

WEC 09, Bible Talk 1: Time vs. Eternity

Good morning. These talks will probably be a challenge, but they will help you with English comprehension, and I hope you will find them thought provoking as well- in a good way, of course!

This first talk is about time. I imagine that the first thing you think of when the subject comes up is, there never seems to be enough time for everything we have to do. Oddly, that was not what the experts predicted when I was a child. I remember reading that the biggest problem I would face as an adult was having too much spare time. Can you imagine that? The theory was that robots and computers and machines would do so much of our work, so well, that we would work only 4 days a week. And that was just Dad- Mom would be at home, with all her labor-saving appliances, wondering what to do next. And, what is the reality? Dad and Mom both work, and don't have enough money! Actually, in America, many people have 2 jobs, and are still short of money. Whatever happened?

It appears that our labor-saving devices take a lot of work! Or a lot of money anyway. On top of that, our media devices dump so much information on us that we are always swamped with possibilities; with things "we really *should* do" So, we are busy working to afford our machines, spending time using our machines, or worrying about all the things our machines tell us we should be doing. No wonder we feel like we don't have enough time! In *Cast Away*, Chuck and Kelly are 2 such people. Never enough time! Not even enough time to propose marriage. It is tiring just watching them.

Now, imagine being on a south-sea island, all alone, with no one to bother you. All the time in the world! Wouldn't it be great? Hmm... Perhaps, after seeing this movie, you aren't so sure about that. Anyway, it's not that likely to happen to any of us. So- what should we do about the time pressures we face? What is really important? How can we get our lives under control?

There are many techniques for time management. You can take week-long seminars on the subject- if you have the time! But there is an even more basic question to be answered first. And that concerns the meaning of life. What are we here for anyway? If we don't know that, how will we know how to spend our time here?

One of the key questions concerns what happens after death. It makes a great difference whether or not there is life after death. But, how can we know that for sure?

Many people are sure they know the answer. Some are very sure there is no life after death. It is interesting to note that for a century after Darwin's theory of evolution became popular, most people assumed that humans were the apex, the end of evolution. We were here to make the world a better place for the next generation of humans. The point was to raise children, or devote yourself to educating children, so the next generation could carry on. Then you died. The end. Unfortunately for this idea, a number of intelligent thinkers followed the logic of evolution to its end, and came up with a very different picture. The idea that humans were the apex of evolution; that we were somehow important, came from the Bible, not from science. Without the Bible's revelation, there is no reason to think we humans are anything special. Scientifically, we are just DNA on its way to becoming something else. Humans just sort of happened. There is no plan, no purpose, no glowing

future Utopia and certainly no afterlife. If we went back in time and started over, evolution would take a different path, and humans would never appear. And, our future? We will either change into something different, or (more likely), outsmart ourselves and become extinct, because we were too successful, and became too numerous to survive. Humans are nothing. We are an accident- probably an unfortunate accident. Look at our wars, our poverty and hunger and disease, and the pollution we create. What's so great about humans? Time goes on in endless cycles. The Big Bang is followed by development, then decay and collapse, to be followed by the next Big Bang. Humans are too small a speck in this huge picture to be of any real significance.

This is a very dark picture, but one which is being taught to students, right now. What incentive will they have to “work for the good of future generations”?

The Bible gives a very different picture. The Bible speaks of a Creator, who made us for a purpose. He made time. It has a start, and runs in a straight line to a conclusion. It is part of the 3 dimensional space we live in. It, and our 3 dimensional space, will come to an end, but will be followed by a new Creation, and a new kind of time- endless time. Humans have a soul that will survive this time and space. In the next creation, we will either be with God, or apart from Him. This current time is where we prepare for the new time to come. Our birth, our life, and our death occurs under the eye of God. Our time is set by God. There is a purpose for our existence. But, the really surprising part is that we can choose our path in time. We can choose to follow God, or to ignore Him. If we follow Him, we will find our place in the big picture, and live with God in light and joy in the new creation. If we ignore Him now, 2 very bad things happen. First, we will never discover the reason for our existence. We can never be sure whether we are doing right or wrong; if we are spending our time well

or foolishly. We just drift through our allotted time in a fog. As we grow older, there is less and less to look forward to. The second thing is even worse; we die and pass on into an eternity separated from our Creator, in darkness and despair.

Two paths are before us. One follows the Creator, the other wanders off into the darkness of human speculation. The path we choose will determine how we pass our time here on earth.

If we choose to follow God, we will come to realize that there is enough time- enough time to do what God wants us to do. We will learn what is important, and what is not. We won't waste our time on useless things. And, we will pass onto eternity with Him.

The other path ignores God, and chases after things that don't last; things we must one day loose. And, in the end, we will loose our chance to be in God's eternal Kingdom of light. It is a big choice. Whatever else you do with your time, take time to think about it, please.