Is Eternity Real?

Message Notes

Introduction:

A US Gallup poll says that 82% of people believe there is life after death. As a pastor, I don't think I have ever had a conversation trying to convince someone that eternity is real. I believe it's because God has placed eternity in a person's

heart. **Ecclesiastes 3:11** (NASB) says He has made everything appropriate in its time. **He has also set eternity in their heart,** without the possibility that mankind will find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end. Most of the conversations I've had about eternity were trying to answer questions about it.

Some of those questions are:

- Is eternity really forever?
- What will we do in eternity?
- Will we recognize each other?

We don't know everything about eternity, and some things will only be known once we get there, but we do know some facts.

Fact #1 - We all have an appointment with eternity

1. **Hebrews 9:27** (NLT) says that each person is destined to die once and after that the judgment.
2. Whether you know it or not, you are on the clock. (TIMER STARTS) Every one of us only has so much time remaining in life,
3. **James 4:14 (NASB)** - Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.
4. Story: Luke 12: The Parable of the Rich Fool
5. "The land of a rich man was very productive. 17And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' 18Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years *to come;* take your ease, eat, drink *and* be merry." ' 20But God said to him, 'You fool! This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you have prepared?' 21So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."
6. This is a reminder that we should value the time we have here and prepare ourselves for eternity.

7. Example: When I go on vacation, I usually don't put my clothes in the hotel's dressers or hang pictures on the wall. I typically live out of my suitcase because I know this place is temporary. I'm grateful for the place to stay, but I know this is not my home.

Fact #2 - Hell is a real place (HELL Graphic LED)

1. **Matthew 25:41 (NLT)** - Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; '
2. When the devil rebelled against God, a place was prepared for the devil and his angels.
3. The Hebrew word Sheol, the Greek word Hades,
4. This place is described:
5. In Revelation 21 as burning lake of fire and sulfur
6. In Matthew 21 as a place where there is a burning furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
7. In Mark 9 a place where the fire never goes out
8. In 2 Peter a place of darkness
9. Luke says its a place of torment
10. In 2 Thessalonians as a place shut out from the presence of God
11. Story: Luke 16:19-31
12. 'Jesus said, "There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed in purple and fine linen and who lived each day in luxury. At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man's table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores. "Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to sit beside Abraham at the heavenly banquet. The rich man also died and was buried, and he went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus at his side. "The rich man shouted, 'Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames.' "But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish. And besides, there is a great chasm separating us. No one can cross over to you from here, and no one can cross over to us from there.' "Then the rich man said, 'Please, Father Abraham, at least send him to my father's home. For I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them so they don't end up in this place of torment.' "But Abraham said, 'Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read what they wrote.' "The rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will repent of their sins and turn to God.' "But Abraham said, 'If they won't listen to Moses and the prophets, they won't be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"'
13. Hell is not a party.
14. It's a place that was not designed for us to go to, but if we make the wrong choices and don't repent, we can end up there.

Fact #3 - Heaven is a real place (HEAVEN Graphic on LED)

1. **John 14:1-3 (NLT)** - ' “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. '
2. Jesus left this earth to go and prepare a place for you and me. C. Heaven is described:
3. Revelation 21 as a place where God resides
4. Revelation 21 a place where there is no sun. The light of the glory of God shines.
5. Revelation 21 a place where there is no pain, no tears
6. Revelation 22 a place where the river of life flows
7. Psalm 16 a place where there is fullness of joy
8. 2 Corinthians 5 a place where we receive a new body. I’m going to get my hair back! You may not recognize me!
9. Jesus describes heaven as paradise.
10. Paul describes it as a reward.
11. Heaven is a place to which we should look forward. It’s home! E. I want to encourage you not to focus on what’s happening here on earth; remember that heaven is your destination.

Fact #4 God desires that we all spend eternity with him

1. 2 Peter 3:9 - …..It’s not his will that anyone is destroyed but that everyone repents.
2. God loves us so much that he sent his son to take our punishment so that we could spend eternity with him.
3. He made it easy. If we would simply confess with our mouths and believe in our hearts we could be saved.
4. Story: Luke 23:39-43 One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!” But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”
5. We should never underestimate how much God loves us and desires to spend eternity with us.

Two questions I have for you: (5:00 MINUTES ON THE TIMER)

- Are you ready for eternity?
- If this timer represented how much time was remaining in your life, where would you go?
- As a pastor, I have been with people in their final moments. In those moments, I’m reminded that whatever they have done in their lives during the time they have has determined where they will spend eternity.
- Job 14:5 - A man's days are numbered. You know the number of his months. He cannot live longer than the time You have set"
- (TIMER ENDS)

ALTAR CALL