

# Time Can Be Eternal Life

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Date: 31 December 1989

Preacher: Harry Robinson

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you.

The order of service that we will use is on page 722 of your prayer book.

722, it's an order for Compline, which means to complete. And we shall stand to begin.

The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end. O God, make speed to save us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, the world without end. Amen.

[ 1 : 31 ] Praise ye the Lord. The Lord's name be praised. We turn to Psalm 85, which we will read responsibly. And if you found it, it's on page 438.

And we will use the little bar as our guide. And we, on this side of the church, will read the first passage of the church.

And we will read the first passage of the church. And we will read the first passage of the church.

And we will read the first passage of the church. And we will read the first passage of the church.

And we will read the first passage of the church. And you, on the far side, will read the ending of

each verse. Lord, thou art become gracious unto thy land. Thou hast restored the fortunes of Jacob.

Thou hast forgiven the offense of thy people. And thou have all their sin. Thou hast taken away all thy displeasure. Turn us, O God, our Savior.

[ 2 : 39 ] And let thine anger cease from us. Wilt thou be displeased at us forever. And wilt thou stretch out thy hand from one generation to another.

Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us. That thy evil may rejoice in the people. O Lord, show thy mercy upon us. And grind us thy salvation.

I will hearken what the Lord God will say. For he shall speak peace unto his people, and to his saints, and unto them that hear their heart.

Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him. That glory be well from heaven. Mercy and truth are met together.

By righteousness and peace are faced together. Truth springeth out of the earth. And by righteousness that will not come with them. Yea, the Lord shall give what is good.

[ 3 : 37 ] And our life shall heal for their dreams. Righteousness shall go before him. And shall break away from the good. Please be seated for the reading of our lesson.

Thanks be to God.

And on page 723. Into thy hands, O Lord, I command my spirit.

For thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

The hymn that we will sing is in our hymn book, and it's number 30. 3-0 .

[ 4 : 44 ] I'm t , .

. The changing scenes of love In trouble and in joy The praises of my God shall sing My heart and tongue enjoy Of these changes I will trust In all that I will share And early dreams will come to take And now will be spread

Where can I am Lord with me? When he is on his way And he just says to give my love In whom I am as you pray Come bless of God in Canada Spirit pass through the Connoisseur of the John.

Experience will be sighed. How blessed are they, and only them who in this truth are fine.

In these days, and you will bear that nothing else to fear.

[ 7 : 45 ] In you, in service, glory, Lord, all shall be in his care.

And to our book at the bottom of page 723. Keep us as the apple of an eye.

High as in the shadow of thy wings. And together, preserve us, O Lord, waking, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace. And we say that nonchdomittis together. Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

[ 9 : 10 ] Amen. Amen. Preserve us, O Lord, waking, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.

He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Let us pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord, have mercy upon us.

[ 10 : 31 ] Lord, have mercy upon us. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers. We pray for you, Lord God of all.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Let us praise him in the night and night and night and forever. Blessed art thou, O Lord, in the firmament of heaven. We praise and glorify all our bread. The Almighty and most merciful Lord, guard us and give us his blessing. Amen.

[ 11 : 34 ] Please be seated. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

let us eat it. Amen. Amen.

Some of you may be surprised to find yourself in church on New Year's Eve, and I'll assure you to begin with that it's forgivable.

So, the great problem that we all have with New Year's Eve is the problem we have of trying to take a moment of time, and in this case, the moment that brings the year to an end, and the moment that brings a new year to being, the moment that ends the 80s and begins the 90s.

And we have, in a sense, enshrined it to be a kind of holy moment, and what we would like to do, I'm sure, is take that moment and stop it.

[ 12 : 55 ] You know, so that you would have, maybe you'd have, well, you can't measure it in time, but just supposing that there was an infinite amount of time between one moment and the next.

We can't do that, but somehow our souls and hearts long for it, that we would be able to do that to time. Just to say that this moment, if we could make it a moment which lasted forever.

And of course, our lives, there are moments like that, some moments that we would like to shrink into a split second, and they seem to go on for hours, and other moments that last but a minute or two, and we wish they would go on for hours.

But time, you see, it's a fiction anyway. It's something we invented. It's a machine that we have created, and I'm talking about humanity as a whole.

I'm not holding any of you particularly responsible. And it's an invention that we have created in order to kind of deal with the process of our lives.

[ 14 : 13 ] And the scriptures come along and say to us, be still and know that I am God. And whoever God is, he is not encumbered with time.

Time is an impossible concept to put alongside of God. In fact, it's fairly interesting to me that at this point, science and biblical faith seem to come together, because science recognizes that time is a fiction.

It's a measure we use, but it has no ultimate reality. And we know that time is a fiction, even on the basis of our personal experience.

You know, you can, when I go into impolite people, like people at banks and so on, they say, and what's the date of your birth, please? And I would like to say, what does it matter to you what the date of my birth is?

I am me. I am here right now. I am vitally alive in this moment. Does it matter? And it does. Those explanations are not well received.

[ 15 : 32 ] Because we want to be able to measure everything and everybody in this process of time. And you can say that I am a few years older than you are.

But you could equally say, I am a few seconds older than you are. It's not really significant. The fact is that we are alive and we are called by an eternal God to share eternity with him.

Absolute timelessness. And to enter into that relationship so that one life becomes, your life is not something that is measured by time.

It's a kind of eternal reality which you are conscious of. But we are not particularly conscious of our own age, though other people are.

We are conscious of being. And I think that's why we find time is so incompatible. I've listened to how counselors work when they're counseling people.

[ 16 : 44 ] And they may take somebody who's 50 years old and say, time was frozen for you when you were 30. Now let's go back to that time and look what happened then.

And sort of thaw it out and allow you to start growing again. Because that's the moment in your life when everything stopped. Or they may want to go back to your childhood.

And some want to go back even beyond that to your, to your, you know, before you were born.

Even, that to try and come to grips because they see your life as a kind of whole.

And that if you are, by our chronology, if you are 60 years old or 50 years old. And you haven't dealt with something that happened when you were 17 years old. And as far as the counselor is concerned, you're 17.

And you have to deal with that before you can fill in the meaning of the years since that time. And before you can find release from the imprisonment or damage that was done to you at that time.

[ 17 : 46 ] So counselors are beginning to treat our life as something that is whole. Now we use time in order to hide from what is past.

Because we don't want to deal with it. And in order to try and keep in the mists of obscurity what might lie ahead. Because we don't want to deal with that either.

And we think if we can control just this moment in time, then we will have succeeded with our lives.

And I think the fact is that we are up against an eternal God.

And our life is an eternal reality. And it's not subject to time. And though we are the victims of the machine that we have created, which is time, God has called us to recognize eternity.

And to be still and know that he is God. And that he is the God of eternity. And so it's probably not an inappropriate thing for us to despise time on New Year's Eve.

[ 19 : 00 ] And say what we really want to do is celebrate eternity. The fact of an eternal God. Who was from the beginning and will be and always will be.

And that we are called to find our life. Not in terms of something that is marked by two points in time.

But something that is marked by the reality of eternity. And you see that's what the heart of the gospel is about. That you move from being locked into a process of time.

To sharing with God. Eternity. And that's hard for us to do. To encourage you in doing it.

I read those verses from Hebrews chapter 10. Which tell you how you are to cope with time.

[ 19 : 58 ] You know we can blame the times in which we live. And excuse ourselves on the grounds of the times in which we live.

But in fact we don't belong to time. We belong to the eternal God. Who has made himself known to us in Jesus Christ. And so eternity.

The past and the future. Are all present to him. And we in the entirety of our whole lives. From our first days to our last on earth. Are present to him.

And these words from. From Hebrews. I want just to say. Read to you again. Because we are.

We are confronted with an eternal God. Who has called us to put our faith and trust in him. And the letter writes.

[ 20 : 59 ] Therefore don't throw away your confidence. Which has a great reward. Don't abandon yourself to the grinding machinery of time.

You have need of endurance. So that you may do. The will of God. And receive what God has promised. Yet a little while.

And the coming one shall come. And shall not tarry. The future is not that far away. The ultimate consummation of history is not that far away.

The writer goes on. My righteousness. My righteous one. Shall live by faith. That's what we are called to do. And if he shrinks back.

My soul has no pleasure in him. The faith of the epistle to the Hebrews is a journeying faith. One that keeps you moving on and on and on. And you don't stop.

[ 22 : 01 ] You don't shrink back. No matter what circumstances you may confront. My soul has no pleasure in him who shrinks back.

But we are. Not of those who shrink back. And are destroyed. But of those who have faith. And keep. Their souls.

And God has called us to put our faith. In him. Through Jesus Christ. To confirm and certify that by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit.

And to know. That. That we are called. To have eternal life. And that eternal life.

Is with the God. Who is. The eternal God. Of all the ages of man. And that eternal life. So let's be quiet for a moment. And then the bell is going to ring.

[ 23 : 09 ] And then we are going to sing a hymn. So let me just sit quietly for a moment. There we go. Oh, my God.

Remember. The Holocaust. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 25 : 31 ] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Eternity is to show the rest of the day.

On page 726 of your prayer book, let us pray. We pause for a moment and collect our thoughts and have this opportunity to make this fresh beginning with God as we confess our sins to him.

[ 27 : 33 ] Amen. And together, we confess to God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed through our own grievous fault.

Wherefore, we pray, God, to have mercy upon us. Almighty God, have mercy upon us. Forgive us all our sins and deliver us from all evil.

Confirm and strengthen us in all goodness and bring us to life everlasting through Jesus Christ our Lord. May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant unto you pardon and remission of all your sins, time for amendment of life, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Amen. Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us? Let thy people be rejoiced with thee. O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.

And grant us thy salvation. Vote safe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin. O Lord, have mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us.

[ 29 : 01 ] O Lord, hear our prayer. And let our prayer come to you. We pray together at the top of page 727.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord, and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night.

For the love of thy only Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. I use the colic for the first Sunday after Christmas, and at the same time I also use the colic for the first day of January, which in the church calendar is known as the naming of Jesus.

Almighty God, you have shed upon us the new light of your incarnate Word. May this light, enkindled in our hearts, shine forth in our lives.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. Eternal Father, we give thanks for your incarnate Son, whose name is our salvation.

[ 30 : 22 ] Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting.

Amen. Amen. We pray for God's guidance as the new year unfolds. Grant, O Lord, that as the years change, we may find rest in your unchangeableness.

May we meet this new year bravely, sure in the faith that while people come and go and life changes around us, you are ever the same.

guiding us with your wisdom and protecting us with your love through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

And at the bottom of page 727, we will lay us down in peace and take our rest.

The Lord be with you. And with thy spirit. Let us bless the Lord.

[ 31 : 37 ] Thanks be to God. The Almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us. Amen. us with us.

Amen. Be thou my vision. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. rust. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 34 : 16 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

And by way of a benediction, will you turn and bless one another and wish one another a very happy New Year, and make sure you don't leave anybody out.