



# SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

## ETERNAL LIFE: DO YOU WANT IT?

**KEY PASSAGE:** 1 John 5:4-13 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:** Ezekiel 18:4, 20 | Matthew 16:16 | Mark 9:7; 15:39  
Luke 3:22 | John 1:29; 10:30; 14:1-3 | Acts 16:31 | Romans 6:23; 8:13-14 | 2 Corinthians 5:6 | Ephesians 2:1  
1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 | 1 Timothy 2:6 | Titus 3:5 | Hebrews 9:12, 27 | 2 Peter 1:4 | 1 John 5:8 | Revelation 22:4-5

### ► SUMMARY

#### Do you want to live forever?

The world seems obsessed with long life. Warnings against bad habits and advice for healthier, longer lives are commonplace. But the focus is on extending life on earth, not on preparing for life in eternity. How can people have confidence that they will live forever? The Bible teaches heaven is a gift from God. It is available to all those who will humble themselves and acknowledge Jesus is God's Son, trust He paid for their sin in full, and accept His generous offer of everlasting life.

### ► SERMON POINTS

The apostle John assured believers that "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has the life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:11-13).

#### What is eternal life?

- **It includes not only quantity of life, but quality of life.** Eternal life can be defined as an everlasting duration of life that includes intimacy and fellowship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.
- **The wise person will choose to live with Christ in eternity.** There are three different kinds of death: physical death, spiritual death while physically alive, and eternal death—separation from God forever for those who don't accept Christ during their earthly lives

(Heb. 9:27; Eph. 2:1). Our bodies will die, sooner or later, but our selves will continue to exist with everlasting life or death.

- **The focus of eternal life is not on a place, but on a relationship with God through Jesus.** Though the Messiah did assure His disciples He was going to prepare a place for them, the most valuable part of eternal life is a relationship with God (John 14:1-3. See also 1 Thess. 4:16-18; Rev. 22:4-5).

#### No Second Chance After Death

Some people believe we can work our way into heaven after we die. But our eternal salvation was achieved fully by Jesus (Heb. 9:12; 1 Tim. 2:6), and we only need to receive it during our earthly lifetimes. The moment a Christian passes away, we are in the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6). We don't have to fear that we may suffer for our sins after death or be required to strive for entrance into heaven.

#### Eternal Life Is a Gift from God

Serving the Lord, giving, praying, worshipping, and reading Scripture are all part of the Christian life. But those activities aren't the reason why God sees us as righteous or considers us fit for eternal life with Him.

- **It is a gift.** "The wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).
- **It is not based on our good deeds.** "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness,

but in accordance with His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5; see also Ezek.18:4, 20).

- **It is gained through trust in Christ.** “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).

## How can I possess eternal life?

- **Agree with God about Jesus** (John 10:30; Matt. 16:16). If Jesus was not divine, He was an imposter or a fraud, and thus not a good person. Scripture says there are three witnesses that Jesus was the Son of God: “the Spirit, the water, and the blood” (1 John 5:8).

*Water.* At Jesus’s baptism, John announced, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). The Spirit affirmed Jesus was the Son of God (Luke 3:22).

*Blood.* At the cross, Jesus shed His blood for our sins, but showed His divinity even as He suffered (see Mark 15:39). Then the resurrection brought us certainty that Jesus wasn’t just another religious leader.

**Witness of the Spirit in our lives.** “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God” (Rom. 8:14). The Holy Spirit brings conviction, so we can respond to scriptural truth and believe God’s testimony about His Son (1 John 5:9).

- **Be willing to accept Him as your personal Savior.** Eternal life is linked to the person of Jesus. It’s impossible to gain entrance into heaven by living a “good life” apart from Christ: “The one who has the Son has the life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:12).

What does it mean to receive Jesus? We must accept the forgiveness He offers and believe that He died for our sins. In his gospel, the apostle John wrote, “As

many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (1:12).

Placing our faith in the name of Jesus means more than just believing He existed. It indicates putting our trust in Him for our eternal salvation. Scripture says that once we’ve done that, believers can be confident that we are heaven-bound: “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13).

Salvation isn’t impersonal. It’s receiving a Person, Jesus, the eternal Son of God, who has made us partakers of His divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4). When a person trusts in Jesus, He comes to dwell in that person’s spirit by the Holy Spirit.

## ► RESPONSE

- If you have never accepted the gift of eternal life, and desire to, pray something like this: “Heavenly Father, I’m asking you to forgive my sin. I do believe Jesus is your Son. I believe that when He died on the cross, He paid my sin-debt in full. By faith, I receive Jesus as my personal Savior. I accept your forgiveness and the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, who is now my Lord. In His name I pray, Amen.”
- Why do you think it’s tempting as believers to think that our good deeds play a role in our entrance into heaven or our righteous standing before God? Why is it so uncomfortable for us to rest completely on what Jesus did for us on the cross?
- In what ways can you surrender to God’s perfect will for your life this week instead of pursuing actions that may look spiritually or morally impressive to others?

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