

“LAY HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE”

INTRODUCTION

The story is told of a stock broker who wished for a copy of the “WALL STREET JOURNAL” dated one year later, so he could buy up the stock that would make him the richest man in the world. Suddenly, such a newspaper fell on his desk. He studied it, and found the best stock for the future. He bought up all the stock, sat back and relaxed. He decided to examine the paper a little further, and on the next page saw something that terrified him. Those words were, “WORLD’S RICHEST FINANCIER DEAD.” He could now see himself rich, but dead. To the rich, Paul wrote that they should lay up for themselves “eternal life” (1 Tim. 6:10). Jesus pointed out that we should **all** lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:19-21).

There are 3 reasons why we should **all** (rich or poor) lay hold on eternal life.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, we should lay hold on eternal life because of the PERISHABLE NATURE OF EARTHLY THINGS.

- A. Jesus said that moth and rust corrupts, or can be taken by thieves, and we all know how that even food is perishable and will not last forever. Matt. 6:19-21
- B. Let’s consider some things that are perishable in nature that we sometimes forget.
1. The earth itself is perishable, and will someday be gone. Gen.8:22; Matt. 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:10-11; Heb. 1:10-12
 2. Marriage ties are also perishable.
 - a. The marriage vows are only till death, and usually come one before another. Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:39
 - b. In heaven, the church will enjoy an “eternal marriage” to Christ, and present marital ties will not exist. Matt. 22:30
 3. Our earthly possessions can be taken away in a moment of time, with floods, fires, tornadoes and hurricanes rampant throughout the land. Luke 12:15; 11 Tim. 6:7
 4. The physical bodies we now have are perishable. Heb. 9:27
 - a. Our bodies are fragile and can easily give way to injury or ill health and sudden death.
 - b. Great tragedies, such as car accidents, plane crashes, fires and terrorism, can take away human life in an instant. 2 Cor. 4:16; 5:1

II. 2nd, we should lay hold on eternal life because of the BREVITY OF LIFE ITSELF.

- A. The Old Testament emphasizes the brevity of life. Job 7:6; 14:1-2; Psa. 90:9-10
- B. The New Testament also emphasizes the brevity of life. 1 Pet. 1:24; Jas. 4:14
1. The early morning fog is swept away with the rising sun and the wind.
 2. The names of most of our ancestors are forgotten by most folks. Eccl. 1:11

III. 3rd, we should lay hold on eternal life because of the LENGTH OF ETERNITY ITSELF.

- A. Everyone will spend eternity in one of 2 places—*heaven* or *hell*.
1. Heaven is the eternal place of rest and reward for faithful children of God. Matt. 6:19-21; 1 Pet. 1:4
 2. Hell, on the other hand, is described as a place of tormenting fire and punishment that will last forever. Matt. 10:28; 25:41, 46

B. Illustration of GIANT SEQUOIA TREES. It is difficult to fully grasp the meaning of "eternity." Let's illustrate it. In California, there is one giant Sequoia tree called "General Sherman." It is over 300 feet tall, and if it were to fall to the ground at one end of an NFL football field, it's roots would rest at one end of the field, and it's top branch and it's leaves, would be at the other end of the field. Now suppose that tree will always exist, and each year, **one leaf** of the MILLIONS of needle-life leaves ON the tree falls to the ground. **How long would take for all the leaves to fall to the ground??** Now, we let each leaf represent 1000 years of existence in eternity. That would be a long long time to suffer for not obeying God.

CONCLUSION

I. Are you laying hold on eternal life?

A. If your emphasis is upon TIME and the THINGS of this life, such as it's pleasure and treasures, without any regard for your soul, you need to examine your life. Matt. 16:26

B. We must put our hearts into the place where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through and steal. Read 1 Cor. 3:11-15

1. Christ offers no eternal hope for the unbeliever. Mark 16:15-16

2. Christ offers no eternal hope for the false religions of the world, or for those who belong to them. Psa. 127:1; Matt. 15:9, 13-14

II. The story is given about a little girl that asked her father for a NICKEL. He took out his wallet took out a crisp \$5.00 bill, and offered it to her. She said, "No I don't want that. I want a NICKEL." She did not see the value of a \$5. bill. So it is with so many today. They want the world's nickel, instead of the Lord's eternal treasure. If you are not a true believer, you need to turn from your quest for earthly pleasure and treasure, and confess your faith in Jesus Christ, and be immersed into Him, and spend your days as a faithful Christian, with a hope of eternal life. If you have forsaken the way of the Lord, you too need to repent and return to the Lord with a request for forgiveness in prayer. The invitation is yours right now, as we stand together and sing for your encouragement.

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