

Essential Living Series
Life through Eternal Perspective
June 20, 2009

Introduction

Perspective Defined: the capacity to view things in their true relations or relative importance

How to gain an eternal perspective

1. Comprehend the beauty and brevity of time (Eccl 3:11; Ja 4:14; Ps 39:4-7)

(Eccl 3:11) "He has made everything beautiful in its **time**. He has also set **eternity** in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end."

The Brevity of life

(James 4:14) "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

(Psalm 39:4-7) "Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath. Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and fro; He bustles about, but only in vain: he heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it. But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you."

2. Focus (fix) your eye on the eternal (2 Cor 4:18)

(2 Cor 4:18) So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

(Heb 3:1) Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

(Heb 12:2) Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Prioritize: Set your eyes on things above

3. Change your mindsets from earthy things to heavenly realities (Col 3:1)

(Col 3:1-3) Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. {2} Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. {3} For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Heaven: It should be the central object of our focus

C. S. Lewis said, "It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this one." God commands us to be heavenly minded, and doing so will give us the perspective and motivation to live on earth as he has commanded us (Heb. 11:26-27).

"Let temporal things serve your use, but the eternal be the object of your desire." *Thomas a Kempis*

"It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this one." *William Wilberforce*

4. Resist falling in love and desiring the things of this world (John 12:25)

Jesus' Viewpoint

(John 12:25) The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

The Viewpoint of the Apostles

(Rom 12:2) Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

"Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. **If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy,** the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. ...Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing.

... I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country, which I shall not find till after death; ... I must make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others to do the same." **C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity***

5. Live for the day that defines all days (1 Cor 9:24-25)

(1 Cor 9:24-25) Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, **but only one gets the prize?** **Run in such a way as to get the prize.** {25} Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

(1 Cor 4:5) Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

(2 Cor 5:9-10) So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. {10} For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.