

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, June 4, 2016

Have you ever considered that the Creator of this Universe has no beginning and no end. The eternity of God deals with His timeless nature. That may be hard to fathom since we live in a finite world. If God were finite, He too would need to have a creator. And, He would not be able to provide eternal life for His creation. That's us folks – His most wonderful creation! In Genesis 2:7 we are told that God did not simply speak man into existence as He did in the case of the plants and animals. Instead, He formed man from the dust of the ground and personally breathed life into his nostrils. That breath of life is our soul and it continues past our earthly death. For centuries, man has been searching for the “missing link” between humans and animals. I propose God Himself is that link!

Now, let's discuss our actual existence here on Earth. In this world, we all face many challenges in life. No one ever said it would be easy! In 1875, William Ernest Henley wrote his well-known poem entitled INVICTUS, which follows:

*Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.*

*In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.*

*Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.*

Are we really the master of our fate, the captain of our soul? To some extent I agree. Our destiny is in our hands since God has given us the ability to think and make our own day-to-day decisions in life. There are consequences for those life decisions. We would be wise to consider that life goes on after our earthly death, since our soul continues on. The author perhaps unwittingly talks about “the Horror of the shade” and “How charged with punishments the scroll” and he says he is “unafraid” of what lies ahead. His “unconquerable soul” is simply his way of demonstrating his unwillingness to accept the Reality of God's existence.

Let me take God's Eternity into our everyday lives. There's application in every aspect of life. In my business life, I vigorously strive to serve my clients as I would want to be served and as if I'm serving my Father in Heaven. In my family dealings, I strive to be the loving husband and father He has demonstrated to me in His Word. Sometimes that means disciplining those under our authority for their well-being and personal growth. In personal relationships, I'm continually reminded that all His people are made in His image and I need to realize the unfinished work of His Hand on the lives of those He places in my path. This is not easy to do, but I strive to have compassion for those who might even be in the enemy camp.

What's most important is to realize that time is short and we'll all meet God face-to-face one day. That's what His Word says and we'd be wise to prepare for that day with fear and reverence and accept His Son as Savior and Lord!

Passages to Ponder: Genesis 1:11, 20, 24; Genesis 2:7; Hebrews 1:1-4; Revelation 3:8-9; Revelation 3:19-20

© 2015, all rights reserved. Note: Jim Langley has been an agent with New York Life since 1983 and an active member of CBMC of Santa Barbara since 1987. These “Fourth Quarter Strategies” discussions are designed to “light a fire” under Christian business and professional men so we might be more effective in the marketplace for the sake of Christ, our Lord and Savior! Please visit our website @ <http://www.fourthquarterstrategies.com>.

Genesis 1:11 New Living Translation (NLT)

¹¹ Then God said, "Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came." And that is what happened.

Genesis 1:20 New Living Translation (NLT)

²⁰ Then God said, "Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind."

Genesis 1:24 New Living Translation (NLT)

²⁴ Then God said, "Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals." And that is what happened.

Genesis 1:24 New Living Translation (NLT)

²⁴ Then God said, "Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals." And that is what happened.

Hebrews 1:1-4 New Living Translation (NLT)

¹ Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. ² And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe. ³ The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven. ⁴ This shows that the Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is greater than their names.

Revelation 3:8-9 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁸ "I know all the things you do, and I have opened a door for you that no one can close. You have little strength, yet you obeyed my word and did not deny me. ⁹ Look, I will force those who belong to Satan's synagogue—those liars who say they are Jews but are not—to come and bow down at your feet. They will acknowledge that you are the ones I love."

Revelation 3:19-20 New Living Translation (NLT)

¹⁹ I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference.

²⁰ "Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends."