

Eternal Ponderings

The human brain and human reasoning cannot fully comprehend the idea of something that has no end and no beginning. God in his three persons is eternal. The expanse of the universe is infinite, even though the mind of man says that there must be an end somewhere. The idea of eternal glory with God, and likewise, eternal torment without God, is something beyond describing with human words.

It is hard enough to describe what the glories of heaven will be like before you even begin to consider just how long we will be spending there. Eternity; in heaven, time will no longer be consequential. It will not mean a thing, so that a thousand days will be as an evening gone. This whole time we will be, as Reverend Vos put it, “singing deliriously before the throne of God.” In heaven, we will not just be “partying it up” as the world thinks, but rather doing everything to glorify the name of God, and we will be doing it perfectly.

But we must remember that we will do this for the rest of eternity. Imagine!

Hell is a place; it is there, and it is real, contrary to the ideas of a certain popular author. It is outside of God’s good providence, where God empties his cup of wrath, so that evil and torment reign supreme. As his son hung on that accursed tree, God took his good grace away from him, and caused the three hours of darkness to hide the torments that his son was going through to pay for all of our sins. This is why the Apostle’s Creed says “and he descended into Hell.” It was not that Christ was bodily moved from his place on the cross and sent to the actual place hell, but rather, that God removed his care from him as he hung there. Our savior only had to deal with that for three hours, not to minimize that in any way, but the wicked will have to endure that for eternity. Hell is not like the Roman Catholic purgatory. You pay for your sins, but there is no way to ever escape. One sin deserves an eternity of punishment and our sinful human nature sins every second of our life.

Again, the idea of eternity comes into play. God is infinite and eternal. He has no beginning and no end. The mind of a mere man cannot fathom this. One day, I sat on my bed and just thought about eternity for a while. Even though I gave up because my head hurt too much after about five minutes of thinking about it, I discovered something. Man can remember the past, live in the present, and not know the future, but you and I cannot wrap our minds around the idea that something will be forever. You can try, but all you will really accomplish is giving yourself an aching head. I believe that eternity is another one of those mysteries that God does not choose to reveal to man. But this does not stop man from trying to understand it.

God does give our feeble human minds an insight into the idea of eternity. We call pi “irrational” because it has no end (that man has found yet), nor repeats itself. But there are people who are constantly trying to find the end to pi, and highpi.com has it written out in download form to the 400 millionth digit. Man wishes to comprehend something eternal, but cannot, so he covers it in a blanket term by saying, “It goes on forever.” It sounds like a simple statement, but if you would realize the full implications of that phrase, I think you might be a little more hesitant to use it.

As children of God, we know that we will be spending this eternity with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and also, that the worldly people around us will be spending it in hell. We know that these glories, and likewise, those horrors, are beyond human explanation, but we do know that it will never end. “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).