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"When Do We Receive Eternal Life?"

by Mark Legendre

There seems to be some question in the religious world as to when a person actually receives "eternal life." Some people say that you receive eternal life the very minute you "believe in Jesus Christ as Lord." But is this really true? **WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?**

In Titus 1:1-2 the apostle speaks of "...in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." In 1st John 2:25 we read "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." But Jesus in Mark 10:30 says "...in the world to come eternal life." So it appears to me that we have the "hope of eternal life, and the promise of eternal life, but this hope does not become reality and this promise is not fulfilled until that world which is to come, which of course is speaking of Heaven."

What does "eternal life" involve? Paul says in Romans 2:7 the following: "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honor, and immortality, eternal life." In verse 10 of this same chapter he also adds "Peace." And so it is clear that we only "receive eternal life in that world that is yet to come, and it involves receiving glory, honor, immortality, and peace." And you must seek for it by patient continuance in well doing.

"THE COMING OF A NEW YEAR"

By Mark Legendre

The coming of a new year often brings "new hopes, new plans, and new dreams." It is also a time when many people choose to make what are known as "New Years Resolutions." I pray that all of our hopes, plans, and dreams will be such that they will be pleasing to God. And I hope that all new resolutions that will be made by God's people will be in keeping with His plans for our lives.

We should, as Christians, set goals each year to accomplish things that will bring glory to God. How many people will you talk to this year about their souls? How many will you actually convert? In 1st Timothy 4:16 Paul tells Timothy to "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." A good example can be a powerful source of influence; it can sometimes even lead some people to obey the gospel according to 1st Peter 3:1-6. We should be prepared to take advantage of every opportunity to teach the gospel to anyone and everyone who will listen. Their souls and possibly our souls as well may be hanging in the balance depending on the kind of effort we make to teach those who are lost.

We should also strive to grow spiritually as well. Peter says in 2nd Peter 3:18 that we are to "...grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." If we are not in the process of growing spiritually, then we may be in the

process of dying spiritually and not becoming all that God would have us to be!

It is indeed a wonderful privilege to be a part of the family of God. But let us understand that being children of God involves God-given responsibilities; first to God, then to others, and finally to ourselves. The salvation of our souls, our families, and the world is dependent upon the effort that we make as Christians to do those things that God wants us to do. In Matthew 5:14-16 we are told to "...let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify God..."

"SEEKING TO PLEASE GOD!"

By Mark Legendre

The following poem by Thomas A. Kempis expresses a very beautiful sentiment. Listen to it closely.

"Prayer For True Knowledge"

Grant me, O Lord, to know what I ought to know,
To Love what I ought to love
To praise what delights Thee most,
To value what is precious in Thy sight,
To hate what is offensive to thee.

Do not suffer me to judge according to the sight of my eyes,
Nor to pass sentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant men;
But to discern with a true judgment between things visible and spiritual,
And above all, always to inquire what is the good pleasure of Thy will.

As I read this poem, it made me think of a number of important issues. For example, it reminded me of the statement of John 8:29 where Jesus says "...for I do always those things that please him." That was what the life of Jesus was all about; doing those things that pleased His Father in Heaven. And that is what our lives ought to be about as well.

This poem also makes me think of the statement of Jesus in Matthew 6:33 where he said that we are to "...seek first the kingdom of God...". Seeking first God's kingdom involves "knowing what we ought to know, loving what we ought to love, praising those things that bring delight to God, valuing what is important and precious to God, and hating what is offensive to Him as well."

This poem also tells me to learn the difference between what is "visible and spiritual" in other words to learn the difference between what is "temporal in nature versus what is eternal in nature." What can be seen is temporal and what can be seen only with the "eye of faith" is that which is truly last; trust in it only, trust God!