and the flesh and the devil conspires against the truth of God. We have been robbed of the eternal sense, and unless we contend for it, we will not obtain it.

When Paul says, I see the things that are invisible and eternal, you think it was just a magical thing for him that he saw? Or was there some measure of sacrifice required to take your eyeballs off the things that are visible and seen in order to be able to consider the things that are invisible and eternal? And the world is engaging our eyeballs daily. There's not a day that my mail doesn't come with advertisements and magazines and this and that and merchandise. I mean, you almost have to be violent to put away the things that will free you to consider the things that are eternal.

It itself is a sacrifice. It itself is a suffering because the eyeballs want to be gratified with voluptuous seeing. We want to see.

We want to feel. We want to touch. We want to be engaged.

Now, it takes a turning away, a denial to be freed up for the things that are not seen that are eternal. Or else we're just dealing with a mental category that will not at all in any way impress the philosophers at Mars Hill. And we are moving toward that exact confrontation.

The foolishness of God as against the wisdom of the world in a final showdown where they have all the marbles. All we are are a bunch of foolish babblers who believe in the resurrection and that God has appointed a day. And we're waiting for that day.

I just challenge you to read the apostolic scriptures and the prophets loaded with references to the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, the day of his coming, the day, the day, the day is the central focus of prophetic and apostolic seeing. But it's not our focus. And therefore our days are one like another.

Until that day is set into the firmament of all days, we lose the value of our days. You can't believe how insane I am for the redemption of the day. There's something in it to redeem the day but the days that are numbered, the days that are few, the night that comes when no man can work.

That's why I'm going on an insane three-month tour. We've got to fight for this. Contend earnestly for the faith once and for all given the saints is more than the sum of its doctrines.

It's an apostolic, apocalyptic, eschatological view that has at its center eternity, the fulfillment of the promises, the things that come after, the inheritance. And you're so persuaded of them, it's such a joy for your contemplation, you're so assured that you're going to enjoy them eternally that you'll take your present spoiling with joy. Even if it's more than your property and is your life and count it privilege that that

was required of you, so much greater is the eternal reward that endures forever.

Now, how are we prepared for that? Look at Hebrews 12, verse 5, Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. God is addressing sons. The Lord scourges and chastens every son whom he receives.

Now, that's an interesting phrase, whom he receives. Have you given yourself to the Lord as a son fitted for end-time purposes? Which is to say, pilgrim and stranger and sojourner. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons.

For what son is he whom the Father chastens not? But if you be without chastisement, without discipline, whereof all are partakers, then are you bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chasten us, but after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Now, no chastening for the present seems to be joyous but grievous. Nevertheless, afterward, the thing that comes after yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. And I'm willing to stake my life and my little meager reputation that that is a reference to eternity.

That the afterward here is not something in this life but the life to come for which the chastening and the perfecting and the scourging and the fitting of sons is preparation to those whom he receives as sons. So therefore, lift up your hands which hang down at feeble knees, make straight paths for your feet and so on. Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

When? When he who comes will come and will not tarry in a little while. Can you see everything is set in the eschatological framework? Everything is set in the apocalyptic expectancy of the day of the Lord's coming and the millennial reign and the seeing of him and the ruling and reigning with him for which now you're chastened and perfected as sons. And you don't have to.

You don't have to be a son. You can just be a babe or a bastard and get by. I think there's something voluntary here.

Something freely given as it is with those who say such things and confess that they are strangers and pilgrims and sojourners in the earth. So without which no man shall see the Lord looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God lest any who do business bring up trouble and thereby many be defiled lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright for you know how that afterward when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected. These words to me palpitate.

They're cogent. This afterward inheritance blessing is clearly future and eternal. But we can perform Esau's era now and miss it because of a morsel of meat or something temporal in this present life.

So I think that we're called again to a little transaction this morning. Every day seems to be another the Lord refining and defining and bringing us into a clearer focus of what he's after. So let's end now with some acknowledgement of how seriously we intend to take eternity.

How much we desire to be sons. How much we're willing to receive his chastenings that will bring us to the holiness by which we shall see God and serve God millennially and eternally. Not all will enjoy that

privilege.

Who shrink from sonship in this world now. Who prefer like Esau their present morsel. Those that say such things.

He's not ashamed to be called their God. For then he's prepared to sin. So Lord precious God Jesus.

We said this morning in our prayer time that we're asking largely of you today understanding that to whom much is given much is required. And you've given us much. You're giving us the beginning of a restoration of something that has been lost historically to the church.

And without which the church is not the church in the power and the glory that it was at the first and needs again to be at the end. And so we're asking Lord that something be transacted now today and in these days that you might receive sons willing to be chastened to be scourged to be inducted my God into your holiness that they might see you. Fitted precious God for last day's service like Paul.

Not only to proclaim the message of the day of the Lord and your judgment but to exhibit it. Already moving and living in the power of the age to come. Lord if there's something required from us that releases you to fit us for this.

May you hear it from our lips today from those who say such things. Even now at the conclusion of this day in Jesus name.

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