

HAVING ETERNAL LIFE

INTRODUCTION

- I. When we think of eternal life, we think of life in eternity, in heaven when this life is over.
 - A. Yet, the scripture speaks of us HAVING “eternal life” WHILE ON EARTH. John 3:36
 - B. God (being Spirit, John 4:24)) has GIVEN a spirit or soul to every body born on earth, and that soul will never cease to exist.
 1. It will exist in heaven in the resurrected body of the righteous.
 2. It will also exist in hell in the resurrected body of the wicked. Matt. 10:28
- II. The **question is**, HOW or in WHAT SENSE, do the righteous HAVE “eternal life” NOW?
 - A. Being in “time” (and physical life), we are made to wonder HOW we can have physical life and eternal life at the same time.
 - B. Also, IF we **have** eternal life, HOW is it possible to **lose** it, or to be eternally lost?
 1. Does it mean we can NEVER lost it, under any conditions—hence, “once saved, always saved?”
 2. Or, are there *conditions*, **WE MUST MEET** to keep our claim to eternal life
 3. We need to remember that GIFTS can be “conditional.” cf Josh. 6:2-5, 16
 - a. Here is an instance where something was “given” (a gift), which was forfeited.
 - b. Eternal life is also a “gift” from God—can it also be forfeited? Cf Rom.6:23
- III. The scripture points out 6 ways that we HAVE “eternal life” NOW—as Christians.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, we have eternal life NOW by BEING IN CHRIST. 1 John 5:11

- A. This means that eternal life is IN Christ, the Son of God, and we share IN that “eternal life” when we GET into the Son of God. Rom. 6:3; Gal. 2:26-27
 1. One who only “believes” that Jesus exists has not yet **gotten** INTO Him so as to BE in Him.
 2. One who believes and “repents” has not yet gotten into Him, so as to BE in Him.
- B. BUT, once we GET into Christ, we must **remain** IN Him to “keep hold” of eternal life. John 15:4-6; Rom. 6:23

II. 2nd, we have eternal life by FOLLOWING CHRIST. John 10:27-28

- A. This comes as a result of **HEARING** the voice of the Shepherd Christ. John 10;27
- B. If we **cease** to HEAR the voice, and to FOLLOW Christ, we will NOT have eternal life. Cf John 10:27-28
 1. This may mean that we have eternal life **as long as** we continue to hear and follow.
 2. Or, it may mean that once eternal life is possessed, it cannot be taken away, and that possession takes place on the judgment day.
 3. At any rate, we must **always** be submissive to the voice and words of Jesus. John 12:48; 2 Pet. 2:20-21

III. 3rd, we have eternal life IN HOPE. Tit. 1:2

- A. “Hope” is having the desire AND the expectation of eventually (in the future) of receiving that which we do not fully possess at the point of “hope.” Rom. 8:24-25; cf Tit. 1:2

B. We can LOSE this hope, and thus no longer desire or expect it's fulfillment. Col. 1:23-24

IV. 4th, we have eternal life IN PROMISE. 1John 2:25

A. Eternal life is PROMISE from God. Tit.1:2

B. We **can LOSE** the promise of eternal rest or life. Heb. 4:1

V. 5th, we have eternal life by ABDING IN CHRIST'S DOCTRINE. 2John 9

A. **Having** the Son is clearly connected to "eternal life. 1 John 5:11-12

B. **Having** the Son means abiding in the "doctrine" or teaching Jesus gave. 2 John 9

1. John said we can "abide not in" the doctrine.

2. If we leave the doctrine (teaching) Christ gave, we do not have eternal life.

IV. 6th, we have eternal life by INHERITANCE. Tit. 3:7

A. The rich young ruler understood that to "have" eternal life is to "inherit" it. Matt. 19:16-17; Mark 10:17

B. Being an "heir" to something anticipates a **future** reception of it. Rom.8:17-18; 1 Pet. 1:3-9

CONCLUSION

I. In review, WE see that eternal life by (1) BEING IN CHRIST; (2) FOLLOWING CHRIST; (3) IN HOPE; (4) IN PROMISE; (5) ABIDING IN CHRIST'S DOCTRINE; and (6) BY INHERITANCE.

A. Eternal life is something we "lay hold on AFTER fighting the good fight of faith and righteous living before God. 1 Tim. 6:11-12, 17-19

B. You can begin the Christian life by being baptized into Christ and made an "heir" of the promise of life. Gal. 3:26-29 (Explain fully)

li. If we can assist you in your obedience to the Lord, please respond while we stand and sing.

DON TARBET