



**F**IGHT the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, unto which you are also called, and have professed a good profession before many witnesses. 6:13 I give you charge in the sight of God, who replenishes life to all things, and be fore Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; 6:14 That you keep this commandment without spot, blameless, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: 6:15 Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potent ate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 6:16 Who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. (1 Timothy 6:12-16)

Immortality is, alone, a singular essence and nature of God. He is the Author and Giver of Immortality to those who believe and are called. How then can the believer inherit a claim on immortality? He may do so through the grace and mercy of the only One who possesses it. Being in Christ, to all that He is in His essential being, we become a party. In Christ their can exist no death, therefore, being in Christ we are aboard the Ark of our salvation just as the family of Noah were spared the devastation of the flood in the Ark of that day.

Our first parents in the Garden were created for an immortal existence until the deadly disease of sin entered in through the partaking of the wrong tree and its deception. This flesh can never enjoy an immortal existence, but the resurrected bodies of the believers will certainly experience that benefit in union with their Maker.

Every soul created by God was created to have an eternal existence – not the kind of immortal existence of the Father, but existence either in glory or eternal damnation. The second death is one of abject, but conscious, darkness. Remember those who, by blood relation, considered themselves rightful inheritors of the Kingdom? – Not so! 5 ¶ And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, 6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. 7 And Jesus saith unto him, *I will come and heal him.* 8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not

worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. 9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. 10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, *Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.* 11 *And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.* 12 *But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* 13 *And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.* There can be no gnashing of teeth and weeping by the inanimate dead.

Most of the modern Bible versions try to avoid even the mention of Hell, but, my friends, beware the deception of these 'yellow journalism' translations. There is as surely a Hell as there is a Heaven. Most, such as the NIV, omit Mark 9:44, 46 altogether since it suggests an eternal torment: *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* Who gave these godless critters the authority to omit the very words of Christ here?

There may be some who are confused in the meaning of immortality as relates to God and the eternal suffering of the damned, or the eternal bliss of the Elect. There is no immortality apart from God, but those who are in Christ enjoy the benefits of that immortality while the lost suffer in a separation from the immortality of painless but joyful life.

In a certain sense, every person who lives today has the very spark of life transmitted down through the ages from Adam to himself. Some infinitely tiny particle of DNA that belong to our ancient parents is present in our body and image today. But God creates nothing or nobody in vain. Dr. Werner von Braun (192-1977) is considered the Father of the Space Age. He developed advanced rocket technology and was the man who planned the details for our first Lunar landing. He also was responsible for the launch of our first satellite, Explorer I, was launched under his oversight. Dr. von Braun was also a believer in God as the Designer and Creator of the Universe. Here is a sample of his thoughts on immortality as revealed in 1 Cor 15:53:

*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.* Dr. von Braun scoffed at the idea that science has made religion untimely or out of date. He said, Science, for instance, tells us nothing in nature, not even the tiniest particle, can disappear without a trace. Nature does not know extinction. All it knows is transformation. Everything science has taught me, von Braun added, and continues to teach me strengthens my belief in the continuity of our spiritual existence after death. Nothing disappears without a trace.

One of my favorite authors of Systematic Theology (Luis Berkhoff) writes on Immortality:

In the most absolute sense of the word immortality is ascribed only to God. Paul speaks of Him in 1 Timothy 6:15-16, as *the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality.* This does not mean that none of His creatures are immortal in any sense of the word. Understood in that unrestricted sense, this word of Paul would also teach that the angels are not immortal, and this is certainly not the intention of the apostle. The evident meaning of his statement is that God is the only Being who possesses immortality as an original, eternal, and necessary endowment. Whatever immortality may be ascribed to some of His creatures, is contingent on the divine will, is conferred upon them, and therefore had a beginning. God, on the other hand, is necessarily free from all temporal limitations.

Immortality in the sense of continuous or endless existence is also ascribed to all spirits, including the human soul. It is one of the doctrines of natural religion or

philosophy that, when the body is dissolved, the soul does not share in the dissolution, but retains its identity as an individual being. This idea of the immortality of the soul is in perfect harmony with what the Bible teaches about man, but the bible, religion, and theology, are not primarily interested in this purely quantitative and colourless immortality, - the bare continued existence of the soul.

Again, the term 'immortality' is used in theological language to designate that state of man in which he is entirely free from the seeds of decay and death. In this sense of the word man was immortal before the Fall. This state clearly did not exclude the possibility of man's becoming subject to death. Though man in the state of rectitude was not subject to death, yet he was liable to it. It was entirely possible that through sin he would become subject to the law of death; and as a matter of fact, he did fall victim to it.

Finally, the word 'immortality' designates, especially in eschatological language, that state of man in which he is impervious to death and cannot possible become its prey. Man was not immortal in this highest sense of the word in virtue of his creation, even though he was created in the image of God. This immortality would have resulted if Adam had complied with the condition of the covenant of works, but can now only result from the work of redemption as it is completed in the consummation. (the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross). Systematic Theology, by Luis Berkhoff, (Pg 672-673), Wm. B. Erdman's Pub. 1941.

Rather than a constant care about the fate of one's soul in eternity, it will be comforting to remember the text from Romans:

*To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. (Romans 2:7-9)*