

# Worshipping an Eternal God

[Psalm 90:2](#)

God Existed B\_\_\_\_\_ T\_\_\_\_\_ B\_\_\_\_\_

[Genesis 1:1](#) contains very familiar words to most people: “In the beginning God ...” Those four words summarize the doctrine of God’s eternity. When “the beginning” began, God was there. This beginning, of course, refers to the beginning of the creation we call earth (or perhaps the beginning of the universe), not God’s beginning. Whenever that which has been created began, God was already there to create it.

One writer describes the difficulty in trying to comprehend God’s eternity:

“It is a concept that we, creatures of a physical world, cannot even begin to comprehend. It is like the blind trying to comprehend the sunset. Neither can we conceive of a world without time or space. We can speak of it, we can think of it, but the truth is that we cannot really imagine a phenomenon so foreign to our experience that anything is without that which dominates our lives every day, without time.”

C.S. Lewis also had a helpful idea about how to compare time with eternity. If you could take hundreds of pieces of white paper, say 8.5” x 11” in size, and tape them all together to form a huge, white backdrop ... then take that giant white “curtain” and tape it to the side of a large skyscraper ... then take a pencil and go to the middle of that backdrop and make a small line about an eighth of an inch long—that line would represent time against the expanse of eternity. Time is a mere blip, a small mark, compared to eternity. (Of course, the illustration breaks down when you get to the edges of the white backdrop, as if eternity had limits. In reality, the white sheets go on forever.)

God is the white backdrop, and the span of history on earth is time. We exist against Him as the backdrop for everything.

## God Exists in the Past, Present, and Future at the S\_\_\_\_\_ Moment

With us, events happen on a linear plane, one after the other. That’s what we call history—the succession of events one after another. But for God, there is no past, present, and future. He exists in all those “times” at once. He exists as much in this present moment as He does in the time of Abraham or in the time of the return of Christ. He sees and experiences all those events at once since he sees eternity all at once. “Then” is the same as “now” for God; “was” is the same as “is.”

God’s perspective on time can be illustrated this way: say you attend the famous Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena one year. You take a seat in the stands that are set up along the way, and watch each beautiful float as it comes by along with the horses, marching bands, and other participants. You see those events as they pass by in front of you, and you can even see them for a few moments after they’ve passed and before they arrive. But God sees the whole parade at once as if He were hovering in a helicopter high above all of history. Expand that idea beyond just the Rose Bowl Parade to include everything that is happening around the world and in the universe at that moment, and you have an idea of what it means for God to dwell in eternity.

Jesus confused and angered the Pharisees once by introducing the idea of His eternity into a discussion with them ([John 8:48–59](#)). He said, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” I AM was the name by which God identified Himself to Moses in David Jeremiah, *Knowing the God You Worship: Study Guide* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004).

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[Exodus 3:14](#), the holy name of God. Jesus was saying that He existed before Abraham—that He was the great I AM of the Old Testament. The Pharisees thought Jesus was just a blasphemer pretending to be God; they didn't understand that He was, in fact, the eternal God.

When we are going through difficult times in our lives, we have to remember that God sees the present and the future at once. The present might be rife with difficulties, but the future contains the resolution of that situation which we can't see—but God can. Therefore, we must not give up in the present just because we can't see the future. We must trust that God is leading us toward a future that will work together for good even though we do not as yet see what it is.

## God Exists O \_\_\_\_\_ of Time

This point is the obvious conclusion of the truth we just discussed. If God exists in the past, present, and future, then He obviously exists outside of time. Time is a temporary phenomenon, not an eternal one. When Adam and Eve sinned, everything changed. Life on earth became temporary instead of eternal as God put in motion a redemptive plan by which man's holiness might be restored and he might enter once again into eternal fellowship with God. Time as we know it—though it seems permanent—is only a temporary blip on the giant canvas of eternity. God stands outside of time (life on earth) looking down on it from His eternal perspective. It is very important for those of us who are bound by time to remember that God is not. Even though we are constrained by time at the present, our hearts still retain the call and longing for eternity ([Ecclesiastes 3:11](#)).

## God C \_\_\_\_\_ Time

We know God created time on the basis of [Genesis 1:14–19](#), the description of God putting the sun and moon in the heavens “to divide the day from the night; and ... for signs and seasons, and for days and years.” Interestingly, those celestial markers will have different functions when the new earth is created and eternity is lived out from the New Jerusalem ([Revelation 22:5](#)).

## God C \_\_\_\_\_ Time

A deist is someone who believes there is a God who created the world but who is not involved in running it. The example of a clockmaker is used to illustrate this idea of God: A clockmaker creates a clock, winds it up, and lets it run without further interference. God, the deists say, created the world and its inhabitants and systems, and is now allowing it to run on its own without interference from Him. Many people try to explain why bad things happen to good people by saying God has taken a “hands-off” policy toward this world.

Deists are wrong. Their view has no biblical support whatsoever. God is definitely in control of the times and seasons of our lives. He knows the time of our birth, the events of our life, and the time of our death ([Psalm 39:4–5](#), [139:13–16](#)).

So what does the eternity of God mean to me in practical terms? It means something specific not just to Christians but to those who are seeking and those who do not believe as well.

First, the Christian and the eternity of God. [Isaiah 40:28–31](#) provides wonderful reassurance for what it means to know “the everlasting God.”

*Have you not known?*

*Have you not heard?*

David Jeremiah, *Knowing the God You Worship: Study Guide* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004).

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*The everlasting God, the LORD,  
The Creator of the ends of the earth,  
Neither faints nor is weary.  
His understanding is unsearchable.  
He gives power to the weak,  
And to those who have no might He  
increases strength.*

*Even the youths shall faint and be weary,  
And the young men shall utterly fall,  
But those who wait on the LORD  
Shall renew their strength;  
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
They shall run and not be weary,  
They shall walk and not faint.*

The “everlasting God” is always there, always with us. God is not bound by space or time or circumstance but is eternal and infinite. Regardless of how your life may have come apart in the past or present, God sees it in the context of the future as well. He knows the future and what your life will be like! Couple that fact with His love and goodness ([Jeremiah 29:11](#); [Romans 8:28](#)), and His eternity becomes a great reassurance. His strength is always there even though ours may leave us.

Second, the seeker and the eternity of God. If you are a person who is investigating Christianity, God, the person of Jesus, or the reliability of the Bible, you are responding to that taste of eternity God has put in every human heart. Even though each of us is unique, we do share that common hunger to know and touch the eternal. Some have suggested that our hunger for eternity is what separates us from the rest of creation, what it means to be made in the image of God.

Because God is eternal, we who are created in His image have a longing to reconnect with the eternal. Every person created by God is going to live for eternity somewhere. Contrary to the naturalistic worldview present in our culture, we do not just die and contribute our carbon remains back to the dust. The human soul lives forever—the question is where.

There is hope in that fact (at least this life is not all there is), but there is also fear (not knowing where one is going to spend eternity). God looked upon the dual realities of man’s mortality and man’s immortality (eternity), and saw a conflict: “They were made to live with Me for eternity, but because they have been stained with sin, they can’t.”

To solve the dilemma, God the Father sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, the realm of mortality. In Christ, eternity touched time and a bridge for mankind into eternity was provided. By dying on a cross and providing cleansing from the stain of sin, Christ became the door through which mortal man can pass into immortality, to partake of the eternal life for which he has been longing. Putting one’s faith in Christ is how we answer the question of where we will spend eternity. Embrace Christ and spend eternity with Him; reject Christ and spend eternity without Him.

Jesus said in [John 5:24](#), “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”

David Jeremiah, *Knowing the God You Worship: Study Guide* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004).

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And John the apostle wrote in [1 John 5:11–12](#), “And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

Those are words of reassurance for the one who is seeking to touch eternity. It can only be accomplished by touching Christ.

Finally, the non-believer and the eternity of God. I hope you will ponder the words of Scripture I just quoted as an assurance to the seeker, for they apply to the one who will not believe as well. The Bible says there is a heaven for those who believe in Christ, and a hell for those who don't. It is not a realm where you would want to live for a minute, much less an eternity.

God has put eternity in your heart, and you likely know it at this moment, regardless of your perspective toward Jesus Christ. May you choose, if you have not already done so, to spend eternity with Him. Eternal life is the gift He entered time to give.

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## APPLICATION

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1. Our God is a forever God. Read the following Scriptures:

[Isaiah 9:6](#)

[Isaiah 57:15](#)

[1 Timothy 1:17](#)

[Revelation 1:4](#)

- a. The concept of eternity is something that is outside of your grasp. Try to think how you would explain color to a person who was born blind and will always be blind.
- b. Now imagine that color is eternity and you are blind. What will it be like when you see it?
- c. Read [1 Corinthians 13:12](#).

2. Read [Genesis 1:14](#). How did the creation of light cause a way to measure time?  
David Jeremiah, *Knowing the God You Worship: Study Guide* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004).

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- a. Do you think there was time before the creation of light?
3. Read [Isaiah 40:28–31](#). How does it make you feel to know that an eternal God knows you?
    - a. What do those who wait on the Lord receive from the eternal God?
  4. Read [Romans 1:18–21](#). According to this passage, what should be obvious to anyone who takes a look around?
    - a. Read the following verses:  
  
[Deuteronomy 33:13–16](#)  
  
[Psalm 65:5–13](#)  
  
[Psalm 104](#)
    - b. What parts of the universe point out especially to you the order and design of a Creator?
    - c. Why do you think God made nature so beautiful and intriguing? What are some things that might tell us about God’s nature?
  5. Read [Ecclesiastes 3:11](#). Put in your own words the phrase, “He has put eternity in their hearts.”
    - a. What do you believe happens after we die?
    - b. Read [1 Corinthians 15:41–49](#). We bear the image of Adam and the image of Christ. Because of Adam, we must die. Because of Christ, we can live.
    - c. What do you think it was like for Jesus to enter into the confines of time? Can you think of a comparison?
    - d. Read [1 Corinthians 15:50–57](#). What do you think it will be like to put on immortality?
    - e. Do you have loved ones who have put on immortality? Is that the way you think of them, or do you think of them as lost to you?

- f. What do you think it will be like to be in a timeless environment? Can you catch an inkling of it?

6. Read the following verses keeping eternity in mind:

[Matthew 10:28](#)

[Matthew 25:31–46](#)

[Luke 12:4–5](#)

[2 Thessalonians 1:8–9](#)

- a. Now contrast those verses with the following:

[Luke 23:39–43](#)

[John 14:1–6](#)

[Philippians 3:20–21](#)

[1 Peter 1:3–4](#)