

El Olam: Eternal or Everlasting God

Main Question: What does it look like to daily put our trust in El Olam, the Eternal God?

Cultural Views of Eternal:

- George Barna quote: “Many committed born again Christians believe that people have multiple options for gaining entry to Heaven. They are saying, in essence, ‘Personally, I am trusting Jesus Christ as my means of gaining God’s permanent favor and a place in Heaven – but someone else could get to Heaven based upon living an exemplary life.’ Millions of Americans have redefined grace to mean that God is so eager to save people from Hell that He will change His nature and universal principles for their individual benefit. It is astounding how many people develop their faith according to their feelings or cultural assumptions rather than biblical teachings.”

- The Good Place
 - Eternity based on your good/bad choices
 - Soul Mate= eternal happiness
 - Feelings- feeling happy for eternity is what’s key

Definitions

1. Hebrew definition of El Olam
 - a. Remember “El” is strong ox, authority of a shepherd, strong authority

2. Eternal: without beginning or end, lasting forever, always existing, enduring, endless,
 - a. Antonyms: finite, limited, brief, transient, changing, perishable

3. Everlasting: lasting forever, eternal, continuing for an indefinitely long time
 - b. Antonyms: brief, temporary, fleeting

WHAT things do we give ourselves to that are finite/temporary/etc?

- As we talk through examples, take time to write down those that resonate with your life

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The natural next question is **WHY** do we give ourselves to these things? Why do we put our trust in them?

John Mark Comer quotes (from Annie F Downs podcast, *That Sounds Fun*):

“the root of the human problem is self-will and our grasping for control”... a secular psychologist study shows ‘the average western person has 15% of the control over their life than they think they do”

“We think we have control over_____, and there’s just enough truth in that to keep up the illusion- we have some control, but most of our life is actually outside our control, and the western world with it’s Amazon.com and it’s safe suburban life and its airbags in SUVs can lull us into believing this illusion about reality that we are masters of the universe, we are captain of our own destiny, we are in control of our own lives”

“That’s where Covid, though very few of us had the maturity to receive it (myself included) was this extraordinary invitation from God to face reality. Because for the first time Western people were experiencing what most of the world is used to. Planning is a function of predictability. All of a sudden now there is an uncertain future, which means we can’t plan, and we feel anxiety and bewilderment and confusion and not at peace because we don’t feel in control.”

“But the reality is we weren’t in control. That was an illusion.”

John 6: 60-69 read v60 and then back up to what happened prior to this time

- Focus verse: 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

Application:

Back to the podcast, Comer ended his comments by saying it’s about **“Growing in our capacity to trust in God as we release our dependence upon the illusion of control.”**

HOW do we do this?

- Identify the areas you give yourself to
- Holding things loosely/Perspective
- Conversational prayer
- Considering what lasts forever
- Community

Scripture to pray and remind of us of God as El Olam:

Genesis 17:7, Psalm 90:1-2, Hebrews 13:8, Psalm 72:17,19