

# Gripped With Eternity

by E.A. Johnston

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being gripped with eternity and living for heaven and its rewards, highlighting the examples of men of old who were consumed with Christ and the gospel.*

**Duration:** 16:30

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 32:35, Daniel 1:6, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 16:26, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 16:30, 1 Corinthians 2:2

**Topics:** "Eternity"

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## Description

The video is a compilation of sermon transcripts from various preachers who were passionate about spreading the word of God and saving souls. It highlights the dedication and sacrifice of missionaries like T. Stud, who gave up everything to serve in Africa. The video also mentions the powerful preaching of Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Edwards, who were able to awaken a sense of urgency and conviction in their listeners. Lastly, it shares a story about D.L. Moody, who witnessed a powerful response to his message and was deeply moved by the number of people seeking salvation.

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## Transcript

Let us take the time to empty our minds of the cares which distract and concern us today, and please give great attention to the following words and come with me and catch a glimpse of eternity as described by the Apostle John. And I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.

And the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it.

And death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them. And they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.

This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. That is a description of the grandest size, as John Wesley called it, where every man comes face to face with the judgment of all the earth, the ancient of days.

He who has eyes of fire will test the quality of their works, and every knee shall bow to him and acknowledge him as lord of lords and king of kings. Each person on that day will be consigned to their final destiny, heaven or hell. When I studied periods of great awakenings and revival where God moved in the midst of a nation with the outpouring of his presence and spirit, I often wonder why we don't see that happen in our day.

In a day where we desperately need revival, why aren't we seeing it? When I study Christian biography and gaze into the lives of men God has used in former times, men like Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield, D.L. Moody and C.T. Studd, I see a vast dissimilarity between men of that stamp and men of today. And I must ask myself why God would choose men like that, raise them up, and use them as mighty instruments of revival and great usefulness. And I look around today and I weep at the lack.

We have the same God as those men did, the same Bible, the same Holy Spirit, but alas, we are lesser men than they. For they were men gripped with eternity, and we are not. We are occupied with many things, and sadly, like Martha, neglect the one thing needful.

We have plenty of excuses, but little power. Our laziness indicts us, and our barrenness embarrasses us. Why did God use a D.L. Moody? I have been to his grave in Northfield, Massachusetts, many a time.

I have stood on Round Top and prayed there. I have sat on the porch of the home he was born in, spent an afternoon in prayer, just sitting there reflecting upon his life. There was nothing spectacular about D.L. Moody other than he knew he was nothing, but he also knew he had access to a spectacular God.

D.L. Moody came to a place in his life that was his personal Jabbok. He heard an Englishman say one day, the world has yet to see what God can do with a man wholly sold out to him. Moody declared, by God, I will be that man, and Moody did more than all of us put together.

Moody often said God told him, Moody, here is a lifeboat, go fill it, and Moody did. D.L. Moody was a man gripped with eternity. On one occasion he was preaching in England at Cambridge University to the students there.

Moody was an uneducated man and he used poor grammar, and the students made fun of him as he preached to them. Moody often took a two syllable word and made it one syllable. For instance, when he pronounced Daniel, he pronounced it Dan-el.

So the students began chanting Dan-el, Dan-el, Dan-el, but Moody didn't give up. He only looked to the one who could help and deliver the souls of men. After, in one of those meetings, God began to move, and the spirit of conviction fell upon the meeting.

Moody finished his address and said to the crowd, if there is anyone here who has an interest in Christ, please stand, and we will adjoin to the next room for counseling. Two hundred men rose to their feet. Moody thought they misunderstood him, so he asked them to sit back down again.

He repeated, only those who have an interest in Christ and want to be saved, please stand. The wooden floor rumbled with the heels of two hundred men. As Sankey sang without one plea, Moody dropped to his knees and gazed heavenward, saying under his breath, my God, this is worth living for.

D.L. Moody was a man gripped with eternity. One of the Cambridge students who was in those meetings was a young man by the name of C.T. Studd. Studd was a famous athlete in England, a cricketeer.

He was a household name in England, and he was the star cricket player in all Great Britain. His father, Edward Studd, was converted in a D.L. Moody meeting. Edward Studd was a multimillionaire, and soon his son, C.T., came savingly to Christ.

When he did, his life so changed that he walked away from all his fame and went to China as a missionary. When he inherited his father's estate, he did what the rich young ruler would not, and he gave it all away to missions and the cause of Christ. C.T. Studd began living in the light of eternity and was able to pen such stirring words as, Only one life, which will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.

C.T. Studd, at the age of 53, went on a one-way ticket to Africa as a missionary and died there for the sake of the gospel and the souls of men. He wrote, Some wish to live within the sound of church or chapel bell. I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.

Listen once more to his words to get a real sense of this man who cared about nothing but the souls of men. The fact remains, God can do little with those who love their lives or reputations, but there is absolutely no limit to what God can do with men or women who care not whether they live or die so long as they are allowed to fight for Christ and do the will of God. C.T. Studd was a man gripped with eternity.

When I read the life of Jonathan Edwards, it stirs my heart. I often go to the town of Northampton, Massachusetts to wander the streets and contemplate about how God came in revival to that town in 1740. Jonathan Edwards described it as the entire town was gripped with eternity.

I have stood at the stone marker which marks the spot where the old church lay in Anfield, Connecticut, where Edwards preached his famous sermon, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God, where strong men were under such conviction of sin they held on to the pillars of the church so as to not drop down into hell. Listen to a graphic account of that meeting by a minister who was there while Edwards was preaching. We went over to Anfield where we met dear Mr. Edwards of Northampton who preached the most awakening sermon from these words, Deuteronomy 32, 35, their foot shall slide in due time.

And before sermon was done, there was a great moaning and crying out through ye whole house, what shall I do to be saved? Oh, I'm going to hell. Oh, what shall I do for Christ? So ye minister was obliged to desist for the shrieks and cries were piercing and amazing. Oh, friends, Jonathan Edwards was a man gripped with eternity.

When I look at the life of George Whitefield, the great British evangelist, I see a man wholly consumed with Christ in eternity. Whitefield burned himself out for the sake of the gospel and the souls of men dying at the age of 55. I have stood on the hill of the town of Middleton, Connecticut, and looked down at the place where George Whitefield preached by the river to 4,000 struck with the awful solemnity of a holy God.

Listen to the following account of a farmer who attended that meeting and who was saved under the preaching of Whitefield. Listen to the grip that Whitefield had on people and how they were gripped with eternity by his mighty ministry. Here now is the account of that revival, which occurred at Middleton, Connecticut, in October of 1740, as told by Nathan Cole.

Now, it pleased God to send Mr. Whitefield into this land and my hearing of his preaching at Philadelphia, like one of the old apostles, and many thousands flocking after him to hear the gospel in great numbers converted to Christ, I felt the Spirit of God drawing me by conviction. Next, I heard he was on Long Island,

and next at Boston, and next at Northampton. And then, one morning, all of a sudden, about eight or nine o'clock, there came a messenger and said, Mr. Whitefield preached at Hartford and Wethersfield yesterday, and is to preach at Middleton this morning at ten o'clock.

I was in my field at work. I dropped my tool that I had in my hand and ran home and ran through my house and bade my wife get ready quick to go and hear Mr. Whitefield preach at Middleton and ran to my pasture for my horse with all my might, fearing I should be too late to hear him. I brought my horse home and soon mounted and took my wife up and went forward as fast as I thought the horse could bear, and when my horse began to be out of breath, I would get down and put my wife in the saddle and bid her ride as fast as she could and not stop or slack for me except I bade her, and so I would run until I was almost out of breath and then mount my horse again, and so I did several times to favor my horse, for we had twelve miles to ride double in little more than an hour.

On high ground, I saw before me a cloud or fog rising. I first thought it was from the great river, but as I came nearer the road, I heard a noise, something like a low rumbling of horses' feet coming down on the road, and this cloud was a cloud of dust made by the running of horses' feet. It arose some rides in the air over the tops of the hills and trees, and when I came within about twenty rides of the road, I could see men and horses slipping along in the cloud-like shadows, and when I came nearer, it was like a steady stream of horses and their riders, scarcely a horse more than its length behind another, all of a lather, and some would sweat.

We went down with the stream. I heard no man speak a word all the way, three miles, but everyone pressing forward in great haste, and when we got down to the old meeting-house, there was a great multitude. It was said to be three thousand or four thousand people assembled together.

We got off from our horses and shook off the dust, and the ministers were then coming to the meeting-house. I turned and looked towards the great river, and saw ferryboats running swift forward and backward, bringing over loads of people. The oars rode nimble and quick.

Everything, men, horses, and boats, all seemed to be struggling for life. The land and the banks over the river looked black with people and horses. All along the twelve miles, I saw no man at work in his field, but all seemed to be gone.

When I saw Mr. Whitfield come upon the scaffold, he looked almost angelical, a young, slim, slender youth before some thousands of people with a bold, undaunted countenance. In my hearing how God was with him everywhere as he came along, it solemnized my mind and put me into a trembling fear before he began to preach, for he looked as if he was clothed with authority from the great God, and a sweet solemn solemnity sat upon his brow, and my hearing him gave me a heart wound. Oh, friends, how can we listen to that stirring account and not get stirred ourselves? George Whitfield was a man gripped with eternity.

Oh, God, send us a Whitfield for our day. Like I said earlier, these men were of a different sort than of us today. We should fall to our knees and confess our lack before our God.

We should be shamed now for how little we have done for Christ, or we will be shamed at the judgment. Eternity awaits us. Eternity faces us soon.

Eternity will confront each one of us. What have we done here for Christ will be the only thing that matters then. I will leave you, my friends, today with the following words which describe men of a different sort.

We can only beg God to make us like those men, men who lie among the mighty dead, men who were gripped with eternity, and the God of that eternity. Here now is a description of such men. The Apostle Paul, Luther, Wesley, Whitfield, Knox, Edwards, Finney, Spurgeon, Moody, each shared a common denominator, a fire in their belly.

They each were so eaten up with the gospel, and thirsty for Christ, and filled with the Holy Ghost, they could not stand idly by while others perished. They saw nothing but eternity, worshipped the Holy God, and served the risen Christ, living not for earth nor its gains, but living only for heaven and its rewards. When they preached, they linked the devil with sin and the cross with salvation.

They preached hell and its fire, and Christ and him crucified. Not one of them feared king, queen, or pope, and not one of them sought the compliments of men.

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