

EAST CAMBRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“A first century church in the 21st century”

Bible Reading Plan

Week 07

- Exo 32-34; *Philippians 3*
- Exo 35-37; Ps 26; Phil 4
- Exo 38-40; *Hebrew 1*
- Lev 1-3; Ps 27; *Heb 2*
- Lev 4-7; *Heb 3*

Leading Services

Announcements: Mike V.

Morning:

Song Leader: Ron V.

Opening Prayer: Ben V.

Lord's Table: Zack V.

Asst By:

Closing Prayer: Larry L.

Evening:

Song Leader: Ron V.

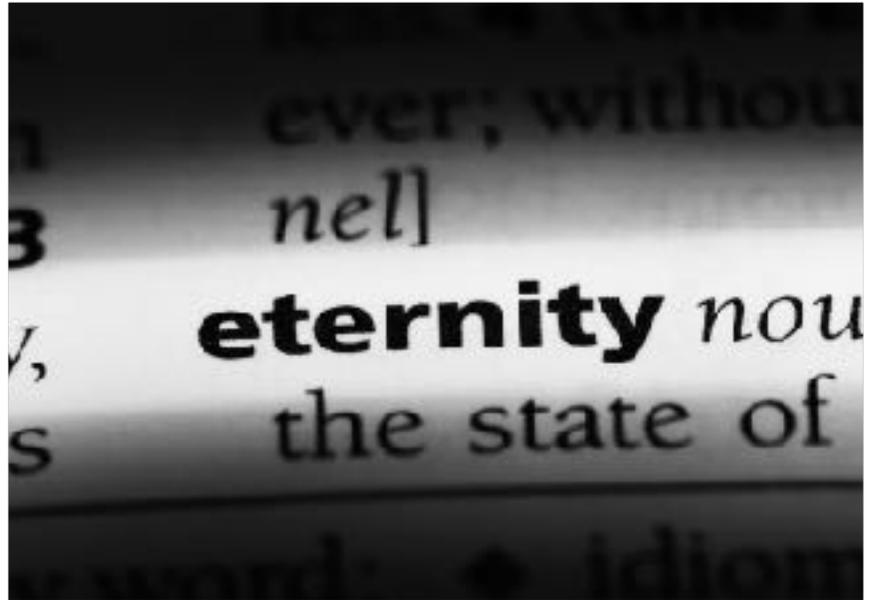
Opening Prayer: Zack V.

Closing Prayer: Ben V.

Scripture Reading: Larry L.
(Matthew 6.1-15)

Sermons

AM: Six Descriptive Words for Hell
PM: Things to Confess



Eternity

I cannot fathom eternity. I do not understand it. I have no basis from which to know what eternity is. Many have used words trying to describe eternity. Some said it is time without end. This cannot be correct because when Christ returns all things are dissolved (II Peter 3:10-f) including time. Some have painted word pictures for us to have an appreciation of eternity. It has been said that if a sparrow flew carrying one grain of sand at a time to the moon that when he was finished carrying all the sand from the earth to the moon, that eternity would have just begun. This cannot be right either because since eternity is an existence not bound by time, there is neither beginning of it nor any other markers of delineation within it.

I cannot understand an existence without boundaries, a beginning and an end, but I don't feel all that bad about my ignorance. Paul was privy to what fleshly men are not as he recounts in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4 "To boast, really, is not profitable for me, for I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

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The concept of eternity

(2) I have known a man in Christ, fourteen years ago—whether in the body I have not known, whether out of the body I have not known, God hath known—such an one being caught away unto the third heaven; (3) and I have known such a man—whether in the body, whether out of the body, I have not known, God hath known, — (4) that he was caught away to the paradise, and heard unutterable sayings, that it is not possible for man to speak.” Young’s Literal Translation- YLT.

Paul experienced the spiritual realm, not knowing what state he was in- in the body or out of the body. The words he heard were first of all “unutterable” in Greek- (*arrhetos*) inexpressible. Strong. He also described the words he heard as “not possible” to speak from the Greek- *exesti*, an impersonal verb, signifying “it is permitted, it is lawful” (or interrogatively “is it lawful?”), Vine, (in the negative (*ou*), thus not possible- GS).What Paul is essentially saying is that men’s understanding and vocabulary cannot support the conveyance of the experience.

The best I can come up with is that eternity is absolute existence, no beginning or end, just an existence of being. With this being the case, our life and how we live it in this realm of time becomes so much more important because of what is at stake. We can trade a few short years of pleasure that is never fully attainable, for an eternity of misery. Or we can live a good fulfilled life of satisfaction for an eternity of absolute bliss. The choice is ours.

We can start down that road to a fulfilled life by obeying the gospel call. We can have true faith in God (Romans 4:3 “For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness."”) that believes what God says, from the only source that is the repository of His will, the Bible (Romans 10:17 “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”).

We can make a change in our life by coming to the point of recognition that there just has to be more to life than the day-to-day grind, disappointments and evils.

This is what repentance is that Paul said he was preaching in (Acts 26:20 “but to those first in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and to the Gentiles, proclaiming that they must repent and turn to God, and do works worthy of repentance.”).

One then must make a commitment to God in confessing His Son Jesus publicly, just as Paul points out in (Romans 10:10 “For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses unto salvation.”).

Then one is baptized which is a figure of Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection as mentioned in (Romans 6:3-6 “Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? (4) Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have been joined together in the likeness of His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection; (6) knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, that from now on we should not serve sin.”).

By doing this we become God’s children, and have the attitude of living our life for Him (Romans 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service. (2) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, in order to prove by you what is that good and pleasing and perfect will of God.”).

Eternity isn’t something that someone else is going to experience, it is for all. We cannot truly fathom it, but we can be blessed in it.

- Garren Stroud