Eternal Life

This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. John 17:3, NASB

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

Eternal life refers to “ζωή αἰώνιος” - literally “life in the age,” understood to be the age to come (Matthew 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Ephesians 1:21), referring to the Kingdom age or Kingdom of God (Luke 13:28-29; 18:18-30).

Who receives eternal life? Life is promised to those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah (Christ):
- Acts 4:10-12; 16:25-34
- Romans 10:8-13
- 1 Timothy 1:15
- 1 John 5:11-13
- 1 Peter 3:18

Eternal life (redemption) is guaranteed by the holy Spirit received at baptism:
- Acts 2:32-33, 38
- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
- Ephesians 1:3-14; 4:30

Eternal life is effective at conversion (Eph. 2:1-8), but begins in fact at resurrection for those “in Christ”:
- Romans 5:17-21; 6:3-10, 23; 8:1-23
- 1 Corinthians 15:20-24, 50-57
- Ephesians 2:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17
- Revelation 20:4-6

Jesus, the firstfruits of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20), is the model of the resurrection:
- Acts 1:3

Resurrection according to 1 Corinthians 15:

Changed from: | Changed to:
---|---
Corrupt | Incorruptibility
Dishonor | Glory
Weak | Power
Natural | Spiritual

Mortal bodies transformed at resurrection:
- Philippians 3:20-21
- 1 John 3:2

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The eternal age begins with reigning with Christ on earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6), fulfilling the prophecies that the righteous will inherit the earth, and continues into the age of the “new heaven and new earth” (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

**Scripture contrasts [eternal] life with death (non-life; not a different kind of life):**
- Proverbs 11:19; 12:28; 14:27
- Isaiah 38:1
- John 5:24-29
- Romans 5:12-21; 6:5, 8-9, 20-23; 8:10-11
- 2 Corinthians 2:14-16
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**Conditions during eternal age:**
- Matthew 19:28-30
- Luke 20:34-38

The wicked are raised for judgment (Rev. 20:11-15) and death (aka the lake of fire), not life. Various words besides “death” refer to the second [eternal] death.

**Scripture contrasts [eternal] life with death (non-life; not a different kind of life):**
- Psalm 37:2, 9, 22, 28, 34, 38 Cut down, cut off
- Psalm 37:10, 36 Be no more
- Psalm 37: 20 Perish, vanish away
- Psalm 37:36 Could not be found
- Psalm 37:38 Destroyed
- Malachi 4:1 Stubble, burn up, leave neither root nor branch
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- John 5:29 Condemnation, judgment
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Jesus brings the reward with him at his return:
- Isaiah 62:11
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