

Attributes of God (Series 2): The Eternity of God

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes the eternal nature of God, exploring its implications for humanity and our understanding of time and existence.

Duration: 44:00

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Psalm 90:1, Isaiah 57:15, Micah 5:2, Matthew 5:17, Galatians 4:4-5, Revelation 13:8

Topics: "Attributes of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of God in our lives. He mentions that God has been present since before the existence of communism, fascism, and modern inventions. The preacher quotes Jesus' invitation to come to him for rest and highlights the idea that God has no past. He criticizes the trend of religious entertainment and emphasizes the need to preach the gospel instead. The sermon also references a vision of the last man on earth, who finds hope in the resurrection of Jesus and trusts in God's immortality.

Transcript

Next Sunday night I want to talk about the Omnipotence of God, the Lord God Omnipotent. Tonight I am to speak on the Eternity of God, and there are two texts that I want especially to mention. One is in Isaiah 57, that familiar text, For thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy.

I dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. He calls himself here the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity. Then an equally familiar passage in Psalm 90, Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, wherever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. From everlasting to everlasting thou art God, said Moses about God. Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, said God about himself.

Now I am to try tonight to emphasize that which everybody believes but don't believe is a rule with sufficient clarity and emphasis to make it worth their while. It is my belief that if this Church can make the whole Church see how wonderful God is, how great God is, and demonstrate the wonder of God to the

people, to the Church, and can arouse and spark other men to preach about these same truths, that it will raise and elevate the spiritual level of the Church very markedly. So I want tonight to talk about the Eternity of God.

I have taken two texts here, and let me say a few words about both of them. First, this word, the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity. Eternity, of course, is a noun.

It's the state of being eternal. Then we have words here, eternal and everlasting and forever. There are those who have said that such words as eternal and everlasting and forever do not mean time without end, everlasting.

They do not mean lasting forever or eternally. We have read into it the concept of everlastingness and endlessness. It only means to the end of the dispensation, to the end of the age.

The High and Lofty One who inhabiteth Eternity, eternal only means to the end of the age, everlasting only means to the end of the age. The reason men have taken that attitude is that they want to escape the doctrine of hell some way or other, because the scriptures say that hell is everlasting. They can't bring themselves to believe what God has said about hell.

Why they say the word everlasting doesn't mean lasting forever, because God uses it about the hills. He says the everlasting hills. Therefore, the word everlasting, eternal, forever and all that, those words cannot possibly mean lasting forever.

I'll tell you one thing. I have a Bible here, and if I thought that the word eternal, as referred to God, meant only lasting to the end of the age, I'd just fold my Bible up and go home and wait for the end. If I had a God that only lasted so long, that didn't have eternity and all the concepts of eternity in his heart, I couldn't possibly find it worthwhile to preach.

Why be a pro-tem Christian and why have a pro-tem God? I believe that God is eternal. You see, the Hebrew has combed and exhausted itself and wrung its language as you wring a towel to get the last drop of meaning out of it just to say that God is forever and ever, endlessly, unto perpetuity, a world without end. And the Greek language in the New Testament has done the same.

There aren't any other words in the Greek language that can be used to mean unto perpetuity, having no end, going on and on and on and on endlessly and forever. There aren't any other words that the language could use. And then when we come to our English, we have the concept of endlessness.

And if we have that concept of endlessness, then there must be somewhere endlessness, or how could we have a concept of that which doesn't exist and which our concept would be greater than the reality, which is plain foolishness as everybody can see. So we haven't any other words to use. Eternal, everlasting, forever, unto perpetuity, a world without end.

All of those words mean just what they say. And when God talks about himself, that's what he means. I am the lofty one who exists eternally, forever, unto perpetuity, a world without end.

And we come to the second text, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. The Hebrew lexicon tells us that you could use the words here from the vanishing point to the vanishing point, because actually in its root that's what it means. From the vanishing point of the past to the vanishing point of the future.

But whose vanishing point? Not God's. It's man's vanishing point. Man looks back as far as he can look, and he then turns around and looks forward as far as he can look.

He looks back until he can't see any further, until it vanishes, and then he looks forward until he can't see any further, until human thought falls exhausted and human eyes can no longer see. And that's the future, unto perpetuity, unto the vanishing point, man's vanishing point, a world without end. Other meanings of the word are concealed and out of mind.

From the time concealed to the time concealed thou art God. From the time out of mind to the time out of mind thou art God. Now that's what it says, my brethren.

And I'd like to have you tonight do something, if you could. I'd like to have you shake your head real hard to get all the wheels going, and then try to stretch your mind all you can, and think, if you can, about the past. I'd like to have you think Toronto out of existence.

I'd like to have you begin to think there's no Toronto here, there isn't a spot here, there isn't anything here but some Indians. And then I want you to go back and think all those Indians away. There isn't an Indian anywhere now, that's before the Indian got here.

And I want you to go on back to that and think away Canada. And then I want you to go on back to that and think away the North American continent, and then think away all this earth of ours, that where the earth is now, think beyond that way back until there isn't any earth now. We're back where there isn't any earth.

And then let's go back to that and think where there isn't any planet, and where there are no planets, and where there are no stars. The stars that we see dotting the clear night sky have all vanished away and there are no stars. And we go on back to that until there is no Milky Way and no anything.

Where we go to the throne of God and think away the angels and the archangels and the seraphim and the cherubim that sing and worship before the throne of God. Think them all away until there is no creation. Not an angel waves its wing, not a bird flies in the sky, there's no sky to fly in.

Not a tree grows in the mountain, there's no mountain for a tree to grow in. But God lives and loves alone the ancient of days, world without end to the vanishing point, back as far as the human mind can go. There we come to God, my brother, and you have God.

The great Augustine said, What then art thou, O my God? What I ask but the Lord. God, or who is God? Save the Lord. God most high and most excellent, most potent and most omnipotent, most piteous and most just, most hidden and most near, most beautiful and most strong, never new, never old, making all things new, yet bringing old age upon the proud, and they know it not, gathering yet needing nothing, sustaining, pervading, protecting.

Yes, O my God, my life, my holy one, what is this that I have said? And what saith any man when he speaks of thee? Yet woe to them that keep silence, seeing that even they that say most are dumb. But O thou, O Lord God, whoever livest and in whom nothing dies, since before the world was, and indeed before all that can be called before, thou existest and art the God, the Lord of all creation, fixedly abiding all causes of all unstable things, and the changing source of all things changeable, and the eternal reasons of all things reasoning and temporal. This was said by the great Augustine, that mighty saint of God.

We come to this God now, and where God is not dependent upon his world, God is not dependent upon kings and presidents, God is not dependent upon businessmen and preachers, God is not dependent upon boards and deacons, God is not dependent upon anything. We have thought our way out and passed back, until there is no history now, back to God himself, God the Eternal One. And I say now that God never began to be.

I want you to kick that word began around a little bit in your mind, and think about it. Began, began. Our good friend Brother Newell always says, I asked him if that was a good Canadian word, and he didn't know whether it was or not.

But he talked about commencing, and I talked about beginning. But I reminded him the scripture didn't say, in the commencement God made heaven and earth, but in the beginning God made heaven and earth. Well, God never began to be.

Began, you see, is a word that doesn't affect God at all. There are so many concepts that don't affect God, and so many ideas that don't touch God at all. The concept of beginning is such as creation.

When God spoke and things began to be, in the beginning God created. But before the beginning, there wasn't any beginning. Before, there wasn't any before.

If you can follow Augustine back to the time when there wasn't any before. When we've gone back so far that we run in a circle. The old writers used to say, the old theologians, that eternity is a circle.

Round and round the circle we go. And back before there was any circle, then God was. Now, God didn't begin to be.

God was. God didn't start out from somewhere. God just is.

And it's good that we get that in our mind. Time, you see, is a creature word because it has to do with the things that are. It has to do with the throne of God, maybe.

At least it has to do with the angels and the sea of fire and the cherubims and all the creatures that are around the throne of God. They began to be. There was a time when there wasn't an angel and then God said, let there be.

And there was an angel. And that angel began to be. But there never was a time when God was not and somebody said, let God be.

And God was and began to be because if that were true, then the one who said, let God be, would have to be God. And the God about whom he said, let be, wouldn't be God at all but a secondary God who wouldn't be worth our trouble. So God back there in the beginning created.

God was, that's all. Now, time can't apply to God, I have said. C.S. Lewis gave us an illustration which I'd like to pass on to you.

If you can think of eternity, of infinitude, as a broad sheet of paper, a pure white sheet of paper extending infinitely in all directions. And then think about time's beginning as a man taking a pencil and drawing a line. Now, the beginning of that little line, an inch long on an infinitely extended sheet of paper as broad and wide as the heavens or wider.

And that little piece of paper has a little line drawn and that line is time. It begins and it moves an inch and ends. And it begins on the paper and it ends on the paper.

So time began in God and will end in God. And it doesn't affect God at all. God is unaffected by time.

No age can heap its outward years on thee. Dear God, thou art thyself, thine own eternity. So God dwells in an everlasting now.

You and I are creatures of time and change. And it's now and was and will be and yesterday and today and tomorrow. We will live.

That's why we get nervous breakdowns. Is it a nervous breakdown or nervous breakdown, some of you teachers? Anyhow, that's why we get nervous breakdowns. Because we're always just one jump ahead of the clock, you see.

Just one jump. Get up in the morning and look at that clock and let out a gasp of dismay and rush to the bathroom, brush your teeth there downstairs for breakfast and eat a half-cooked egg and rush out to catch the commuter bus. And that's time.

See, time is after us. That's time. But God Almighty sits in his eternal now.

And all the time that ever was moved in the heart of God. So the time is only a tiny mark upon the bosom, the infinitely extended bosom of eternity. No age can heap its outward years on thee.

O great God, thou art thyself, thine own eternity. God has no past. And I want you to hear that.

And I want you to shake your head hard here because this is an idea that the old fathers knew but that we, their children, don't seem to care much about. We like to be entertained, you know. This is the day of religious entertainment.

We have little saintlings and the saintlings have to be given a kindergarten church or they won't come out. They have to be entertained. Well, I've done a lot of evil in my time, God knows.

And if it wasn't for the blood of the Lamb, I'd roast in the devil's hell. But there's one thing I've never done and that's entertain the saintlings. I refuse to do it.

God didn't say, go ye into all the world and put on a show for my tiny, undeveloped, retarded children. He said, go into all the world and preach the gospel and teach them to do and observe all that I said. So I've had many sins, God knows, but I'm not going to add to any of my sins the entertainment of the saints.

If the saints have to be entertained, they're not saints. God's saints ought to be able to think on eternal things. God has no past.

Now, I took off there on a tangent, but I come back to it, that God has no past. You have a past, you see, my friend. It isn't really very long, although some of you wish it wasn't so long.

But your past isn't very long, really, just a short time. You date back there a little way, but not very long. But God has no past.

And God has no future. Why doesn't God have a past or a future? Because past and future are creature words and they have to do with time. They have to do with the flowing motion of time.

But God is not riding on the bosom of time. Time is a little mark across the bosom of eternity. And God sits above time in eternity, dwelling in eternity from everlasting to everlasting.

Thou art God. And here is the wonderful thought, my friend, that God has already lived all of our tomorrows. You haven't lived your tomorrows.

A man, what was his name, wrote a book called All Our Yesterdays, or just Our Yesterdays, a great book of its sort that I read when I was a boy, Our Yesterdays. But God has no yesterdays and he has no tomorrows. Now, somebody wants to jump right on my back and say, Now, hold on a minute, didn't the Scripture say Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever? Yes, my friend, but it's not his yesterday.

It's your yesterday and my yesterday and the yesterday of the man out on the street there or sitting looking at television tonight. Jesus Christ the Lord is the one who came out of Bethlehem, out of Judea, whose goings forth had been even from everlasting. And he can have no yesterdays and no tomorrows because yesterday is time and tomorrow is time, but God surrounds it all and God has already lived tomorrow.

And the great God who was present at the beginning when he said, Let there be and there was, is also now present at the end when the worlds are on fire and all creation has dissolved and gone back into chaos and old night. And only God and his redeemed saints remain. So remember that, that God has already lived our tomorrows.

I wonder if that could be the reason that men can prophesy. Now the ability to foretell with precision an event that will take place three thousand years from now, how can that be? Well, it might be, and I think maybe it is, that a prophet in the Spirit is up in God where he's seeing as God sees the end from the beginning. Do you remember that passage? He sees the end from the beginning.

So God way up there takes it, the end from the beginning, and looks down and that's where we ought to be really, my friends. We ought not to be down here looking up through the clouds. We ought to be up looking down.

Sometimes I ride planes here and there and any of you may have had the same experience times without number. You go up there and pretty soon you've got sunshine, so much sunshine. If you're going to read or write you've got to shut the little curtains to keep the sun off of your paper or book.

But down below you see a solid carpet of thick clouds. You find it very difficult to understand how anybody can be down there saying, Oh, what a cloudy, overcast, gloomy day this is. It isn't cloudy and overcast and gloomy up where you are.

You're looking down on it. People down there are looking up at it. So they say it's cloudy and gloomy and overcast.

You're looking down on it and saying, Oh, that's the floor down there. But up in the ceiling it's as clear and bright as can be and there isn't a cloud in the sky. So that if you insist on being down here looking up, you're going always to have an overcast sky and the devil will see to it.

But if you'll remember that your life is hid with Christ in God, then you'll be looking down on it and not looking up on it. Now, the scripture says in this book, this psalm here, that because God is eternal, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. You see, God is in our today because God was in our yesterday and

God will be in our tomorrow.

God is the one that you can't escape. You can't escape God by denying Him because He will be there anyhow. You can't escape Him by defining Him as meaning something else because He will be there anyway.

God is. And because God is, then God is here and God is now and God dwells in an everlasting and eternal now. When God talked with Abraham way back yonder, when God talked with Abraham and Jacob and Isaiah, He had already lived in the New Jerusalem because the New Jerusalem is in the heart of God and all the things that will be are in God.

And God isn't subject to the flow of time. Now, Christ as the Eternal Son is timeless. You see, don't you, that when you think about Jesus, you've got to think twice.

When you think about our Lord, you've got to think of His humanity and His deity. He said lots of things that made it sound as if He wasn't God. He said other things that made it sound as if He wasn't human.

He said, for instance, before Abraham was, I am. That made it sound as if He antedated creation. And then He said, I can of myself do nothing.

I look to my Father and as I hear, so I speak, the Father worketh in me. And so that made it sound as if He wasn't divine. He said, my Father is greater than I, and that made it sound as if He wasn't God.

And He said, I and my Father are one, and that made it sound as if He wasn't human. But the fact is, He's both. He talked about Himself as divine and He talked about Himself as human.

And when Jesus talked about Himself as human, then He had the words that were humble, lowly words. When He talked about Himself as divine, He talked with words that startled and shook people. He said, speaking about the inspired scriptures, you've heard it was said, but I say unto you, put a period down there, why He could talk like God and then He could talk like man.

So we've always got to think about the Son of Man, Jesus Christ the Lord, in two ways. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under law, that He might set free and deliver those who all their lifetimes were subject to bondage. Well, that means His humanhood.

And then He was slain from the foundation of the world. What can that mean? How could He be slain from the foundation of the world? Why, when God laid the heaven and the earth and caused the grass to be upon the hills and the trees to be upon the mountains, when God made the birds to fly in the air and the fish to swim in the sea, God had already in His heart lived Calvary and the resurrection and the glory and the crown. So He was slain before the foundation of the world.

We pray to God sometimes as though God were panicky, as though God were in as great distress as we are, and we pull out our watch and look at it. I refuse to wear a wristwatch. See, those two wrists have never been fettered by a wristwatch yet.

And if the Lord would help me, I'll never wear a wristwatch because it's bad enough to have it in my pocket where it's difficult to get to. But to have to look at the miserable thing all the time and know that time is getting away from me, I think I'd panic. But God never panics because God never looks at any clocks or any watches.

The fullness of time was the time when God had ordered it. And when the time came, Mary gave birth to her boy and he was born and lived and died just for the unjust to bring us to God. So the Eternal Son has lived through all time.

And the baby that was born in Bethlehem's manger did not take its origin in Bethlehem's manger. And the baby that came from the womb of the virgin did not take his origin in the womb of the virgin. The Eternal Son didn't.

The baby did. The human baby did, but the Eternal Son did not. And so we stand before God tonight.

We stand before God. Time like an ever-rolling stream bears all its sons away. They fly forgotten as a dream dies at the opening day.

Now I don't like to be gloomy, but you might as well face up to facts. And that is, the time like an ever-rolling stream is carrying a lot of people away. My wife and I were discussing it here some time ago.

Said it looks as if every time we get a letter from back home, somebody else is dead. Somebody else is gone. Well, it's natural.

You can expect it, you know. When they threatened to kill, take the head off of Epictetus. No, it was kill his son, I think he said.

Well, I never said that I had begotten an immortal son. He knew he had to die. And everybody has to die.

A time like an ever-rolling stream is burying its sons away. Do you know, my friends, that there are trees out in California, the redwood or the sequoia trees? I've seen them. I walked around an old tree.

I'm trying to think the day of the name of that tree. It had a name on it, kind of a plaque there, and a name. It was either the captain or the colonel or some such name they'd given it.

And I walked around the thing, you know. I'm an old farmer, and I don't have to have a foot rule. I can just walk it off, you know, three steps to a yard.

And I walked around the thing, and it was 51 feet around, 51 feet. I kicked a little dirt to get my start, and then I walked around that tree hugging it as tight as I could. And when I got around there, it was 51 feet.

And I remembered dimly enough mathematics to show me that it was 17 feet through, 17 feet from one side of that tree to the other side of that tree. Now that's a sequoia tree, and they go up as high as 300 feet, which means 30 stories in the air. Towering 30 stories high, and as much as 17, and I'm sure there are larger ones.

That was not the largest, only among the large ones. 17 feet through. So there's a sequoia tree.

How long did it take that to grow up? Well, now I'm giving you, and I don't know I could be wrong, but the scientists say this. I don't quote scientists too often because they change their minds and leave a man out on a limb. But they have said, those who are supposed to know, that some of those sequoia trees go back as far as Abraham.

And that before Abraham's time, those very trees, now not the species, but those very trees, that when Abraham left the desert of the Chaldees and followed the gleam of faith downward to the Negev, down

What ages past? God's ages past now. God lives in now. Our ages past, the brief race of men, our help for years to come, the race, the race, our help for years to come, and your help and my help for years to come, and this God, be thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home.

I need to guide myself, be thou our guide while life shall last. I need a guide. I need somebody to guide me.

I can't go alone. I'm too small and I'm too weak and I'm too stupid and I'm too vulnerable. A microbe so small I can't see it can get in my nose and start down my neck and the next thing you know it's in my lungs and the next thing you know I have pneumonia.

Then I'm gone. That's we poor little creatures. I need immortality and eternity and you'll only find it in God and you'll only find God through Jesus Christ the Lord.

Let me say to you that I am not here trying to plead the cause of one who's failed. I am pleading the cause of one who's conquered absolutely and sits at the right hand of God now in eternity. One time I remember being in a museum.

I went to Field Museum, a very famous museum, and I had half a day or so and so I went around looking at things there and I wandered into the Egyptian room. Now the Egyptian room is in the basement. There's a certain poetic eloquence about all that, that it's in the basement where it ought to be.

And there in the basement was the Egyptian room and there were mummies there. Now the mummy is the human body wrapped up as you know and mummified and born so it lasts through the years. They'd taken some of them and partly unwrapped them to show them off.

Old fellows there, their teeth had fallen out and their chins had met their noses centuries ago and they had them wrapped up. There they were. And then there were little babies there and I saw one little chap.

He was probably seven years old and we had a seven-year-old boy and I looked down at that mummified baby boy and I began to grieve. I stood there and looking, I walked from one crypt to the other looking at these mummies, these human beings. Some of them were kings incidentally.

Now they were lying all wrapped up there in gun sack and dry enough that you had to keep the wind off of them or they'd have blown away. Dust, dust, dust. And I saw it and I saw the fallen in eyes and the fallen in cheeks and I saw the tough leathery arms that had been uncovered for the occasion.

There they were. They were human beings and they had been before England was. They had been before Greece was.

They had been before Rome. They were from the, from the dynasties of the kings and before the Egyptian kings had built the pyramids. And I walked around down there till I, I got gloomy and though I'm kind of sensitive and easily affected and I began to get gloomier and gloomier and feel more miserable all the time.

And it was past noon and I was hungry and they had a restaurant down there. How silly can you get? The restaurant was, the restaurant was just next, next room over or two from, from the mummies. And I couldn't eat.

I couldn't have eaten if they'd have given me, if they'd have given me caviar and hummingbird tongue. I couldn't have eaten. I, I just was sick, sick in my heart, sick in my body, sick to think that man made in the image of God had to die and turn to dust.

And I walked out of there and went over to the elevated line and got an elevated train for the south side out where I live. And I was about as gloomy as they come. And when I get gloomy, Brother Indy Gould is, is bright, is light by comparison.

I don't get that very often, but something like that did at that time. And I went out of there so gloomy that I had the book with me and I had a book of poems by an English poet by the name of Thomas Chown. And I, I got a hold of one of those poems and it was called The Last Man.

Did you ever read it? I had just come from looking at dead men. And now here was a little fanciful story written by a man who believed in Jesus Christ. And a little story, beautifully written, for he was a master craftsman, though not perhaps one of the greatest of the poets, he was a good one.

And he, he envisioned a little dreamer vision that he had about seeing the human race down to the last man. He said they'd killed each other by guns and there'd been pestilences and famines and wars and all sorts of things had whittled the human race down till there was only one man left. Everybody else was dead.

Almost sounds as if he'd heard of the, the hydrogen bomb. But everything was down to one man. And this man was awfully sick, leaning on his elbow, high up on a promontory looking out over the western ocean.

And the sun was going down into the sea setting. And he knew it would be the last sunset he would ever see for the rattle of death had already come and his eyes were getting glazed. But he could still think and still talk a little.

So as he gazed out at the setting sun, he began to talk to the sun. And he said something like this to the sun. He said, by him recall to breath who captive led captivity and robbed a grave of victory and took the sting from death.

Then, after he had reminded himself that there was one who had risen from the dead and had come out and robbed the death of its sting and taken away the victory from the grave. Why, he spoke to the sun. Here's what he said to the sun.

He said, go, son, while mercy hold me up on nature's awful waste, to drink this last unbitter cup of grief that man shall taste. Go, tell the night that hides the face. Thou sawest the last of Adam's race on earth's sepulchral clod.

The darkened universe defied to quench his immortality or shake his trust in God. He said, when the sun, when you're old and burnt out and have gone to dust, I'll still be living because I live in him who captive led captivity and robbed a grave of victory and took the sting from death. Well, you know what that did for me.

That lifted me up out of a merry clay and established my emotions, at least on the solid rock. I had just come out of seeing all kinds and shapes and sizes of kings and queens and little babies and half-grown kids, all done up in gunny sack and all of them 3,000 years old. I thought, oh, boy, that's where I'm headed.

And then I read this, and I thanked God that my soul was lifted up. And I came back home a joyful man, remembering that no matter what you do to the body, no matter how much you wrap it up or embalm it, Jesus Christ recalled back the human breath and took the sting from death and gave victory to man, God the eternal God. Oh, my friend, you need God, for God is your eternity.

You need God, for God is your tomorrow. You need Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ is your tomorrow. He's your guarantee of that which will be.

He is your resurrection and your life. And when the sun has burnt itself out and the stars have been folded up like a garment and the heavens have been rolled like a vesture and are no more, God will be, for God dwells in an everlasting now that nothing can get to. And he takes his children who believe in his Son into his bosom, into the heart of the everlasting now.

So that's why I believe in the communion of saints, brothers and sisters. That's why I'm an Anglican when it comes to that. Although I'm not an Anglican, they wouldn't accept me.

But I'm an Anglican when it comes to the communion of saints. I do not believe that one saint that leaves the earth, goes anywhere but into the heart and bosom of God to be a timeless, endless, forever saint. And I believe that all these great Hebrew and Greek and English words that apply to God apply to every man and woman who is in the bosom of God.

Eternity and forever and unto perpetuity and world without end. I'll settle for that, won't you? Somebody came along to me and said, we're going to take you to heaven, but you can only be up there for 20 years. Oh, I'd be a miserable man.

I'd say, well, what's the good of getting used to a place like that and learning to love it and then have to leave it in 20 years and have to go out like a candle? I can't see that. But I accept for my own soul and I accept for the soul of all the Lord's children. These are wondrous words, eternal and everlasting and forever and unto perpetuity and world without end.

I accept the everlastingness of the saints. Why can we believe in immortality? Because God is eternal. You see, that's basic to the doctrine of immortality.

If God were not eternal, there could be no immortality and no certain future for anybody. There would only be cosmic dust who somehow or other managed to get shifted into human beings and trees and stars and then only to be swept away again and blown into immensity and forgetfulness. But because God is eternal, we have our home in God.

We can look forward with calm restfulness for the time that shall be. Our daughter wrote us the other day. She said she'd been doing her housework, which if I remember means washing iron, in their poor little college apartment.

And she'd been listening to a record or an album that I gave her, Bach's D Minor Mass. And I don't get excited. It's Luther, not Catholic.

It's Luther. But she said, when I get to heaven, I want to meet Isaiah, David, Paul, and Bach. I know some others I want to meet, some of the dear saints of God.

And I know they'll be all right. They'll be all right. There won't be any rot on them.

You can't rot in God. There won't be any decay, and they won't be old. Jesus, our Lord, died when he was 33, and 33 is the top peak of human possibility if the body's healthy.

He died at 33, and we shall be like him and shall see him as he is. So sister, if you want to know how old you're going to be, you're going to be 33 forever and ever and ever and ever and ever. You're not going to be the immature 20s.

You're going to be a ripe, mature 33 forever and ever. Thank God, my brother and sister, the years never can throw any outward signs on God, and they never can on us either, through Jesus Christ, the Lord. Well, I think I must close at 25 minutes after 8, and I could go on a while, but I'm not going to because I want you to come back next week.

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