

Eternal Life

by Peter Brandon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having eternal life through Jesus Christ and how it transforms lives.

Duration: 38:18

Scripture: John 10:7

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Transformation through Christ"

Description

Peter Brandon emphasizes the significance of eternal life as presented in John 10, where Jesus identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd and the door to salvation. He explains that eternal life is a gift from God, essential for overcoming spiritual death caused by sin, and that it is found in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Brandon highlights the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers, illustrating how accepting this gift leads to a renewed life filled with purpose and joy. He urges listeners to recognize their need for eternal life and to accept it through faith in Christ, assuring them that once received, it cannot be taken away.

Transcript

I'm going to read from John 10 tonight, and we're going to commence reading of that one. The Lord Jesus is the speaker, and he says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the porter opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. And when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger.

This parable spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief, that means Satan, comes not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. But he that is a highling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming, and leads the sheep, and flees, and the wolf catches them, and scatters the sheep. The highling flees, because he is a highling, and cares not for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep. And have known of mine. As the father knows me, even so know I the father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself.

I have power to lay it down, I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father. Verse 27 of that same chapter.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give unto them eternal life, they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand.

I am my father alone. Now would you turn just to another verse, it's in Romans 6 verse 23. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Would you allow me to read that again, because that's my scripture for tonight. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I'm sure God always blesses the weaving of the Bible.

Someone once said that Christianity was a deathbed religion. Now first of all, I want to say clearly that Christianity shows you how to die victoriously, but it is not a deathbed religion. In fact, the Lord Jesus made it very clear that if you don't have life before death, you will never get life after death.

So can you see if we're going to have life after death, we've got to have eternal life before death. When we read John's gospel, and it's a lovely book, when you have a few spare moments to read it, you will find that the whole of that book was written that people might believe that Jesus Christ is the Christ, and that they're believing they might have life through his name. Therefore, almost in every chapter in John's gospel, there's a reference to life.

In chapter one, he's the light of life. In chapter three, he is the new birth of heavenly life. In chapter four, he is the spring of life.

In chapter five, he is the security of life, if you like the assurance of life. In chapter six, he is the bread of life. In chapter seven, he is the river of life.

In chapter eight, he is the light of life. And in chapter ten, he is the abundance of life. And in chapter eleven, he is the resurrection and the life, all life.

And therefore, I want to share with you tonight, just for a few minutes, this great gift of eternal life that God is desirous to give to all people. The first point is quite obvious and simple. Why do we need eternal life? Secondly, what is eternal life? And then thirdly, how do we receive eternal life? Now, why do we need eternal life? Because the wages of sin is death.

In order to understand that statement, my dear friends, we have to go right the way back to the beginning of creation. And when God made man, he made him, if I can put it very simply, so that we can understand, in three parts. He made him with a body, he made him with a soul, and he made him with a spirit.

Now we can prove that immediately. When you were sitting at the table eating your food tonight, you were feeding the body. That's clear.

When you were listening to the music tonight, you were not feeding your body, you were feeding your soul. When we bowed our heads and prayed, all those who loved the Lord Jesus, were not feeding their bodies, were not feeding their souls, but they were feeding their spirits. We were in contact with God.

So can you see, with the body, man knew the earth. With his soul, he knew himself. With the spirit, he had contact with the Almighty God.

Now if you spoke to Adam before he sinned, and if you said something like this to him, what's the best part of the day for you? He would say without hesitation, when the evening comes, the cool of the garden, I go out and I meet the Almighty God, and I move right into a new world. I move into the world of the Kingdom of God. And that was the most precious point in his experience in life.

God put man under a very simple test. For instance, every aeroplane, every car is tested. And so the Lord tested man.

And there in the garden of Eden, there was a tree. It wasn't an apple tree, it wasn't an orange tree, it was a brilliant tree. It was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now it was the mind of God that man should know good, but not evil. And he was forbidden to touch that tree. Immediately man deliberately sinned, and took of that tree, he took from the hands of God, the reins that controlled him, and he became his own master.

And into that body there came the poison of sin. Now the body almost remained the same, though there were differences. The soul was almost the same, but there were some differences.

But the spirit went dead. Just like being in a house and all the lights go out, the light of God went out. A man had life physically, he had life socially, but life spiritually was dead.

So that when God came in the evening, he was afraid, and we hear him saying something like this, I'm afraid, I've hit myself. You see instead of being conscious of God, instead of being aware of God, he was just conscious of himself. But that's not all.

Every little baby that comes from Adam is born dead. Not physically, not emotionally, but spiritually. And this is what the word of God says.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for the Lord has sinned. And that is the world's greatest problem. So that when we pick up a lovely little baby, and we all love them, we admire them, it's made in the image and in the likeness of God, admittedly damaged by sin.

That baby has natural life, it has soulish life, but it's spiritually dead. And if that baby when it reaches the age of responsibility, is then responsible before God to receive this gift of eternal life. Now secondly, let's look at the facts of this.

Can we really see that man is spiritually dead? Now here's a fact. In a place called Milton Keynes, I was working and evangelizing, and I gave a man a Bible. The man knew nothing at all about the Bible, he knew a very little about God, he knew a very little about Jesus and so on.

And then I went back to see him about two months later, and all this was arranged, and I said, how did you get on? Didn't understand a word. I tried prayer, but it's all ridiculous. He said, I knelt down and prayed, but I was praying into the thin air.

He said, then I went at the Bible again, couldn't understand it. What was he saying? He was saying, I can't understand the Bible, I can't understand prayer, I believe that God's there, but I don't know him. He was saying, I'm spiritually dead.

And that man was being honest. Now it's possible, dear friends, to be religious. For instance, in the Bible, there was one man whose name was Nicodemus, and he was a religious ruler, he was a Pharisee, he was a master in Israel.

In fact, he was a brilliant man that used to teach people religion. For instance, if Nicodemus stood here, and I said to him, Nicodemus, I want you to give me a resume on the personality of God. He could have done it beautifully.

But then, if I said to him, Nicodemus, do you know God intimately and personally? No. And that's why he came to Jesus by now. He knew that he was spiritually dead, and that's why the Lord Jesus said to him, except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Thirdly, I want you to think now of the loss of spiritual death. I want you to think of the average man, now I'm thinking of Britain and I'm thinking of Australia, and we are very similar, and the average man in Britain, and this would mark almost 78% of Britain, he gets up in the morning, he goes through his washing hygiene, he sits at the breakfast table, he reads his paper, he says goodbye to his wife and children, and he goes to work, and shall we imagine he's a carpenter, and he's working there on a particular house, and then he takes out his sandwiches, 12 o'clock, and then he goes back to his work, and 5 o'clock, he's home in his car, and he sits down, and it's almost noon time, and he switches on the television, and he watches it, and then he has his dinner, and then perhaps he looks at the telly again, and then it's about 10 or half past 10, and he's thinking of going to bed. For 16 hours that man has gone through the day spiritually dead, unconscious of God, unaware of God, that's not all, he's married, he's got a nice little home, nothing wrong with that, he loves his garden, nothing wrong with that, he likes to go and watch the arsenal once a month, and then my dear friends, he comes home, and he works hard, brings the money in, puts a little aside, and he's going through life, and then he loses his youth, his middle age, he gets a corporation, and feels a little clumsy, so he puts himself through some keep fit classes, and then when he gets about 65, he retires, and then he says, I put my feet up.

Now what happens? 30 years he's gone through life without God, without Christ, without hope, dare I say it, spiritually dead. He reaches a good age of roughly about 85, and then he feels ill, he has a heart attack, and they're all around the bed, they love him, and that man dies spiritually dead. Listen, he lived without Christ, he died without Christ, and he moves into a Christless eternity.

What a shock! Now Jesus describes two men, one was rich, he was a brilliant businessman, he reached the age of retirement, but he was without Christ, he was without God, he was without hope, he was spiritually dead, and suddenly he died, and do you know what the Lord said? Thou fool, this night thy soul

shall be required of thee. There was another rich man that the Lord Jesus spoke of, and this particular rich man was obviously a man that fared sumptuously every day, that means he had the best food possible, went to the synagogue, wore the purple garment, that meant he was a man of dignity, and everyone would recognize him as a VIP, and then all of a sudden this man dies, and his spirit, and what a fuss they made of him at the burial, but Jesus said, in hell he lifted up his eyes in torment. What happened? He lived without Christ, he died without Christ, he slipped from time into the yawning jaws of eternity, and he said, Lord, I'm lost, spiritually dead.

Now my dear friends, immediately we understand that, then we shall need eternal life. Now can I ask you a question? Have you got eternal life? Do you realize the wages of sin is death? Do you realize if you die in your sins, you will be eternally lost? And that's why all of us need eternal life. Now what is it? Now I've been speaking to people that have no relationship at all with churches, and one man thought eternal life was stardust from heaven, another man thought it was like a kind of a Christian theory that comes to you.

So then what is eternal life? Now my dear friends, eternal life is the Lord Jesus. John chapter 1 says, in him was life, and the life was the light of men. John's epistle first chapter says, for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the father, and was manifested unto us.

So it's the life of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus said, I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly. Again the Lord Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life, he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

And to Martha he says, do you believe this? So eternal life is found in the Lord Jesus. Now isn't that clear? Now comes the problem. How can the Lord Jesus, the son of man, the son of God, put his life in me? Impossible.

Can I say it again? How can the Lord Jesus actually put his life in me? Well that's impossible. So he said to his disciples, it's expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter, the Holy Spirit will not come. And then he said, when he has come, he will be with you, now note this, and in you.

So can you see my dear friends, the Holy Spirit is that member of the Trinity that's indwelling. When the Lord Jesus died upon the cross, as we were saying last night, he died on the cross on behalf of the sins of the world. That meant, instead of God's judgment coming upon us, he volunteered to bear the judgment.

And through that cross, all our sins can be forgiven, if we receive it. When he went back to heaven, he did a wonderful thing. He went back for one purpose, to send the Holy Spirit.

And therefore on the day of Pentecost, when the disciples were all gathered in an upper room, about 120 of them, as they were waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit, they suddenly heard the sound of a rushing mighty wind. Must have been wonderful. And it filled the room.

And the enclovened tongues of fire sat upon each of them. And here it comes, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Now what does that mean? The Holy Spirit came in them, and brought into them eternal life.

Wonderful. Again, some of you will remember this, if you don't, we'll try and make it clear. When the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead, he went among his disciples, and when they saw the Lord, they were glad.

So would you be, if you thought he was dead, and now he was risen. And when the disciples saw the Lord, they were jubilantly happy, and he showed them his hands and his side, and then he did a remarkable thing. Now grip this.

He went up, and he breathed on each of them, and said, receive thee the Holy Spirit. Now when he made man in good shape and form, he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being, right at the beginning. Now he's going to start all over again.

He's going to build a new society. So he breathes and says, receive ye the Holy Spirit. And on the day of Pentecost, they receive the Holy Spirit.

And when a person receives the Holy Spirit, he receives into his life, eternal life, and I know you're going to raise your eyebrows, but he will never, never die. Never. And we shall see that in a few moments.

Now when this life comes into a person, the Lord Jesus said, that you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. Now this is not an exaggeration, but when the Holy Spirit comes into you, you are born anew, and then he will change your life dramatically. It won't be you, it will be the Holy Spirit changing.

Now to prove this point, if you look at the disciples when they were with the Lord Jesus, they were good men, but they all failed like we all do. But these men, when they were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they were completely transformed. In fact, as you read of them in the Gospels, and as you read of them in the book of the Acts, you can hardly tell they're the same people.

Why? The Spirit of God was changing. Now this is the wonder of the Christian life. You might see five Christians on this platform, and you might know the five of them.

But there's one of those Christians that's really shining for the Lord. What does that mean? That he has more of the Holy Spirit than the others? No! It means that he's cultivated the life, so that the beauty and the loveliness of the Lord Jesus shines out. And that's Christianity.

It's Christ reliving his life in you. And Paul put it like this, I am crucified with Christ, that was his old unconverted life. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.

And the life which I now live in the flesh, meaning in the body, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Just before we came here, we were working at Vista. And just 18 months ago, I was in a very large house, where they were having meetings.

And it was the last night, and in came a lady, and she sat right in the front. And the moment I looked at her, I staggered a little. She was about 16 stone, six foot three tall.

She had two of her sons with her. And the moment I looked at her, I could see she was a strong personality. As I was preaching the gospel and showing to the people how that the Holy Spirit could completely change their lives.

Somehow I felt that the words were going right into her heart. Then they told me that that woman was a wine alcoholic, and she was under a leading psychiatrist for 15 years. She went away from that service, said nothing to anyone in the room.

She thought all about the message that she heard. And then on a Tuesday afternoon, she got down by a chair and wept her heart out, and told the Lord she was a poor wretched sinner. She thanked the Lord for dying for her.

And she asked the Lord to come into her life and save her. The first thing she did was to go to the social security and tell them that she had been robbing them for 10 years. And she said that she would pay it all back, the new life.

For years, Friday and Saturday and Sunday, the children saw them in a drunken stupor. It all went. And even facially, that woman's life has been changed.

So much so, that her husband when he saw the change in her, he said I must come with you. And he came almost for about six or seven months, even coming to a communion service without taking the bread and wine of course, because he wanted to get the grip of this. And God gloriously saved him.

Two wine alcoholics. And then the last Sunday I was there, forgive me being rude, Steve the husband got up and worshipped the Lord. Six months old saved.

Worshipping the Lord. And you could see they were both transformed. What was it? The gift of eternal life had come in and transformed them.

You know some of you Christians that have been saved for years, you've made a very little progress. You know you should be shining bright lights for God. And some of you dear people that have just been saved, that eternal life is in.

And there's some of you dear friends tonight and you're sitting there and I feel sure you're saying that's what I need. And thank God he's waiting to give it. I must share this with you before I close.

When you have eternal life, it's eternal life. So in your body there's a paradox. The Holy Spirit comes in and he comes right down into your spirit and makes your spirit alive and he transforms your personality and he stamps upon that personality the beauty and the loveliness of Jesus.

Wonderful to see. You see when you become a Christian, if I may use sentimental language, he wants to make you all beautiful people. Full of the Lord Jesus.

So that your lives are full of love, joy and peace. And then dear friends there's the paradox. The old exterior, the body is dying.

The soul and the spirit is renewing. And so a Christian is a paradox. His body is dying.

The person inside is being renewed. Now if God gave us eternal life in this body it would be agonizing. I knew a lady Mrs Fred Elliot.

Her husband was a well-known evangelist and she lived till 112. The oldest lady in Britain. And would you believe it she was playing the piano at 111.

And she was all on the TV over there. But if you said to Mrs Elliot do you want to live for another 20 years? She would say no. I want to go home.

I want to go home. And that's where she is. In the glory.

They have buried the exterior and that's in the ground and it will decompose. It's called sleeping. That the real her is in paradise with the Lord.

And my dear friends the moment you have received eternal life there is no such thing as eternal death. It's gone. Absent from the body, present with the Lord.

You know when I hear some of my Christian brothers saying John passed away. I cringe. Passed away? Passed away? And when I hear another brother say I've lost my wife.

You've lost your wife? Of course you've not lost your wife. You know where she is. In heaven.

You see beloved Griffith the moment we die when we've got eternal life we're absent from the body present with the Lord. And we're a thousand times happier than we'll ever be in this body. Wonderful.

Now you say well how do we receive it? Now my dear friends it's the most costly thing that God ever gives. Before you could have eternal life the Lord Jesus had to die upon the cross, bear our sins and taste death for everyone. And eternal life is given because of the precious shed blood of the Lord Jesus.

That's the depth of it. Secondly eternal life is a gift. Now please note this.

Bear with me. That bible was a gift given to me by a man in Ireland. But it was a gift from him.

Here is a pen. And that was a gift given to me I believe by one of my sons. But it wasn't the gift of Philip.

It was a gift from Philip. When God gives you a gift it's not a gift from God. Note this.

It's a gift of God. In other words he puts the Holy Spirit within you and when he comes into your life you are completely converted, revolutionized. And he will go on doing that all the days of your life.

So when you receive this gift you receive a gift that's going to change your life. That's why you receive the Lord Jesus as your savior and as your Lord. Now there comes a time in your experience and we do not want to impose this we just the Spirit of God will say this to you.

When you sit in a seat like this and God in his grace comes to you and actually offers you the gift of eternal life. Now my dear friends allow me to say this in deep love. God would never give this subject to me if he were not to give the gift tonight.

And I'm absolutely sure that God now is waiting to give you the gift of eternal life. But you can do two things. You can reject it or you can receive it.

And you know I want to bow my head and say this. I've seen hundreds of people rejecting it and one day they'll stand before God and they will realize they will be in hell forever because they rejected the gift that God wanted to give. But I've seen people receiving it.

It's beautiful. Instead of going away as the others do they sit behind and you just draw close to them and say what's your trouble? And they're quietly say this. I want to receive the gift of eternal life tonight.

And then you say well I can't give it to you. I know that. It's only the Lord Jesus and it's beautiful to see it.

They kneel down, invariably do a little weeping. They tell the Lord they're sinners. They thank the Lord for dying for them.

And then quietly they say Lord be my Savior and my Lord and come into my life. Right there they're born of God. Dear friends all I want to say now is this.

I commend you to take that gift. Take it tonight and it will not only change your life, it will take you to glory. When you die the Lord help you to accept the gift of God which is eternal life.

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