

(John - Part 1): God Has Put Everlasting Into Our Souls

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes the divine longing for eternity that God has instilled in humanity, contrasting it with the destructive nature of sin.

Duration: 56:44

Scripture: Genesis 3:17-19, Luke 15:4-7, Luke 15:11-32, John 1:1-2, John 1:14, John 1:29, Revelation 1:13-16

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the clarity and depth of the language used in the fourth gospel, specifically the book of John. He emphasizes that while the language is clear, it is also profound and challenging to fully comprehend. The preacher highlights three curses that rest upon everything in this world: recentness, temporality, and transience. He explains that the animalistic desires of the brain are at odds with the longing for everlastingness that resides in the heart, and that only Jesus can satisfy this longing for eternity.

Transcript

It will be my privilege over the next weeks to bring you messages from the book that sets forth the eternal word. I wanted to say that it was going to be a pleasure to expound this book, but a sense of inadequacy has come over me, so stunning, almost paralyzing, that I am not able at this juncture to call it a pleasure to preach. Perhaps this will be God's way of reducing the flesh to a minimum and giving the Holy Spirit the best possible opportunity to do his eternal work.

I fear that sometimes our very eloquence gets in our way, and the unlimited ability to talk endlessly about religion is a questionable blessing. So that, with this sense of the impossibility of a man like me saying anything worthwhile about the writings of a man like John, has me, literally after all these years, paralyzed. But maybe I say, and repeat, that will be God's opportunity.

Man's extremity is said thus to be. Now, I am going to relieve you of a long introduction. John scarcely needs any introduction.

The passage here in the first verse of the first chapter, in the beginning was the word, and the word was God with God, and the word was God. I am not going to read any further because you know the verses too

well. This is introduction enough.

Now, this John who wrote the book that bears his name is the mystic of the New Testament. I started to say that this John was the mystic of the New Testament. But we must be very careful not to put a was where God puts an is.

We must be very careful not to put God's children into the past tense. For there are no past tenses with the people of God. Jesus argued for immortality on the grounds that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

And the dead are past. And when we talk about a dead man, we say was. But when we talk about a living man, we say is.

It is therefore not theologically proper to say that John was the mystic of the New Testament. We say, rather, that John is the mystic of the New Testament, as Paul is the theologian of the New Testament. Now, I have used two words, mystic and theologian.

And naturally that brings the two very closely related words, mysticism and theology. And there is in the minds of some people the idea that there is a contradiction between mysticism and theology, the mystic and the theologian. The mystic has earned himself a bad reputation, or rather, he has had a bad reputation earned for him, so that we shy away from anybody that is said to be a mystic.

But John was the mystic of the New Testament, as Paul was the theologian. For I want you to know that in Paul's theology there was much mysticism, and in John's mysticism there is much theology. So that you do not have a contradiction, you have a complement, a supplementing of each other.

The man Paul had a great brain, and God could pour into this great brain the great basic doctrines of the New Testament, and think them out, and reason them out, and set them down logically. So that Paul has earned the reputation of being the theologian of the New Testament. But in the mind of John, God found something different altogether.

He found a harp that wanted to sit in the window and catch the wind. He found that John had a bird-like sense about him that wanted to take flight all the time. And so he allowed John, starting from the same premises as the theologian Paul, to mount and soar and sing.

Shakespeare, in one of his sonnets, says, "...like to the lark at break of day arising from sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate." And John was like and is like. In his book he wrote it, and we say was, but John is, still is, like the lark that rises at the break of day and shakes the dew of the night from his wings and soars to heaven's gate singing. Now, he doesn't soar any higher than Paul, but he sings just a little bit sweeter than Paul and gets your attention more.

So that Paul is the theologian who lays foundation strong, and John gets on the parapet, flaps his wings and takes off. That's why it's difficult to preach John. For the two did not contradict each other, nor cancel each other out.

They complemented each other, so that we might say that Paul is the instrument and John is the music the instrument brings. Now, the man Robertson, the great expositor, he was a Baptist. And this great expositor says something about the book of John, which I want to give you, if you will allow me, after saying I wouldn't give an introduction.

To give you this introduction, it's very brief, and here is what the expositor says. He says, The test of time has given the palm to the fourth gospel over all the books of the world. If Luke's gospel is the most beautiful, John's gospel is supreme in its height and depth and reach of thought.

The picture of Christ here given is the one that has captured the mind and heart of mankind. The language of the fourth gospel has the clarity of a spring, but we are not able to sound the depths of the bottom of it. Lucidity and profundity challenge and charm as we linger over John's book.

Lucidity and profundity. That is, it's so clear that you can see through it, but so deep you can't see clear through it. I think that's wonderfully put.

And it charms as we linger over it. Now, we'll never get beyond those first three words, and I don't intend to try it tonight. I wonder if the preposition in would not be as far as we ought to try to go, but that would put the end of the exposition, the sermons on John, somewhere in 1968.

So that I've got to do something better than that. So we'll take in the beginning. Now let me leave that passage in the beginning, here in the New Testament.

And in order to understand it better, go back to the Old Testament. It is characteristic of the wisdom books of the Old Testament. That sometimes they contain short passages that get lost in the sand and silt and dust of the ages.

But passages so profound and solid that they are literally building blocks of spiritual power. Now, Ecclesiastes 3.11 is such a thought. It says there, He, God, has set the world in their heart.

Now, you could read that passage, God has set the world in their heart, and yawn and pass it up. And go to a psalm for a little help. But if you will know what the Holy Ghost meant here when he said, God has set the world in the heart of man, you will not go beyond it, you will get your help here.

Now, hidden among the rubble of the ages lies this passage. He has set the world in their heart. Let us walk around a little, because I suspect that buried here under the shifting sands of the desert, buried here is a palace with many rooms and much beauty.

Let's walk around the palaces and behold the goodly bulwarks thereof and see what we can find. He has set the world in their heart. Now, Psalms 92 will give us a light on what Ecclesiastes 3.11 means, where the Holy Ghost says about God, From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

Now, I have looked up that word, everlasting. I do that always. I try to discover what a word means, and then in my preaching, I don't allow it to mean anything that it doesn't mean in the Hebrew or the Greek.

I do that much, at least, to safeguard you against my unlimited, unbridled imagination. So I make this mean what it means in the original. So the word everlasting, twice used, says, From everlasting to everlasting God is God.

Now, if you go to your Hebrew, and some of you that are studying it, you can ask your professor. You go to your Hebrew and you will find that this word, as the Holy Ghost uses it here, can mean time out of mind. Or it can mean always.

Or it can mean to the vanishing point. Or it can mean to the beginningless past. So that what the Holy Ghost says here, in the word everlasting, is about talking about God, From time out of mind to time out of

mind thou art God.

He faces back into some imaginary past and says, O God, from time out of mind and turns and faces some future and says, To time out of mind thou art God. Or he looks back and says, O God, from the always to the always thou remainest God. Or he looks back into the dim future that won't focus in his mind or dim past and says, O God, from the vanishing point out yonder, down to the vanishing point out here thou art God.

From the beginningless past to the endless future thou art God. Now, that's what the Holy Ghost says about God. And that's easy for you and me, because we say, well, that's simple.

And if you've got one of those mousetrap, shut and open minds, you will say that's the attribute of God called eternity. That's found on page 71 in a footnote in Thus and Thus' systematic theology. Now let's go have a soda.

And that you'll dismiss that there and leave it. Or tuck it away in your memory among the unused lumber in the attic of your soul, and it'll never mean anything to you. But brother, if you will let it live and the Holy Ghost will shine upon it for you, it'll put you in the middle between the everlasting vanishing point of a forgotten yesterday and the equally everlasting vanishing point of an unborn tomorrow.

And God gathers all of it up in his heart, the eternal God is thy refuge. Now, we can easily believe that the attribute of God is eternity, one of the attributes. But oh, the wonder of this passage I'm trying to get at.

The wonder of it is that God said this about people. He says, Thou hast set the world in their heart, but that word world is exactly the same word the Holy Ghost used when he said everlasting. Thou hast set everlastingness in their heart, and hast said about the heart of a creature named man, whom God made in his own image, he says the same thing about man that he says about God.

He says, O God, as one version has it, he hath put eternity into man's mind. That's it with the period. And so God says, he has put time out of mind into the heart of a man.

It says he has put the everlasting, beginningless, always into the heart of a man. He says that he has put the vanishing point of eternal yesterdays forgotten to the vanishing point of tomorrows unborn into the heart of a man. Now, that's what it says.

It says that God has put in the heart of man an affinity for everlastingness. Brethren, I have no hesitation to say that that's what's wrong with us. If we were of the earth only and we belonged to the beasts, we would never be disturbed.

I think there would never be much trouble in the world at all. I do not believe that Hitler would ever try to conquer Europe, or a Stalin or Malenkov would ever try to conquer Asia. I do not believe that there would be much trouble in the world if God had not put everlastingness in us.

If there was not that in us that appreciated the everlastingness of God and that longed for it and wanted it and has lost it and can't find it and wishes it had it and longs for it and doesn't have it and yet appreciates it and wants it and is dissatisfied with anything less. So man, like a caged animal, like the eagle in a cage, roams the cage and trots back and forth from one war to another war, from one strike to another strike, from one gamble to another gamble, from one dance to another dance, from one hell to another hell. What's the matter with man? Why does man, like the yellow lion, roam and pace his cage and roar to the

heavens before he dies? Because God has spoiled him.

He can't lie down with the beast and be no more. He cannot lie down with the dog and be buried. He cannot with the horse lie down.

God has put everlastingness in his heart. He has put a longing for immortality in his heart. He has put in him something that demands God and heaven and yet is too blind and sinful to find him or even look for him.

And that's the state of confusion we're in. The beasts of the forest don't have any wars. The cows in the barnyard don't have any whorehouses or gambling dens.

Why is it only man that has these things? Why is it only man that has murder incorporated? Why is it only man that has gas chambers and concentration camps? Why do the very serpents under the rock and the very whales in the sea and the very beasts of the jungle manage to get along and kill only when it's necessary to eat? And then they lie down and sleep and wait for the night to come. Why do the beasts of the forest get along better than people? Why do they have less trouble? Why are they more moral? I have no hesitation in saying that there isn't a dog in Chicago that's more moral than his master. If indeed you can attribute morality to that which has not eternity in his heart.

But I say they live better. They're decenter. And when we say a man lives a beastly life, we're insulting the beast and lying about the man.

For no beast ever does what men do. No beast ever kidnaps another beast and takes it away, sends a threatening note, and if it doesn't get what it wants, kills the beast that it's kidnapped. No one ever does that.

Not beastly, it's devilish. Sin is not beastly at all, it's devilish. And the beasts of the forest are not bothered with the devil.

It's only people. Why? Because God has put the appreciation of everlastingness in their heart. He made them in his own image.

Once more I say that there's not enough made of that in this day in which we live. Modernists have scared us out. Modernists have frightened us out.

Oh, ladies and gentlemen, what we need in America today is men with something here in front except a belt buckle. You know what I mean? We need men with backbone and intestinal fortitude that aren't scared all the time. You don't dare say anything because you've always got to be looking over your shoulder if you're some modernist editor, some liberal editor, worried about what some fundamentalist will say or what some fellow over here will think about you.

What's the difference what any of them think about us? Now, I said that, as the brother says, to say this, that if we had more courage, we'd preach more on the image of God in man. And that doesn't mean that unconverted man is saved. He specifically is lost.

And except he be born again, he'll never see the kingdom of God. And except he repent, he shall certainly perish. And if he dies untriven and unforgiven, he'll certainly go to hell.

All that I believe. But I believe the only reason a man can be saved is that God has put eternity in his heart. And God made man in his own image.

And though man fell, he keeps the longing after eternity there and the appreciation of everlastingness there and the desire after everlasting life within his heart. And that upsets him. And he goes wild.

He calls in one thing but deeply down in him. It's another thing that's bothering him. I said one time in an article somewhere that God made man in his own image and that sin has marred the soul of man and ruined it.

But still, when a man lifts his heart to God in praise, he's doing the most natural thing in the world because God made him originally to do it. And some tough old baby from out east somewhere wrote to the president of the Christian Missionary Alliance and said, I was a liberal, a modernist, a heretic, and off on my theology and needed to be dismissed and so on. He said, imagine it, saying that prayer was a natural thing.

And she gets to heaven and she'll apologize to certain one little bald-headed editor, I'm telling you. She'll apologize with a red face for her stupidity and ignorance. For this is exactly the fact, ladies and gentlemen, that God made you with eternity in your heart and when you turn your face toward the Eternal One and say, God, have mercy on me, a sinner, and go on to say, our Father who art in heaven, you're being what God intended you to be in the first place.

But when you look down at the earth like a beast, you're not being natural, you're being sinful. And when you refuse to call on God through Jesus Christ, you're not doing the natural thing, you're doing the diseased thing. And sin is to human nature what a cancer is to a human body.

And when a man has been delivered from a cancer somewhere on his body and stands up and breathes deep and feels no pain and knows he's free, he's doing the natural thing. And when a redeemed sinner says, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, he's doing that which goes back to the Garden of Eden, to the loins of Adam, further back than that yet, to the new Adam, Jesus Christ our Lord. So I'm neither a modernist, nor a liberal, nor a fanatic, nor a heretic, nor a dreamer.

I'm just an ordinary preacher. And anybody ought to see this, and it's no compliment to anybody that they don't see it. Now, God has put a longing after immortality in our hearts.

And you know the spirit of a man wants it. And he dies of suffocation when he doesn't get it. They tell me, and I guess they still do it, they do everything by machinery now, but they tell me that they used to, if they still do not, use birds to detect gases in mines.

You know that when you go down into the earth, after a coal, usually coal, or any other metal, you go down there, and after a while, the water and the seepage and so on, creates certain chemical reactions that create gas, and that gas can become deadly. And many men go down in there and walk into a pocket of that gas, and before they can get out, they die of asphyxiation. Now, in some of those mines where they weren't certain that there was gas there or not, they took caged birds down there, and the bird is the first creature to detect that gas.

And he acts strange if there's a little of it, and if the concentration is a little higher, he falls down and dies in the bottom of his cage. The bird that was built by God to miracle in feathers, a wonder with wings, was meant to soar over the green meadows and look into the shining sun and breathe the sweet air of heaven,

take him down and put him in a coal mine where black damp and gases gather, and he dies of suffocation. And so the soul of a man, God made the soul of a man to mount into the eternities and live with God and to look back on the everlasting vanishing point that was and on into the eternal vanishing point that will be and feel no age, and count no birthdays, but like God live in God.

But sin has ruined us. We've listened to that serpent, the devil, and we've gone down into the slimy, dark, gas-infested bowels of the world, and men are dying everywhere of suffocation. You see them, you see them, dying of suffocation.

The Maccabee and I spent last week, part of last week in Dixon, Illinois, at our conference. We stayed at a hotel there. And I saw an old couple, I don't think I caught Brother Maccabee's attention to it, but I saw an old couple there.

I would guess he would have been 78 and she 75. They were shriveled up, well-dressed, and had a big car, I noticed. But shriveled up and mean-looking.

They talked to each other as if they were both in deep pain. And they were all an old husband and wife, I suppose. I'm sure, quite sure they were.

And they both looked mean, and both looked simply as if life had done them in. Not a trace of sunshine, not a lift of the corners of the mouth, not a fragrance, not a friendliness. Two tired, weary, sick, disappointed, frustrated, disgusted old people, too mean to die and too old and dried up to live, walked around waiting for the undertaker.

Now, that was just an example, brethren, that's all, just an example. And the world is full of them. They're in jails, they're in hospitals, they're in insane asylums, they're out on the highway in big cars.

The poor birds that God made to soar and sing are being gassed to death in the bowels of the earth, down where sin is, in black dams, in grief and woe. That's mankind, and that's what's wrong with us, ladies and gentlemen, that's what's wrong with us. And I believe that apart from our animal natures, that accounts for our activity.

That's why we do what we do. Sin has plunged us, I say, into the bowels of creation and marked us with mortality so that we're a brother to the clay. We call the worm our sister and death our brother, when God never meant it to be so.

God made man upright, and he sought out many inventions. God said, let us make man in our image, and the image of God made he him, and gave him dominion. But man has sinned, and all he's got left is the appreciation of the divine.

All he has left is a hidden wish that he might have the eternal. And his vital need is there, and his craving after it is there, but he hasn't got it. He has not that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifest unto us.

And man, looking for it, can find only counterfeit. There are three marks of the curse upon everything. And if this sermon tonight sounds a little bit in the minor key, I have no apology to make whatsoever.

I preached a series of sermons one time where the characteristic of the preaching is a lot of fun and thought of quips and remarks from Reader's Digest. And they play everything from a hand saw to a gourd.

And it's all very funny and all very Hollywoodish.

And I get up there and I just preach the way I preach. And the pastor told me that after I was gone, his wife had said, Honey, isn't there anything good in the world? After listening to Mr. Tozer, I'm asking you, isn't there anything good in the world? No, her husband was a preacher. And she had a Bible in her house.

And then she would ask a man if there wasn't anything good in the world. Foolish question number 5821. Of course there's nothing good in the world.

And it's amazing that the wife of a preacher should have to ask, isn't there anything good? Certainly there's nothing good. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. And with every good there's some evil lurking there.

And under every beautiful thing there's a serpent coil. When I was a lad, a very small lad, early in the spring before the sun had gotten things thawed out, some of us kids went out poking around in the woods. And I found a funny little thing that looked like a rag rug.

Now some of you ladies know what a rag rug is. You braid or plait, or whatever you call it, rags together, varying colors. And then you sew those braids together, round and round and round, and you have a rug.

They don't have much anymore. That is, they don't make them, they buy them now, make them by machinery. But this looked like a tiny rag rug, flat and rather pretty, and neatly done.

And I took it out, it was about the size, oh, smaller than a saucer. Somewhat, quite a little smaller than a saucer. And I took it home, and I said, look what I found.

Isn't this a pretty thing? It's flat, and it's just like one of these braided rugs. And in the house, it began to get warm. Now I'll give you three guesses what I had brought home.

A snake! It had curled up and gone to sleep, wrapped around itself, and had been so careful to follow protocol, and lived the way Emily Pope would have suggested, that it didn't just tumble itself in like an old dirty pair of socks sewn into a hamper. It made itself pretty for the winter. But it was still a snake.

And as soon as it got warm, it began to uncoil, and I began to get out. You can take this from me, and you never need to come back and hear me again if you think I'm wrong. But you can take it from me that there isn't a thing advertised in Siroba, there isn't a thing sung about over the radio, there isn't a thing in Wall Street or London or Hollywood or Broadway or Miami, there isn't a thing in Ceylon or Singapore or Rome, there isn't a thing in Chicago or in the world, that if Jesus Christ doesn't get to it, then to you won't turn out to be a coiled serpent in your bosom.

I preached in the church where I'm going to preach next week, Dr. Simpson's Tabernacle on Times Square, some years ago. The pastor then was a southern man, a very delightful southern drawl, and quite a learning fellow. He listened to me for a while.

And then we were walking up and down amid the hurrying throngs, as the poet said. He turned to me and said, Brother Tozer, he said, I've figured you out. And I said, well, what have you discovered? He said, I have found your philosophy, your spiritual philosophy.

And I said, well, now what is it? He said, Brother Tozer, he said, your spiritual philosophy is everything is wrong till Jesus sets it right. And I said, thank you, Brother, that's it. I guess you've summed it up.

And I hadn't thought about it myself, but I think he had it all right. And that's where I stand, ladies and gentlemen. Everything is wrong till Jesus sets it right.

But you say, surely there's something good somewhere. There's a lot that's supposed to be good, and there's a lot that's good on the human level, but there's nothing that's divinely good. Three curses, or three marks of the ancient curse rest upon everything in this world.

First, it's recent. Second, it's temporal. And third, it's transient.

Now let's look at that recent. You know, the brain, that is the animal man, is at war with the heart. The animal man says, look, look, isn't this wonderful? I push a button and look what happens.

Isn't this wonderful? I pull a lever and look how fast we go through the air. Isn't this wonderful? And the heart says, oh no, that isn't it, that isn't it. That belongs to the animal man.

That belongs to the brain. That belongs to the world. The heart is still crying for everlastingness.

And the heart says, that won't do. You've got a lovely stove and I'm glad you have. And you set it and tell it what to do, and then you go shopping and come back and it has done the whole business.

And a little bell rings and you pull it out and took grandma the day and a half to do what your little old stove does and a little while all by itself with you not even watching it. And your animal nature says, that's progress, that's progress. Isn't that wonderful? But deeper down, if you listen, you'll hear a plaintive voice saying, no, no, no, that isn't it.

That's not wonderful. That is temporal. That is recent.

That is transient. And that belongs for one brief day. And one of these days, another gadget, still more wonderful than your stove that does everything but pick your teeth afterward, more wonderful still, will pull up in front of your door.

Two gray-faced men will get out with a basket and they'll lug you out from your radio and television and electric curlers and electric massagers and electric sweepers and electric kneaders and electric stoves and electric refrigerators. They'll lug you out. This thing inside doesn't win.

You'd better never have been born. I suppose that it's more comfortable to go to hell in a Cadillac and feed your beastly nature while you live or your animal nature on food cooked in a pressure cooker automatically. But it's hell nevertheless when you get there.

And your poor heart in which God has put appreciation for everlastingness won't take electric cookers and radios in lieu of eternal life. Something inside of you is too big for that, too terrible for that, too wonderful for that. God has set everlastingness in their hearts.

And the word temporal is here. I've used it, too. And the word transient.

Born for but one brief day. We have something we like and think it's wonderful, but it's like a little boy watching a circus parade. There comes the big wagon with the clowns, and he almost goes wild.

But that passes on down the street and turns a corner, and here comes the wagon with the elephants or the lions or the tigers. Here comes the wagon with the acrobats in tights and spangles. Here comes the

band, and each thing as it goes by excites the little boy till his eyes pop.

And he screams his delight. But it's transient, it's temporary, it's passive. And it goes on down to the railroad station and trains and disappears.

And so it is with everything the world offers you. Don't you wish I had some trinket to shake, some rattle to shake for you tonight? Don't you wish I had a really just rattle to shake and a sugar tit to give you? You know what a sugar tit is? Now don't get excited. They had them when I was a boy.

I was raised on one. You know what it is? It's a little cloth of hair filled with sugar about the size of your finger and then sewed up on the end. And when the baby starts to squall, he just stuck this thing in his mouth.

And the little fellow stopped squalling. Well, sugar might not have been good for his teeth, that's what we didn't have, but at least he got that, that was the way they handled him. And the preachers in our day are adept at the old-fashioned custom of the sugar nickel.

So they run around, manufacture them, make them. And there are religious houses that do nothing else but specialize in making them. Put out catalogs and boast about them.

Do you want more people coming to your church? Do you want a bigger offering? Do you want to get famous? Do you want to succeed? All right, then, buy my, A-number-one deluxe sugar nipples and take them to your church, and believe me, they'll crowd you out. They can go on past, as far as I'm concerned. God Almighty never said, young fellow, get yourself a pocketful of sugar nipples and go out and feed them to the carnal public.

He said, preach my word, and I'll put my words in your mouth. And don't you be afraid of them, because if you're afraid of them, I'll confound you before them. But if you'll be fearless, I'll stand with you, and I'll make your neck like brass.

And this little old wrinkle, neck of mine with a 15 collar, you'd think if somebody bumped my head it would come off, brother. It's like brass. God Almighty said, I'll make it like brass.

So I'm telling you that that thing you thought you had, oh, some of you young fellows, you got an old car with a stepped-up noise of fire on it, and around you go, and by a trick of the psychology, you imagine that the noise and power of that old car makes you more than you are. A jackass could run your car. A chimpanzee could drive it.

And yet by a trick of imagination, we think if we get in a big car, we're a big man. And apart from the old jalopy that's been souped up, we have the big ones that cost \$5,000. A little old guy without any hair left or any backbone.

Wife has two, his and hers. But he gets into the car, and the deep rumble of that gorgeous motor, he feels he's a man at last. Until an ignorant Irish cop that never went past the fifth grade lectures him like a schoolboy.

But he gets the temporary lift to his personality, a lift just like Ogleteen gives you. Because he's got the power, the power. But old man, you foolish old man, that you will allow your deep soul in which God has put eternity, you will allow it to weep itself to death inside your bosom.

And you'll pay no attention to the cry after God and your mortality that lies inside of you. And you're women with everything, everything. You've got everything now.

Scarcely need to do anything in the day in which we live. And you imagine you're getting someplace. No, you're not getting anywhere.

In you there is something that's bigger than curls and plucked eyebrows. Bigger than nylon and silk and fine-toothed leather. Bigger than a lovely home and a ranch-type house and a garage and a car.

Bigger than anything the world can give you. God Almighty cries, there's something cries inside of you, the voice of God crying out of you for everlastingness and eternal life and deliverance and hope. And you're smothering it like the bird in the mine.

Smothering it under harsh duties and longing for one thing and another. Oh, how foolish we mortals be. Now, I don't want to stop on that note.

I want to tell you that in the same chapter that says in the beginning, says this, in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. John was not the light, but he the Word was that light, that light of every man that cometh into the world. He came to his own and his own received him not, but as many as received him.

So then gave he power to become the sons of God. And that great something inside of me that appreciates everlastingness and won't be satisfied without it, looks and says, that's what I've wanted. Not religion, you can trace it back, it's recent.

Not philosophy, you can trace it back, it's recent. Not civilization, it's recent. My animal nature wants something recent, but my deep heart wants something eternal.

And so God says, all right, I made you that way and now I have what you want. The Word made flesh to dwell among you. He that receives him, to them gives he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

And like a shipwrecked sailor who floated on a raft, who now looks and sees solid land and notices the wind is drifting him towards solid land, shouts his joy through his parched lips, he's found something solid and he'll soon be on it. And so your soul and mine, we've been betrayed by civilization, we've been betrayed by religion, we've been betrayed by all of the features that man created. But we know we're afloat and we know that we're ready to perish.

And then comes the Holy Ghost and says, in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, there's eternity. And eternity was made flesh and walked among us. And whoso believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

So I do not go to the modernist and apologize. I do not go to the liberal and excuse myself. I do not go to the philosopher and say I'm sorry but I'm a Christian.

I go to any of these men and say I have found it. Eureka! I've got what you're looking for. This is what you need.

Something in your heart was made to appreciate everlastingness that will never be satisfied until it gets eternity and immortality and the promise thereof. And I say now I have it. Paul went to Athens and told

them that.

Went to Corinth and told them that. Went among the learned philosophers of his day and said I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus and him crucified. That's the rock.

That's why we sing Rock of Ages, prep for me. Let me hide myself in thee. It's the rock at last.

The shipwrecked man is on the rock now and is not going to perish. But the rock is solid. He may tremble and shake but the rock never shakes in the beginning.

Here's where we start with Christianity. Not Mrs. Eddy. Not Joseph H. Smith.

Not Father Divine. Not Mr. Ballard. Not Madame Blavatsky.

Not Zola Lester. Not Mohammed. Not Buddha.

They all had a beginning and they all had an ending. But we want that which had no beginning and never can have any ending. Namely the word which was with the Father in the beginning.

And the word which was God. And the word which is God. He walked around the carpenter sharp on little rubbery baby legs.

Oh, a baby is a harmless thing. And it captures you quicker than a regiment of soldiers. And if you'd seen Eternity walking around on baby rubbery legs and tumbling and falling flat among the shavings, you'd have run and picked him up and dusted him off and kissed his little forehead and said, It doesn't hurt.

Be a big boy. And little Jesus might have smiled, taken a tear away and gone off for another tumble. But it was Eternity walking in flesh.

It was God Almighty come to live among us, to redeem us, to save us from the reasons and the temporal and the transient and to give us Eternity. He that receives him has that eternal life which was with the Father and was given unto man. Oh, how wonderful that God gives us this, and yet how terrible that we won't accept it.

How terrible that we have to be frightened into hell or into heaven, that we have to be whipped into heaven with the thongs and whips of hell. Why is it? Why is it you won't repent until God Almighty shows you the pit? Why is it? Because we're so bad, we're so bad. The sin in our animal nature has ruined us and we're so bad.

But oh, that we might turn unto God in Christ and say, Lord Jesus, I believe thee. I believe that thou art the eternal word and that in thee I have the everlastingness that's equal to God's everlastingness, that eternal life which was with the Father. You see the life God offers you.

It's not a question of duration, it's a question of quality. And the quality of life he gives you is that God's own life in your heart. And that takes care of the duration and everything else.

Believe on him tonight. Come on, you fellas. I'd like to take you and shake you awake.

Paddle you until you came to your senses. What's the matter with you? You're a very big, good-looking fella on your way to hell and you're not doing anything about it. And you pretty, graceful young lady, what's the matter with you? And you older people that are showing the marks of time when you've been

weather-beaten and bumped and dinged like an old car and you won't be around long and still you're lost.

And if you'd listen to your heart five minutes, you'd hear a cry coming up saying, Why don't you do something about me? I've got a longing for eternity in me and time won't satisfy me. Earth won't satisfy me. Give me Jesus.

Let the world forgive me, Jesus, for what we all sinned. Won't you take him tonight? Won't you have him tonight? Won't you come to him tonight? Let us pray. Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, thou art nearer than our breath.

Thou art nearer than the impulses of our nerves. Thou art nearer than our thoughts. Oh, Lord Jesus, thou art here walking amid the seven golden candlesticks with eyes like fire and a sword going out of thy mouth and thy head white as wool and thy face as the sun shining in strength and thou art girt about the patch of the golden girdle thou art the high priest of the church.

Oh, Lord Jesus, we pray for the lost sheep here tonight. We pray, Lord Jesus, for the half-saved Christians. We pray for the backslide.

We pray for those who have turned from the thing they knew was right. Their first memory is a Sunday school class and prayer at the table. Oh, they have turned from it and only go to church occasionally and then only to listen and go home.

My Lord Jesus, tonight we pray thee help such poor people who have listened to the voice of the animal, the dull voice of the brain, and they have ignored that in them which cries for God in eternal life. Have mercy, we pray thee, upon them. And while the two voices are sounding, the voice of Esau and the voice of Jacob, the voice of earth and the voice of heaven sounding, we pray that they may have the wisdom and courage to turn their backs on the siren voice of the world and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ for the call of the day.

Great God, this is thy meeting. We don't know what to do with it. It's up to thee, Lord.

Great God, tonight, don't let the devil have everybody. Please, God, save some for thyself. Rescue some for thyself.

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