

A Short Discourse on Eternity

by Michael Wigglesworth

The sermon emphasizes the boundless and unending nature of eternity, and the eternal consequences of rejecting Christ.

Scripture: Isaiah 57:15, Matthew 25:46, Mark 3:29, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Revelation 14:11

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Salvation"

Description

Michael Wigglesworth preaches about the incomprehensible concept of Eternity, emphasizing its vastness and the impossibility for mortal man to fully grasp its magnitude. He contrasts the finite nature of the world and time with the infinite nature of Eternity, urging listeners to consider the eternal consequences of their actions. Wigglesworth highlights the contrasting destinies of the righteous who will live in eternal bliss with Christ and the sinners who will face eternal torment in Hell, underscoring the importance of choosing God's love and salvation.

Transcript

[1]

What Mortal man can with his Span

mete out Eternity?

Or fathom it by depth of Wit,

or strength of Memory?

The lofty Sky is not so high,

Hells depth to this is small:

The World so wide is but a stride,

compared therewithall.

Isa. 57:15

Mark. 3:29

Matt. 25:46

[2]

It is a main great Ocean,

withouten bank or bound:

A deep Abyss, wherein there is

no bottom to be found.

This World hath stood now since the Flood,

four thousand years well near,

And had before endured more

than sixteen hundred year.

[3]

But what's the time from the Worlds prime,

unto this present day,

If we thereby Eternity

to measure should assay?

The whole duration since the Creation,

though long, yet is more little,

If placed by Eternity,

then is the smallest tittle.

[4]

Tell every Star both near and far,

in Heav'ns bright Canopee,

That doth appear throughout the year,

of high or low degree:

Tell every Tree that thou canst see

in this vast Wilderness,

Up in the Woods, down by the Floods,

in thousand miles progress.

[5]

The sum is vast, yet not so vast,

but that thou may'st go on

To multiply the Leaves thereby,

that hang those Trees upon:

Add thereunto the Drops, that thou

imaginest to be

In April Show'rs, that bring forth Flow'rs,

and blossoms plenteously:

[6]

Number the Fowls and living Souls

that through the Air do Fly,

The winged Hosts in all their Coasts

beneath the Starry Sky:

Count all the Grass as thou dost pass

through many a pasture-land,

And dewy Drops that on the tops

of Herbs and Plants do stand.

[7]

Number the Sand upon the Stran,

and Atomes of the Air;

And do thy best on Man and Beast,

to reckon every Hair:

Take all the Dust, if so thou'st lust,

and add to thine Account:

Yet shall the Years of sinners tears,

the Number far surmount.

2 Thes. 1:9

Rev. 14:11

[8]

Nought joyn'd to nought can ne're make ought,

nor Cyphers make a Sum:

Nor things Finite, to infinite

by multiplying come:

A Cockle-shell may serve as well

to lade the Ocean dry,

As finite things and Reckonings

to bound Eternity.

[9]

O happy they that live for aye,

with Christ in Heav'n above!

Who know withal, that nothing shall

deprive them of his love.

Eternity, Eternity!

Oh, were it not for thee,

The Saints in bliss and happiness

could never happy be.

1 Thes. 4:17

Rom. 8:38, 39

[10]

For if they were in any fear,

that this their joy might cease,

It would annoy (if not destroy)

and interrupt their peace:

But being sure it shall endure

so long as God shall live;

The thoughts of this unto their bliss,

do full perfection give.

1 John 4:18

John 6:35, 40, 51

Rev. 21:4

[11]

Cheer up, ye Saints, amidst your wants,

and sorrows many a one,

Lift up the head, shake off all dread,

and moderate your mone.

Your sufferings and evil things

will suddenly be past;

Your sweet Fruitions, and blessed Visions,

for evermore shall last.

Heb. 12:12

2 Cor. 4:17

Psal. 16:11

[12]

Lament and mourn you that must burn

amidst those flaming Seas:

If once you come to such a doom,

for ever farewell ease.

O sad estate and desparate,

that never can be mended,

Until Gods Will shall change, or till

Eternity be ended!

Luke 13:28

Matt. 25:41, 46

Rev. 14:11

[13]

If any one this Question

shall unto me propound:

What, have the years of sinners tears

no limits, or no bound?

It kills our heart to think of smart,

and pains that last for ever;

And hear of fire that shall expire,

or be extinguish'd never.

Mark. 9:43, 44

[14]

I'll Answer make (and let them take

my words as I intend them:

For this is all the Cordial

that here I have to lend them)

When Heav'n shall cease to flow with peace

and all felicity;

Then Hell may cease to be the place

of Wo and Misery.

[15]

When Heav'n is Hell, when Ill is Well,

when Vertue turns to Vice,

When wrong is Right, when Dark is Light,
When Nought is of great price:
Then may the years of sinners tears
and sufferings expire,
And all the hosts of damned ghosts
escape out of Hell-fire.

[16]

When Christ above shall cease to love,
when God shall cease to reign,
And be no more, as heretofore,
the Worlds great Sovereign,
Or not be just, or favour lust,
or in mens sins delight:
Then wicked men (and not till then)
to Heav'n may take their flight.

[17]

When Gods great Power shall be brought lower,
by forreign Puissance;
Or be decay'd, and weaker made
through Times continuance
When drowsiness shall him oppress,
and lay him fast asleep:
Then sinful men may break their pen,
and out of Prison creep.

[18]

When those in Glory shall be right sorry
they may not change their place,

And wish to dwell with them in Hell,
never to see Christs face:
Then those in pain may freedom gain,
and be with Glory bright:
Then Hellish Fiends may be Christ's Friends,
and heirs of Heaven hight.

[19]

Then, Ah poor men! what, not till then?
No, not an hour before:
For God is just, and therefore must
torment them evermore.

ETERNITY! ETERNITY!
thou mak'st hard hearts to bleed:
The thoughts of thee in misery,
do make men wail indeed.

[20]

When they remind what's still behind,
and ponder this word NEVER,
That they must here be made to bear
Gods Vengeance for EVER:
The thought of this more bitter is,
then all they feel beside,
Yet what they feel, nor heart of steel,
nor Flesh of Brass can bide.

Mark. 9:43, 44,
45, 46 &c.

[21]

To lye in wo, and undergo
the direful pains of Hell,
And know withall, that there they shall
for aye, and ever dwell;
And that they are from rest as far
when fifty thousand year,
Twice told, are spent in punishment,
as when they first came there.

2 Thes. 1:8, 9

Mat. 25:46

Rev. 14:10, 11

[22]

This, Oh! this makes Hells fiery flakes
much more intolerable;
This makes frail wights and damned sprights,
to bear their plagues unable.
This makes men bite, for fell despite,
their very tongues in twain:
This makes them rore for great horror,
and trebleth all their pain.

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