

## **God Made Us to Live Forever!**

**January 28, 2018 Sermon by Pastor Diana J. Perkins**

**Have you ever wondered what life on earth would be like if Adam and Eve had eaten of the tree of life instead of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? They would have lived forever and had perfect surroundings. When God looked at his work after He created Adam and Eve in his own image, he declared all of his creation to be “very good”. Read Genesis 1 and 2.**

**In Ecclesiastes 3:11, Solomon wrote concerning God’s purpose for mankind. The beginning of the chapter speaks about time and how that every purpose has a proper time to take place. There is a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to harvest that which was planted; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to keep and a time to throw away etc. Then he mentions that a worker who labors is fulfilling God’s plan for man for work is a gift from God. Solomon calls it a God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied. Work is not a curse; it is a gift from God that builds character and a sense of self-worth. In verse 11, it reads like this: “God has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.” Solomon wrote that there is nothing better for men than to rejoice and to do good in their lives, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor for it is a gift of God.**

**If you continue reading this chapter you learn that whatever God does is forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing will be taken from it. God does it that man should fear before Him. That which is has already been and what is to be has already been and God requires an account of what is past. God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every purpose and every work.**

**It is God’s will that we grow in Him and add to our lives. This life is a testing ground for mankind so those who are humble and desire to know God will have God revealed to them. Those that are rebellious and desire to be satisfied with the carnal nature of mankind will reap the rewards of the wicked. See 1 Chronicles 16:9.**

**There are some interesting verses in the book of Proverbs. Look at chapter 27:19. It says even as a face is reflected in water, so a man’s heart reveals the man. Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied. As a young girl, I learned to hold onto material things from this life loosely for they are only borrowed for a time. All through my teen years, every week I went to a local nursing home with my Sunday school teacher. She taught me to play an accordion and trained me to minister to the elderly people who lived at the nursing home. Everyone there had the same things around them. Their worldly goods consisted of a bed, bedding, chair and a small closet for their clothes and a buzzer to ring for the nurse. Everything but clothing belonged to the nursing home and the only other things residents had were pictures on the wall of family members and the visitors that came to see them. End of life looked rather drab to me. One thing I**

noticed was that those who knew Jesus Christ were happy and had a smile on their faces. They were different from those who were bitter and angry about the hand that life had dealt them. Life is very difficult at times and for those who don't know Jesus Christ, it can be unbearable. Look at Matthew 11:28. Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

The darkest hour is just before dawn. Imagine being a disciple of Jesus, expecting Him to set up his kingdom on this earth and by His power, overcome the government of the Romans who were so cruel and heavy handed towards the citizens of Jerusalem. The disciples' minds were on their promotion that they expected to be just ahead of them and their conversation consisted of who would be the top dog in the kingdom of God. This took place shortly before Jesus was arrested and condemned to die. Look at Luke 9:44. Jesus told them to "let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men." But they didn't understand this saying and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it, and they were afraid to ask him about this saying. Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be the greatest. When Jesus served the disciples the last supper at the Passover, they were not prepared for the night to turn so dark. Jesus dismissed Judas after revealing that he was the traitor among them, but even then the disciples after they heard Jesus say, "Whatever you are going to do, do quickly" thought that Jesus sent him to do some good deed for the poor or to purchase necessary items for them. Even to this point they were still arguing over who was going to be the greatest among them when Jesus set up His kingdom. See Luke 22:24. In John 13:27, Jesus served Judas bread and wine knowing the deed he was going to do shortly and then dismissed him. It was night when Judas left the presence of Jesus and his disciples for the last time and joined himself to the enemies of Jesus. That very night Jesus gave a new commandment to the disciples. The commandment was that they were to love one another as He had loved them. You will know the followers of Jesus by the love they have for one another. Jesus went with his disciples over the Brook Kedron where there was a garden which He and his disciples entered. John 18:1. Judas also knew this place for Jesus often met with His disciples there. Judas came with a detachment of troops and officers from the chief priest and Pharisees bearing lanterns, torches and weapons. He betrayed Jesus with a kiss. In verse 12, Jesus was arrested and bound by the group led by Judas and taken before the high priest. Before many hours passed, Pilate had given the word for Jesus to be crucified. The disciples were terrified and all forsook Jesus. Peter had desired to stay true to his Master, but in the end, he denied that he knew Jesus also, not once but three times. Jesus had come into the world to redeem the world from sin and He suffered at the hands of the Roman soldiers who mocked Him, spit on Him, and cursed Him. Many tried to coax Him to prove that He is the Son of God by

coming down off the cross. Satan's forces were at work to try to destroy people's faith in Jesus Christ. Joseph, a rich man, went to Pilate and asked to have the body of Jesus. He and Nicodemus took the body, prepared it for burial and rolled a huge stone at the mouth of the tomb. See Mark 15:46. He was the first person to be buried in this rich man's tomb. See John 19:38-42. There were some people who remembered His words that He would raise from the dead on the third day. Repeating the words of Jesus, they told Pilate of their concern that the disciples might try to steal the body and claim that Jesus had risen from the dead. See Matthew 27:63. Pilate told them to get their guard to make the tomb secure as they knew how and set them to watch over the tomb. This was a dark time for the followers of Jesus. After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. Matthew 28:1. Behold a great earthquake had taken place and an angel of the Lord had come from heaven and rolled away the stone from the door and sat on it. His countenance was like lightening and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him and they became as dead men. The angel told the women not to be afraid for he knew that they were seeking Jesus. He showed them the place where Jesus had laid and told them to go quickly and tell his disciples that He would go before them into Galilee; there they would see Him. "Behold, I have told you." As they went, Jesus met them saying "Rejoice!" They fell at His feet and worshipped Him. Jesus told them to go tell his disciples that He would meet them in Galilee. In Acts 1:1, there is the account of the time between Jesus' crucifixion, his resurrection and His ascension into heaven. Jesus told his followers to tarry in Jerusalem until they were filled with power from on high. He promised a new experience for his people; they would be filled with the Holy Spirit shortly. The disciples asked Him if He was going to restore the kingdom to Israel at this time. Jesus told them that it is not for them to know the times or the season which the Father has put in His own authority. However, they would receive power when the Holy Spirit had come upon them; and they would be witnesses to Jesus in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth. After He had spoken these words, He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight even as they watched. An angel asked why they were standing looking up into heaven. Jesus had gone back to his Father and He promised to return in the same manner as He went away.

They left and went to Jerusalem and went up into the upper room where they were staying. The 11 disciples continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus and His brothers. There were approximately 120 people gathered there. Acts chapter 2 says that "when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the

**Spirit gave them utterance. There were in that city devout Jewish men from every nation under heaven. And when the sound occurred, the multitude came together and was confused because everyone heard them speak in his own language. The people were amazed as they knew that all these people were from the area of Galilee and would not have known any other language other than their native tongue. These people were speaking all different languages and giving praise to God for His wonderful works. Some were amazed and perplexed and others mocked saying that these people had been drinking wine.”**

**The same Peter that refused to acknowledge his relationship with Jesus earlier now had the holy boldness to stand and address the crowd. He told them that this was the fulfillment of the prophecy spoken by Joel promising the people of all nations that “God would pour out his spirit upon all flesh. Their sons and daughters would prophesy, their young men would see visions, and the old men would dream dreams. And on God’s manservants and maidservants, He would pour out His spirit and they would prophesy. He also spoke about the second coming of Jesus and told the people that whoever called on the name of the Lord would be saved.” See Joel 2:28.**

**Peter gave his sermon beginning with the Old Testament prophets and told how the Jewish nation had rejected all the servants of the Lord that had been sent to them. He finished by speaking about Jesus, the Son of God, who had been sent to redeem Israel and had offered himself to be their king and they crucified Him. He then told them to be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of their sins and they too would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was for anyone who believed, asked for forgiveness and obeying the commandment of Jesus. The promise would follow generation after generation until Jesus Christ returns to earth. 3000 people responded to the words of Peter as he explained that the blood of Christ was on their hands for they killed the Son of God. They were baptized and continued in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers. The Church of Jesus Christ flourished and the gospel spread throughout the world. We are in the church age at this time, but in the future the nation of Israel will recognize Jesus as their Messiah. Many Jews today realize that He is the Messiah of the Old Testament, but the Jewish nation has not yet recognized Him. In 2 Corinthians 6:2, it says, “Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. Don’t procrastinate and think that you have plenty of time to give your life to Jesus Christ. Don’t delay if the Holy Spirit is dealing with you to get right with God. Satan would have you think that there are many opportunities to make that decision, but we don’t know the day or the hour that Jesus Christ is going to call his church home! Don’t waste your life and live with regrets later on. Commit your efforts to learn the truth about God and his love for you and invest your efforts in living a godly life honoring Him who loved you even while you were living in sin. See Romans 5:8. I pray that God will quicken your hearts on this matter. It is the most important decision you will make in this life for it is an eternal one.**