
What is eternal life?



It is that time again when we encounter the change from the old year to the new. For some the ushering in of a new year is a ritual of staying up until midnight to make a bunch of noise or perhaps sing an old song. Yet in one way or another, the beginning of a new year is a time of reflection and planning. We take stock of what happened in the last year. We think of our pains, regrets, joys, surprises, births, and deaths. We also look to the future and ponder what we want to do differently in days to come.

In all of our planning, though, there is this unalterable fact that life here will end. Our time is finite. It has a limit. Come to think about it, everything about this world has a limit.

The Bible tells us of one thing, however, that has no end. Referring to his believers Jesus said, “I give them eternal life” (John 10:28). In view of

our knowledge and experience of limited life in this world, we wonder what eternal life is.

Jesus explains, “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life” (John 5:24). Life is being connected to God and his blessings. The opposite is death which is separation from God and his goodness. All people are born separated from God because by nature they are sinners. As a result, they are headed toward an eternal separation from God to be condemned in a very real place called hell.

But God did something very great. He sent the world a Savior who is Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God. In an unmatched act of love, Jesus placed himself under our condemnation for sin. He willingly suffered the death sentence that all of us deserve.

Through Jesus God has forgiven the world’s sin which separated people from him, and he gives the gift of eternal life. All who listen to the Savior and believe in God who sent him have eternal life. By faith in the true God of salvation they have crossed over from death to life. They do not face the fear of separation from God, but they rejoice in a close and blessed relationship with him now and forever.

What a great way to start a new year! We have the confidence that no matter what has happened in days gone by and whatever the future holds, our life with God is secured forever by faith in Jesus.