LIFE GOES ON
THE REALITY OF ETERNITY

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THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Life Goes On seeks to clearly and faithfully present what Scripture teaches about life beyond death. The Bible does not speak of eternity in vague or symbolic terms, but as a real and unavoidable reality. Death is not the end of existence, but a doorway into an everlasting future—either eternal life in the presence of God or eternal separation from Him.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SERMON

What happens at death depends on what happened before death.

READING – THE MAIN PASSAGES

Daniel 12:2 (NKJV)
"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Daniel affirms resurrection and two distinct eternal outcomes, demonstrating that the reality of heaven and hell is rooted in God's revealed truth long before the New Testament. Eternity is not speculative—it is certain.

John 5:28–29 (NKJV)
"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation."

Jesus speaks plainly and authoritatively about eternal destinies. Heaven and hell are presented as equally real, everlasting, and consequential, reinforcing the seriousness of eternity.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31
19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. **20** But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, **21** desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. **22** So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. **23** And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. **24** "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' **25** But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise

Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' 29 Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

Observations From The Passage

1. Eternity is dependent on want happens on earth
   - The afterlife location was based on life decisions on earth.

2. Eternal destinies are fixed and cannot be reversed.

3. There is a separation of the two worlds that no one can pass through – a great gulf.

4. Those in hell can perceive heaven.

5. Those in hell are tormented.

6. Those in heaven are in comfort.

7. Both heaven and hell have gates
   - The wicked dead cannot return and the righteous are not allowed to.

8. The rich man was aware of his family but not of their daily affairs.

9. Even the testimony of Christ who died will not save them.

TRANSITION STATEMENT TO THE MAIN POINTS/OUTLINE OF THE MESSAGE

You will wake up dead – somewhere.

Eternity is real, it is final and it is determined here and now.

MAIN POINTS/OUTLINE

Key Thoughts About The After Life

1. There are many biblical references to the afterlife, specifically hell; however, these are all describing the same place – they are not different places.

2. The afterlife is eternal, including punishment and suffering.

3. The Bible does not teach annihilation once someone has passed away.

4. In hell, there are degrees of suffering and pain, not everyone receives the same punishment.

5. **Jesus speaks more about eternal damnation than anyone else in the Bible**

    - Jesus referenced hell and eternal damnation at least 46 times
    - 18 times it speaks of fire and flames
        - **12 direct references to "hell" (Gehenna)**
        - **30–33 total teachings about eternal damnation** when all descriptions and metaphors are counted.

Key Details On Where Jesus Went When He Died

- **Paradise (Abraham's Bosom):** This was the holding place for the righteous dead before the resurrection, often described as a place of rest or bliss.

- **Sheol/Hades:** The general place of the dead. Some interpretations suggest Jesus went to this realm, specifically the side for the saved, to proclaim His victory to the spirits.

- **The Tomb:** Jesus's body rested in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb from Friday afternoon until Sunday morning.

- **Not Hell/Torment:** Most theological interpretations emphasize that Jesus's suffering ended when He died, and He did not suffer in hell. His death completed the work of salvation.

- **Reunion with the Father:** Some interpretations based on, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46) suggest His spirit immediately went to the Father in heaven, although He also visited the place of the dead.

MAIN POINTS

1. Eternity Is Real

a. The Bible has much to say about eternity (heaven and hell), both are a reality
- Old Testament = 90-120 references
- New Testament = 250-300 references
- Jesus referenced hell, damnation and eternal condemnation more than anyone else in the Bible
  - Jesus referenced hell and eternal damnation 46 times
  - 18 times it speaks of fire and flames.

b. What is ahead for us when we die?
- Our soul goes into the conscious presence of the Lord.
- Our body is buried until the day of resurrection.
- When Christ returns, we will be raised bodily from the grave.
  - Body and soul reunited, we will be with the Lord forever.

c. What does the Bible teach about eternity being real?
- Humans are created with a sense of eternity
- The Bible says God placed an awareness of eternity within the human heart.
- **Ecclesiastes 3:11**"He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart."
  - This means people instinctively sense that **life is more than the years we live on earth**.

d. Life continues after death
- Scripture teaches that death is **not the end of existence**.
- **John 11:25–26** Jesus said: "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die."
  - This confirms that **physical death does not end life**.

- Every person will be raised and face eternity.
- The Bible teaches a future resurrection for all people.
- **Daniel 12:2**"Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt."
  - This passage shows that:
    - Everyone will be raised
    - Everyone enters an **eternal state.**

e. Jesus spoke frequently about eternal life

f. Jesus taught that eternity is the ultimate destination of humanity.
- **John 3:16** "Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."
  - Eternal life is not just endless existence—it is **life with God that begins now and continues forever**.

g. There are two eternal destinies
   - The Bible teaches that eternity has two possible outcomes.

     Matthew 25:46 "Then they will go away to **eternal punishment**, but the righteous to **eternal life**."
     - This verse shows that:
       - Eternity is real
       - Eternity is permanent
       - Eternity has two outcomes.

h. The Future Eternal Kingdom
   - The Bible promises believers an eternal home with God.

     Revelation 21:3–4"God's dwelling place is now among the people… There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain."
     - This describes **eternal life in the new heaven and new earth**.

i. Earthly life is temporary compared to eternity
   - The Bible repeatedly reminds believers that earthly life is short.

     James 4:14 "What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."
     - But eternity is **forever**.

"You were not created just for time—you were created for eternity."

"Death does not end life. It simply moves us from time into eternity."

2. Eternity Is Final

a. **<u>Do I get a do-over in this? What about re-incarnation?</u>**
   - NO! There is one life and one death and then the judgement.

b. Hebrews 9:27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.

c. Reincarnation is a Hindu belief – there is not one example in the Bible that teaches this concept

d. What does the Bible teach about eternity being final?
   - Death ends the opportunity to change one's destiny
     - **Hebrews 9:27**"It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment."
     - This verse establishes the biblical order:
       Life → Death → Judgment → Eternal State

- There is **no indication of another opportunity after death**.
  - Jesus taught that eternal destinies are fixed
  - The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)
  - **Luke 16:26** "Between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us."

- Jesus teaches that after death:
  - Destinies are **permanently separated**
  - Movement between states is **impossible**
  - This implies **eternity is irreversible**.

- Jesus described two eternal outcomes
  - **Matthew 25:46** "Then they will go away to **eternal punishment**, but the righteous to **eternal life**."
  - The same word **"eternal" (Greek: *aiōnios*)** describes both outcomes.
    - Meaning:
      - The duration of punishment
      - The duration of life
      - Both are **permanent realities**.

e. The final judgment is permanent
   - Revelation presents eternity as a **final state with no reversal**.
   - **Revelation 20:14–15** "Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire… If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."
     - This event is called **the second death.**
     - It represents **the final separation from God**.

f. The New Creation Is Also Eternal
   - For believers, eternity with God is also **permanent and unchanging**.
   - **Revelation 21:3–4** "God himself will be with them… He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain."
     - This state is described as **everlasting fellowship with God**.

g. Scripture Speaks of Eternal Consequences
   - **Daniel 12:2** "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to **everlasting life**, others to **shame and everlasting contempt**."

The Biblical Pattern

The Bible consistently presents this progression:

1. Life on earth
2. Death
3. Judgment
4. Final eternal state.

Once judgment occurs, **the eternal condition does not change,** nor can it be reversed.

"Eternity is not just long—it is final."
"What begins after death never ends and never changes."

3. Eternity Is Decided By What Happens On Earth

a. Big Biblical Principle
- The Bible consistently presents this timeline:
- **Earthly Life → Death → Judgment → Eternity**
- There is **no biblical teaching of a second chance after death**.

b. "Eternity is not decided after death—it is decided before death by the choices we make while we live."

c. "This life is preparation for the life that never ends."

d. There is one life followed by judgment

e. Scripture teaches that humans live once and then face God's judgment.
Hebrews 9:27 "Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment."
- This verse clearly establishes the biblical sequence:
  - Life on earth
  - Death
  - Judgment
  - Eternal destiny.

f. Our response to Christ determines eternal life
- The New Testament repeatedly teaches that **belief or rejection of Christ determines eternity**.
  - **John 3:16–18** "Whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life… whoever does not believe stands condemned already."
  - **John 5:24** "Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life… he has crossed over from death to life."
    - The decision made **during earthly life** determines the eternal outcome.

- Judgment based on what is done in the body
  - Scripture teaches that people will give account for their lives.
  - **2Corinthians 5:10** "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."
    - This emphasizes that **earthly actions matter for eternal evaluation**.

- Jesus taught the same principle
  - Jesus frequently taught that **eternal destinies are determined in this life.**
    - Sheep and Goats (Matthew 25:31-46)
    - Jesus describes final judgment based on how people lived.
    - Outcome:
      - **Eternal life**
      - **Eternal punishment**
      - The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)
        - **i.** After death, destinies are **fixed**.
        - **ii.** The rich man cannot cross from torment to comfort.
        - **iii.** This implies **that opportunity for change is during earthly life only.**

- The Parable of the Rich Fool
  - Jesus warned that focusing only on this life can cost eternity.
  - **Luke 12:20–21** "This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?"
    - **Preparation for eternity must happen before death.**

- The Final Judgment in Revelation
  - The Book of Revelation shows the final evaluation of humanity.
  - **Revelation 20:12** "The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books."
    - Those not found in the **Book of Life** face the **second death**.

SERMON CONCLUSION – THE CALL TO ACTION

The Urgency of Salvation Now

- Because eternity is determined in this life, Scripture repeatedly urges **immediate response to God**.
- **2Corinthians 6:2** "Now is the day of salvation."
- **Today is the day of salvation.**

2Corinthians 6:2
For He says: "IN AN ACCEPTABLE TIME I HAVE HEARD YOU, AND IN THE DAY OF SALVATION I HAVE HELPED YOU." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.