

Eyes on Eternity

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of eternity, the glory of Jesus, and the power of the blood of Christ to purify the conscience.

Duration: 34:07

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 8:11, Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 3:20, Hebrews 9:24, 1 John 3:9

Topics: "Eternity"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of fully surrendering oneself to God. He urges the audience to not just talk about their faith, but to bring their entire being, including their will, heart, and affections, to God. The preacher highlights the need to present oneself as a living sacrifice to God, as stated in Romans 12:1-2. He warns against conforming to the ways of the world and encourages transformation through a deep devotion to Jesus. The sermon also emphasizes the greatness of Jesus, describing him as the heir of all things, the creator of the world, and the one who upholds all things by the word of his power. The preacher laments the loss of immensity, intensity, and eternity in modern preaching and calls for a return to a deep reverence and adoration of God.

Transcript

Again, our Father, we bow before Thine everlasting throne. We recognize our unworthiness. We thank You again that when we could not reach up, You reached down.

When we could not become as God, there was one, the Son, that became as man. Our God contracted to a span incomprehensibly made man. We thank You that for the day when I'm sure the angels were astounded, and the devils were terrified when He laid aside His glory and took not the nature of angels, but the nature of human beings.

He came not as a flaming seraphim, but He came quietly through the womb of a maiden, when others were looking for Him, coming in mad. Well, I usually tell you about some of the visitors we had this week. They were very good, uh, two of the most famous men in America came to see me, and they asked me about preaching.

Of course, I know a lot about it. There's a lot I don't know. I said, modern preaching has lost three things, immensity, intensity, and eternity.

I heard of some men arguing that the Bible is indestructible, and one said, well, how do you know? He said, because it survived so much bad preaching. I don't want to prove my point tonight. Come on, won't you sing a few minutes? Every knee shall bow.

So there were five million people in the world. What about the Medo-Persian Empire? What about the Roman Empire? What about the British Empire? What about World War I? Uh, 18 million people died in World War I. Right after it, there was an international plague of flu, or influenza, if you're a scholar, and 60 million people died. But all the marching legions of Rome, all the pharaohs, all the kings, all the maharajas of India, all the caliphs of Baghdad, everybody from Wall Street, that's just to encourage the New Yorkers here, they're all going to come one day and bow the knee to Jesus.

Boy, I can't wait for that. You know, it talks about a choir. In Revelation chapter 5, it talks about a multitude which no man can number singing.

You know, I used to sing on a team. No, I sang as a soloist with a team. I couldn't win a competition, a frog match right now.

But you know, wouldn't it be wonderful to hear a super edition of Handel's Messiah? How many of you enjoy Handel's Messiah? The rest of you must be very, anyhow. You need to play that more and more. It's only the Bible said to music, you think of a million altos over here, a million of sopranos over there, a million basses over there, and me by myself over here, singing the tenor part, and Gabriel said, stop, turn the volume down from the tenors a little bit.

Well, you wait and see what it's like. Well, you sang then in the noblest, sweetest song, I'll sing thy power to save, when this poor lispng, stammering tongue shouts, fix o'er the grave. You know, the trouble with us, we're too earthbound.

We only think of eternity when we go to a funeral, that's a bit late. That's, oh, a brother called me today. He said, you know, I love you so much, your books have meant so much in my life.

He said, I want to really show my love for you. So I thought, oh boy, must be \$10,000 at least. What in the world do you think he said? You'd never guess, Dave.

Do you know what he said? I want to be one of the appalled dares. I told him, no, there's no future in that. Not for him, for me, yes.

Okay, let's skip through some verses. Let's look at Hebrews. Hebrews again, chapter 1. Here, I'm going to read, as you know, I always read out of the, out of the Living Bible, King James Version.

How does it begin? God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these, what? Last days. When was that written? Forget a long time, come on. When was it written? Pardon? They don't want to reveal their ignorance.

Well, it's written over 2,000 years ago anyhow, or about 2,000. No, a bit further, let's come back a bit. Well, anyhow.

Well, let's make it round. 2,000 years. Last days, 2,000 years ago.

How does the Book of Revelation begin? Things which, what? Shall shortly come to pass. If they were shortly coming to pass in the Book of the Revelation, how near are we now? It's possibly, the clock is

maybe like that. One minute to midnight.

And this old world has no hope. God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. Whom he hath appointed heir of all things.

Look at all this catalogue of wonderful things about Jesus. Whom he hath appointed heir of all things. By whom also he made the world.

Who being in the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power. Do you realize that? What the people, the mystics say out, over in India, over those countries. They say the world is held up, what? On the back of an elephant, that's standing on the, on a tortoise.

That's pretty crazy. It's held up by the word of God. If he says let it go, it'll go back into oblivion.

From which it came. This world isn't going to end up in communism, it's going to end up with Jesus reigning where e'er the sun doth its successive journeys run. Forget reading Romans 8, 28 every time you're under the weather, under the weather taking an aspirin.

Read Revelation. After all, this is our country, this is our kindred. Okay.

Verse 4 says he's made much better than the angels. For by them, for much better than the angels, as he hath by an inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto each of the angels hath he said at any time, Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee.

I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son. Now notice this book is about one person only, and get this in your little mind. Let it go deep in your mind, then you'll have it in a nutshell.

I thought some of you were sleeping. In this amazing epistle, if I were a young man like some of you are, and some of us like Brother Dale aren't, I would master this book. The whole book is, it's a commentary on the first five books of Moses and the book of Psalms.

But actually it centers in one person, Jesus Christ. It shows us that in the affairs of men, Jesus Christ is the center, and he's the circumference, he's the beginning, he's the ending, he's the first and the last, he's the light and he's the life. See, this world exists only for one reason, that's to glorify Jesus Christ.

And Jesus didn't save you from hell and jail, that's a fringe benefit. He wants, God wants to conform you to the image of his son. He didn't create you just for happiness, he created you for holiness.

And that demands discipline and obedience and submission. You think of this wonderful world in which we live, okay. There's a hymn I don't like, but I'll quote a part of it for you.

It starts with, Praise to the holiest in the height and in the depth be praised, in all his works most wonderful, most sure in all his ways. O loving wisdom of our God, when all was sin and shame, a second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came. O wisest love, that flesh and blood which did in Adam fail, should strive afresh against the foe, should strive and should prevent.

But there isn't a second Adam. Jesus wasn't the second Adam, he was the last Adam. If there's a second Adam, you may have a third, a fourth or a fifth.

But think of the awesome fact that the first Adam, perfect intellectually, perfect morally, perfect emotionally, was put in an environment of total perfection. There wasn't a weed in the garden, the bees had no stings, there were no thorns in the garden, the serpents you could pick them up and fool around with them if you wanted. And so the first man Adam came into a totally perfect environment and yet he polluted the whole thing and polluted the whole race.

The last Adam, Jesus Christ, came into a world that was totally corrupt from center to confluence, as it is now. Doesn't it say in the sixth chapter of Genesis, in the days of the flood, the earth was corrupt before God. Didn't Jesus say, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be today.

So why are you amazed at it? Why are you disturbed that it's corrupt? Jesus said it would be. If you deny the laws of God, all you do is embrace everything of the devil. Okay, so Jesus, Adam, came into a perfect environment and he got totally corrupted and disobeyed God, broke the heart of God, got kicked out of the garden.

Come on you folk who sin and repent every day. What if God dealt with you like he did with Adam? How many times did Adam sin? A thousand? Christianity is not a sinning repentant religion, it's a victorious religion. There should be a place where you quit your sinning.

I preached in a certain university with a brilliant fellow who's a national preacher for his denomination. When he finished, everybody went on the platform, you know, girls can have your autograph, can have your photograph. I pulled his coattail, I said, sir I'm not a hero worshiper, I don't want your autograph, I don't want your photograph.

He said, what do you want? I want to tell you why you were wrong tonight. He said, what? In a great university with 2,000 students listening? I said, when you were talking about sin, I was thinking about that bad woman that came to Jesus. You remember that woman? Oh sure, I remember the woman.

Do you remember what Jesus said to her, go and sin less? He said, what? I said, that's what you preach tonight. You'll see some bumper stickers on cars. Christians are not sinless, they just sin less.

Well, I've got news for you. If you're a Christian, you don't sin. You are victory over sin.

Jesus didn't go to leave you messed up in sin. What do we sing tonight? That wonderful hymn, my sin or the bliss of this glorious thought. My sin not in part, but the whole is nailed to the cross.

The church hasn't moved into that yet. We're so concerned to see a few signs and wonders and miracles and people that perform and go back to dirty living and dirty talking and covetousness and pride and anger. The Lord Jesus Christ came to purify us unto himself and nothing else than purity will satisfy him.

Thank you. I got one amen, it was worth a hundred. Thank you.

Anybody else while the voting is going? Thank you. You see, everything in this book is marked as permanent. Just to go through it quickly in case you want to put it down.

In the first chapter it says, thy throne O God is forever and ever. His throne is forever. Chapter three says, his house is forever.

What do you have a house for to live in? Good Lord, what's the good of putting up big glass mansions, palaces or abbeys or cathedrals? God doesn't dwell in temples made with hand, he lives in human

personality. It's men that set the world on fire. You say prayer changes things, forget it.

Prayer changes people and people change things. You can't have a prayer life and be the same person. You can't even sin.

Don't you blame the devil that your prayers are not being answered. You aren't, you're stopping them. You sabotage your own prayers.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? He that hath clean hands, that's our relationship with the world. He that hath a pure heart, that's our relationship to God. And God demands purity on every level.

And until he comes and cleanses the inner being where all the corruption is, you know sin isn't in the heart. I mean not the physical heart. Supposing you die, please don't do it in the next 10 minutes, but supposing you have a heart transplant.

Did you transplant all the sins of the man? Did you transplant all the sins out of that man into your heart? Of course not. Sin isn't in the physical heart. And yet out of the heart proceedeth evil thought, impurity, everything that's antagonistic to God.

Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. Not one of you have thought about Julius Caesar today, have you? Have you thought about the Roman Empire? Have you thought about Julius Caesar? Have you thought about Augustus Caesar? Have you thought about Agrippa Caesar? Have you thought about Pompey? Well they made headlines in the world. Their throne is gone, the Pharaoh's throne is gone, but thy throne is forever and ever.

He's going to rule and reign forever and ever. That's a pretty long while. As I said to you, hell has no exits.

Hell is forever. I'm not going to heaven for the weekend. If you New Yorkers want to do that, that's your business.

I'm going forever and ever. When I get inside those pearly gates, boy, I'm going to sing with the redeemed and shout and glorify the Lord. So chapter 1 of Hebrews says, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.

Chapter 3 says, The house of the Lord is forever and ever. Hebrews 7, 24 says, The priesthood is forever. Chapter 9 says, The covenant is forever.

And chapter 12 says, The kingdom is forever. Going back to that wonderful song, The Messiah, I love to hear people sing it. When the sopranos get up there, you know, and he shall reign forever and ever, and they keep going up and up and up, king of kings and lord of lords.

Boy, I jump up and shout, like a good old Methodist should, because I'm going to participate in that kingdom forever and ever. I was thinking of the glory of the Lord today, the pre-existent glory of Jesus that he prayed for in John 17, the glory which I had with thee, what did he say, before the world was. In chapter 1, verse 5, Unto which of the angels saith he at any time, Thou art my son, this day I begotten thee.

And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him. And then verse 5, But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God.

That's the Father speaking to the Son. Whether these wretched Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses dare to say Jesus had no pre-existence, he was just somebody specially endowed, forget it, that's a lie. I tell you as I entered in my prayer tonight, I guess the moment Jesus was born on earth, all the angels in heaven were staggered.

You see, there came a place, as it says in Matthew 3, when the angels of heaven were allowed to look down and see the man Christ Jesus. And a voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son. And so, if you like, there was a hole in heaven to let the angels look down and see what they'd never seen before.

A man who had become totally controlled by God. The angels looked down and saw that marvelous being that even eternity hadn't seen. They'd seen him as the Son of God, but not as the Son of Man.

And neither is the Son of Man who is the Son of Man and the Son of God. And then you remember Stephen. Stephen looked up to heaven and said, I see Jesus.

You see, if you see anything else but Jesus, you'll soon get sidetracked. He is the author and the finisher of our faith. I don't care how much blessing you get in Bible school, or through ministries, or tapes, or anything else.

It must be centered in Christ. He is the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega. So the glory he had with the Father before the world was.

I'm skipping back a bit. Again, Hebrews 1 and 3. He was the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person. And he had by his power, when he had by himself, purged our sins.

Isn't that wonderful? You see, it's wonderful to think of the glory that Jesus had with the Father before the world was. And then the next phase of his glory is from when he was a babe until he went to the cross. It was his moral glory.

We need to preach on the moral glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, even being found in fights as a man. He wasn't a king, he was the poorest. And while Adam came into a world with no sin, Jesus came into a world with every conceivable sin, and he wasn't corrupted, and he wasn't corruptible.

He went through everything. Hatred, bitterness, scorn, ridicule, kicked out of his family, kicked out of the temple, buried with the malefactor outside the city. Yet we see the moral splendor of Jesus.

Now, what about his official glory? At the right hand of the Father, living to make intercession for us. It says when he had by himself purged our sins. If you go into chapter 9 of Hebrews and look at verse 7, it says he went into the second, that's the second section of the tabernacle, went the high priest, or pardon me, go back to verse 6. These things were thus ordained.

Priests, notice it's plural, always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God, but into the second tabernacle went the high priest once every year, not without blood, but he offered himself. You see, if ever you run short of of worship, all you have to do is read Hebrews. How many priests from Aaron until the moment Jesus went into the place, how many priests had gone in there? What did it take? They took the blood of bulls and goats, or blood of bulls.

He took his own blood. And immediately he did that. Immediately Jesus said on the cross it is finished.

He put every priest, every priest was unemployed from that moment. Every sacrifice was invalid. Doesn't matter who made it.

Christ is our altar, he is our priest, and he is a sacrifice. When he had by himself, come down to verse 12, he went neither by the blood of goats and cows, but by his own blood he entered once into the holy place. Notice, having obtained eternal redemption.

As long as there's one man on earth, that blood is valid. The great missionary C.T. Studd, I saw him once when I was about 12, C.T. Studd said sin is so terrible in the eyes of God, that if there was only one sin on earth, Jesus Christ would have gone to the cross to save that sinner. Because that man is denying God the right to his personality.

Some of you are doing that with all your talk about it. You don't just bring him a lousy sin, you have to bring him your will, you have to bring him your heart, you have to bring him your affections. And there comes a place where you can put everything on the altar, according to Romans 12, 1 and 2, present your body a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is only a reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed.

I think Phillips, it's a pretty good version, it's English, but anyhow, Phillips says don't let this world squeeze you into its mold. Come on, what's your excitement tomorrow? Oh, not much. Sunday afternoon, you'll be watching all the dumb guys kick a ball around, and you profess to love Jesus.

When do you give Jesus two hours of your time? When do you sit in speechless wonder, adoring him, magnifying him, with tears running down your face? For listen to what it says here, in verse 9 of chapter 9, it says, which was a figure for the time in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, look, that could not make him that did this service perfect, pertaining to the conscience. Do you realize that when that man took his offering, it just made him acceptable to God? He didn't do a thing for his conscience. But look further down the chapter.

What's it say in verse 9? Well, it says in 9, okay, it did not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, he was still guilty and condemned. Verse 14, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience? Come on, you guys, whether you've been to jail or been to hell, I don't care. Supposing every sin you ever committed since the age of accountability was burning in your heart tonight, it would be hell, wouldn't it? But once in mercy, one drop of his precious blood, and that one sacrifice, I think it was Isaac Watts wrote the hymn, not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain could give one guilty conscience peace, or wash away one stain.

But Christ, the heavenly lamb, take all our sins away. What do you think the priest thought? You know, I believe when John Baptist stood there and said, behold the lamb of God, every fiber of hell shook, because they knew here was a perfect offering. All the hypocrisy, all the artificiality of the was finished in the moment Jesus said it is finished.

No blood sacrifice, no priesthood, no high priest, no altars, no feast of tabernacles, no other feast was valid. That should make your head spin, that should make you get on your face and thank God that once in the end of the age he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. If you had every sin you've ever committed, tormenting you on the inside, you'd die of fright.

Jesus didn't come to lose you from some lousy sins merely. What does it say here? In verse 14, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. You see that? Purge your conscience.

It doesn't matter how loaded you are with guilt. In World War II, I'm trying to think back, yeah, World War II, okay, we were living outside the city of Bath in England, and I used to go to the largest military camp on Tuesday night and talk to hundreds and hundreds of Air Force men. The next week when I went, this, this place is empty, that place is empty.

They got shot down over Germany. It was a tremendous opportunity. I remember one young, handsome young man came to me one night, he said, is it really true what you said tonight? I'd never heard that.

That somewhere mysteriously, 2,000 years ago, a man on a cross bore my sins in his body on the tree. I said, yes, he tasted hell for you, the Word of God says. All God's billows went over him.

And he tasted hell because he understood why men run away. Oh yes, Peter can say what you've said many a time in the heat of a meeting. How many of you said, I'll pray more, and you haven't prayed more since.

I'll give more money, and you haven't given more money since. I'll discipline myself. You haven't done it.

You'll find it at the checkout counter, which is a judgment seat. And this poor man said to me, Mr. Rayleigh, I'm haunted. I'm haunted by this.

My conscience, it's like a fire in me sometimes. My memory is as though I'm sitting on the edge of hell. I've been the vilest of sinners.

And these were his words. He said, I guess if I could go back for a few years, I must have fathered at least 30 children. And he said, sometimes when a little child comes up smiling, I think, oh, this could be my child.

When a child asks for help, I give it help because it might be my child. And he said, I wake up in the night, something thumps inside. I forgot what, I don't know whether it was creases.

One of the Greeks anyhow said, you know, men say they're afraid of death because it's annihilation. He said, no, they're not. They're afraid of death because, because they're not sure it's annihilation.

That's right. Jesus said the pains of death got hold of him. Okay.

So on the cross, he says what? Why has thou forsaken me? So what happened? The whole earth rocked. There was a famous, there's a famous Greek scholar called Diogenes and the famous heathen philosopher called Diogenes. Diogenes the Greek, in the moment when God, you see, nobody ever saw the crucifixion.

Don't believe it. Somebody imagined it and painted it. God couldn't even see it.

I don't understand how God became man. Come on, the heaven of heavens cannot contain him and yet he was pressed into the womb of the Virgin Mary. I don't understand when he was the essence of all wisdom, was a helpless babe.

He put all the food of the universe in the world, but he hung on to a woman's breast, otherwise he would have died. He was the most helpless little creature in the world. Animals within a few minutes of being born can scramble around.

A baby can't do that. And he laid his glory by and wrapped him in our clay. There was a hymn years ago.

Do you remember a hymn called? Let me think of it a minute. The love of God is greater far. If I'm wrong, correct me, can you? The first stanza is the love of God is greater far than tongue and pen can ever tell.

It goes beyond the highest star, it reaches to the lowest hell. Then the last stanza, do you know this amazing hymn, do you know the man that wrote the last stanza wrote it in a lunatic asylum? So cheer up. If you land up there, if you land up there, start writing hymns.

Oh, the last stanza is, listen, this is a man supposedly insane. He had been marvelously saved while he was there. He'd been a wretched criminal.

There wasn't a clean thing in him from his fingernails to the heart of his being. He was vile and corrupt. He was like 10 Al Capone's all rolled into one.

When he heard the wonderful mercy of God, he reached out. The last stanza, could we with ink, listen to this madman, could we with ink the ocean fill and were the, were the skies of parchment made, were every blade stalk of grass a quill and every man a scribe by trade. To write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry, nor could the scroll contain, contain the whole, nor stretch from sky to sky.

Now that man has a vision. You sang about the love of God tonight. I don't know why, but driving up, I thought about a great Englishman by the name of Raven, no, no, sorry, Churchill.

I thought it sounded funny. They used to put on, they used to put on the newspapers during world war two, Churchill said, and one day it said this, Churchill yesterday said this in parliament. I've often wondered what would happen if God got weary of mankind.

Ever thought of that? Jesus had been making intercession for 2000 years. What if he quits tomorrow? But he has an eternal priesthood. You can take all the priests from Aaron and Aaron's sons, and everybody else, and if you put them all together, they hadn't, between them all, they hadn't the virtue that Jesus had.

He was a spotless lamb of God, and he bought our sins. For what reason? That we might know a conscience that's free, and that we might serve the living God. In verse, in the same chapter nine, for Christ is not entered into the holy place, made with hands richer figures of the two, but listen, into heaven itself, to appear for who? Sonny James.

To appear for who? Mark Cordy and his brother. To appear for who? My precious friends here, the Hughes. We used to hear people in England say, oh, that man got a light sentence because he had a friend in court.

You should get up every morning with a hallelujah, got a friend in court. Jesus is there, living to make intercession. What does it get excited about? Why, in God's name, are you going to tell me you can't get excited about having a conscience that's purged of offense toward God? Are you going to tell me you don't get excited to know you're an heir of God, and a joint heir with him? Even to be an heir of God is wonderful, but to be a joint heir with Jesus, that whatever he triumphed, when he rose again from the

dead, and boy he did.

Some of you look as though he didn't. We're going to sing a verse. Keep seated if you can.

Let's sing up from the grave he arose. Please. This is the end of this message.

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