

Who is Eternal and What Are We All About?

September 7, 2008 - Skip MacMillan

God-Centered

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5).

God has drawn you into an eternal relationship by His love and power demonstrated in Christ Jesus.

God has given you a new birth, a new heart and placed His spirit in you.

God has called you to follow Him, to keep the faith, to believe, to sacrifice, to pray, and to reading His Word.

God has called you to experience the greatest love, truth, and joy known to mankind.

God has called you to love Him and to love your neighbor.

God has called His church to make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

"He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised for them" (2 Corinthians 5:15).

Eternal strives to be God-centered.

PURPOSE: Eternal is about glorifying God and enjoying Him forever.

We glorify God by loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.

We glorify God by giving ourselves away to Him and others.

We glorify God through worship, following, giving, obeying and by our commitment to Him.

Eternal is about enjoying our relationship with God.

Sitting on the back deck with a cup of coffee and the Scriptures, having a moment with God.

Laughing with God about ourselves, our church, and humanity.

VISION

The two greatest commandments according to Jesus: loving God and loving people (Matthew 22:37-40).

Loving God and Loving People according to the Scriptures.

GPS is eternal, nothing else!

MISSION

Our mission is to live out the four pillars found in the book of Acts: Worship, Evangelism, Community, and Discipleship.

Worship

Lifestyle:

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast" (Psalm 139:7-10).

Worship happens when you begin to understand and experience who is GOD!
Worship happens when you begin to understand what He has done and is doing for the world and you.

Worship happens when you begin to understand who you are in Jesus Christ, a new creation, the temple of God, sons and daughters of God, eternally positioned to be with the presence of peace, rest, hope, joy and love, that is God, forever and ever and then you can't help but worship!

When worship happens you can't help but fall to your knees.

When worship happens you can't help confessing your sins.

Worship happens when you feel God lift you up out of the miry clay and set your feet on the Rock!

And we haven't even gotten to Sunday!

This is what Eternal is about and the kind of people we want to become.

Eternal on Sundays:

Gathering together, Hebrews 10:19-25.

Worship is not an option but a chance to be with God and His church.

Why do people come on Sunday? What is worship for?

To learn about and experience God.

"He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised for them" (2 Corinthians 5:15).

Scripture is read because the Word is your life.

Singing is an expression of our need, hope or joy.

Praying is a chance to share your heart with God, to pray together as one body.

Sermons are from the Scriptures, a call to deepen your own relationship with Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 4:1-5

My role and your role - I teach the Scriptures and you seek God to apply it.

Evangelism: Word and Deed

"Evangelism is sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with those who do not have a relationship with Him. At Eternal, we believe evangelism should happen not just at a Sunday worship service, but also through real, genuine, and sincere relationships with people. For this reason, we encourage our people to be involved in their communities and neighborhoods, investing in the lives of those around them and sharing the love of our Lord. Our prayer is for God to regenerate more and more lives in Fort Mill, and the surrounding areas."

The Gospel, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst" (1 Tim. 1:15).

Word and deed - Ephesians 2:1-10.

How we view those who are not Christians, Colossians 4:5-6.

More next week.

Community

"At Eternal, we believe building community involves sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in deed with believers and non-believers. We do this by building relationships with people and intentionally investing time, energy, and resources to help those around us. Our desire is to be a real source of help and health to our community."

Two Communities

The Community of Eternal is Eclectic:

Rich and poor, educated and uneducated, older and younger, northerners and God's people, new believers and those who have walked with God for years, Charismatics, Catholics, Lutherans, Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterians, Reformed and Armenians. . . .

1. Demographics: early Church, Acts 2:1-13 and 1 Timothy 5:1-2.
2. To be eclectic requires all of us to move beyond the cultural barriers that attempt to separate the church.
Ages, incomes, where you live, tattoos, intellectual or athletic.
Oct. 4--40+ Dinner to reassure those over 40 they are part of this church!
3. To be eclectic requires all of us to major on the majors and minor on the minors.

Majors are the foundational beliefs of the Church, Apostle's Creed, Jesus Christ fully God and fully man, the virgin birth, His perfect life, death on the cross, resurrection and ascension; the sin of humanity and salvation found in none other than Jesus Christ; Scripture as the Word of God to humanity; God is three in one: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, holy, just, merciful and loving.

This is what we believe and we do not waiver!

Minors are your view of the end times, private, public or home schooling, who you plan to vote for, clothes you wear, music you listen to, etc.

2 Timothy 2:23-26 and Titus 3:9.

4. What this eclectic group in Acts 2 had in common and what we have in common is **Jesus Christ**.

"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:26-29).

5. Ministries: Small Groups, Couple Groups, 40+ Dinner, Fall Festival Oct. 17, cook-outs, one-on-one.

Serving the Community: CARE (video)

Discipleship

What do you personally know of Jesus Christ?
Why do you follow Him?

"It (discipleship) is nothing else than bondage to Jesus Christ alone, completely breaking through every program, every ideal, every set of laws. No other significance is possible, since Jesus is the only significance. Beside Jesus nothing has any significance. He alone matters" - Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*.

Therefore you follow and you adhere to Christ.

Discipleship is growing and following in the likeness of Christ.

You must know Him personally and know why you follow Him.

Take seriously: children's ministry, youth, adult ministries: Small Groups, Large Groups and retreats.
Free Bibles and books.

Communion

Eternal is here because of God.

The entire reason we are here, do the things we do, say what we say is because of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If it were not for Him, there would be no God to worship, no God to follow, no God to obey.

If it were not for Him there would be no gospel.

If it were not for Him I would not be a new creation, given an eternal hope, and be called a son of God.

If it were not for Him we do not need to gather together or serve other people.

"If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, 'let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die' " (1 Cor. 15:31-32).

But He is here, He is God, He entered this world, died on the Cross, resurrected three days later and ascended into heaven.

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men" (1 Timothy 2:5).

Jesus Christ has made you into the Temple of God, filled you with His unconditional love, and called you friend.

So we take communion this day to remind us of why we are here, why Eternal is here; it is for no other reason than for God, "the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light," (1 Timothy 6:15-16). ". . . [Y]ou were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:9-10).

"He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised for them" (2 Corinthians 5:15).

1 Corinthians 11:23-34.