

23-1203a Transcript

23-1203a - *There is None Like Our God, Part 1, Jim Lokenbauer*

Bible Readers: Mike Mathis and Tom Freed

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There is None Like Our God, Part 1

Transcript (0:03 - 46:14)

Scripture Readings

1st Reader: Mike Mathis

Genesis 21:33,

(0:03) The first scripture reading for this morning will be taken from Genesis the 21st chapter (0:13) verse 33. Genesis 21 verse 33.

And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba (0:29) and called there on the name of the Lord the everlasting God. (0:42)

2nd Reader: Tom Freed

Deuteronomy 33:27,

(0:47) I'll be reading Deuteronomy 33 27. Deuteronomy 33 27.

(0:55) The eternal God is a dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms. (1:02) And he drove out the enemy from before you and said destroy. (1:07)

Transcript

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(1:12) Good morning everybody. (1:15) And we're continuing our search of the great I am through scriptures, getting to know our God.

(1:25) And let me ask you, when you're in your private time with our Father in heaven, (1:32) whether you're reading, praying, meditating, or studying his word, (1:38) what is it that you're most interested in? And when you figure out what it is you want to (1:47) ask God or study, do you pursue it until you're satisfied? (1:55) For me, I think the greatest portion of my personal study time is spent (2:01) trying to find out as much as I can about our God. You gotta admit, God and the idea of God (2:10) is a mystery. We can't know about him unless we crack this open.

Sure, we can observe through (2:20) nature. You know, God does reveal himself through nature when you look at the perfect (2:27) order of things and the intelligent design behind it, the web of life, everything being dependent (2:36) on everything else. It's an amazing system.

So nature screams out, I've been created. (2:50) So God's nature is truly a mystery, but God does reveal himself and you gotta seek him out. Jesus (2:57) said in Matthew 7, 7, ask and it will be given you.

Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be (3:05) open for you. So from this one verse, we get instructions how to go to God for what we need.

(3:13) We can also apply these steps to get a blueprint for studying and finding out about the God of (3:20) the Bible. Ask, seek, and knock. So first we ask, we go to him in prayer, and whatever it is that's (3:30) on our hearts, we let him know, even though he already knows what we need and what we're gonna (3:36) ask, he wants us to ask.

So he wants us to develop a personal relationship with him. (3:45) Jesus said, ask and it will be given you. So believe it.

When you go to him, (3:52) believe he's going to reward you. So Jesus wants us to develop a personal relationship with our (3:59) holy father. He talked often with his father.

Throughout the gospel, we see Jesus would go off (4:07) and spend quality time praying to God. He wants us to talk to the father. This helps our faith to (4:16) grow.

So when we go to our invisible father in heaven, whom we can't see, but believing he is (4:28) there and that he hears us, we got to believe that he's going to answer us. And then when you (4:35) see, feel, and understand the evidence of answered prayer, that's when your faith starts growing. (4:44) So when you pray, you've got to make mental note of what you pray for, and then see if God answers (4:51) it one way or the other.

We can't always get what we want. There's a song in there somewhere, (5:00) but we'll go away from that. But you have to take note so that when you see he answers it, (5:07) you praise him.

So the Hebrew writer says in Hebrews 11, 1 and 6, now faith is being sure (5:17) of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. How do you have such solid faith in (5:28) something that you hope for that we haven't yet gotten it? But he wants us to treat it as if it's (5:34) real, if it's now. That's what strong faith is.

And without faith, you can't please God, (5:44) because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who (5:52) earnestly seek him. So it's the seeking we got to do. And that's what Jesus says in Matthew 7, 7. (6:00) Ask, seek, not.

So when we apply ourselves, the Bible's floppy. It just goes all over the place. (6:13) It's hard to keep it put.

So when we apply ourselves to prayer and the studying and the (6:22) practicing of God's Word, he rewards us with what? More grace, more faith, more knowledge, (6:31) and godly character. And I've taught on this process in the past, and it's the process that (6:38) you see in 2 Peter chapter 1. When we pursue knowledge, he'll bless you with it, (6:45) and he'll give you more grace, because

guess what? God's going to test you. He doesn't tempt you, (6:52) even though it's the same Greek word.

He'll test you to see if you get it, to see if you really (7:00) believe it. And so that's why he gives you more grace, because there's going to be times (7:05) where you blow it, and you either don't get it or you willfully reject it at that moment, (7:13) whatever it is that he's testing you on. So that's why he increases grace as our knowledge (7:21) increases.

What a God. He's making allowance for us, knowing that we occasionally make mistakes. (7:32) What a great God.

So we must believe that when we ask God, he'll give it to us. (7:43) That, of course, is if it's God's will for you. I know a person who says they're a Christian, (7:52) and I don't want to doubt it.

You know, they may have a weak faith, this particular person I'm (7:58) talking about. They once told me that they prayed to God so that they would win the lottery jackpot, (8:06) I think when it was up to a bazillion dollars. You know, they ran out and bought lottery tickets, (8:14) and with pretense, they told me, or rather they said to God, (8:20) Lord, if I win this jackpot, I will give to the poor some of the proceeds.

(8:28) I burst out laughing when they told me that, and I know it probably embarrassed them, (8:33) but I couldn't believe somebody could be so cheeky with God. You know, it's like, (8:38) let's make a deal. Hey, if you give me this, I'll do that.

And it's like, God's not a magic (8:45) genie in a bottle who will grant you the most absurd wishes. Excuse me while I rearrange here. (8:55) My Bible's just trying to take over here.

Anyhow. So anyhow, James tells us in his letter, he said, (9:06) you ask and don't receive because you ask with long motives so that you may spend it on your (9:14) pleasures. God knows our hearts.

This is what immediately came to my mind when I heard that (9:22) confession, so to speak. We got to be sincere when we approach God in prayer and ask with proper (9:30) motives, and according to James, if we ask God for things like wisdom and knowledge and we apply (9:39) ourselves to that end, God will reward us. Secondly, we must be seekers.

Seeking implies action, (9:50) and effort must be given on our part. When studying the Word of God, we should go to God (9:56) in prayer first and ask for God to help us to find the answers to our questions, to help us (10:03) to gain knowledge, and then to apply what we learn in our life to become more like Him. That's called (10:11) being a doer of the Word, James says.

So through the application of His Word, by being a doer of (10:19) the Word, Holy Spirit will work with that implanted Word within us and start transforming (10:27) us into the image of His Son. When we become Christians, we don't prove instantly we're like (10:34) Jesus. It's like a muscle that's got to be exercised right now.

You know, as a new Christian, (10:40) it's atrophied. You've got to build it up. You've got to strengthen it.

It takes time. It takes (10:46) effort. Thirdly, we've got to knock.

It's another way of saying, ask again. It implies persistence, (10:57) keeping at it, kind of like being

the widow who sought for justice before the crooked judge. (11:06) And Jesus, when He gave that parable about the persistent widow, (11:12) in the Jewish tongue, that widow was called a nudnik.

That's Yiddish, which has a Ukrainian (11:18) background in it, believe it or not. I don't know if Wally knows Yiddish, but nudnik means a pet (11:26) who keeps asking the same thing over and over. So we've got to be little nudniks to God.

We've got (11:34) to keep asking God, being persistent, like the old widow seeking justice before the judge, and the (11:41) judge said in his mind, man, I'd better give her what she wants or she's going to wear me out. (11:49) And that was the point of Jesus' parable. Keep at it.

Keep asking. So when we study God's Word, (11:57) we should pray like David when concerning God's Word. In Psalm 119, verse 18, he says, (12:05) Open my eyes, that I may see wonderful things in your law.

(12:13) David understood that you can read God's Word, you can study the law, but if you don't have God (12:21) turning on the light bulb in your head, sometimes you're not going to get it. You need the assistance (12:28) of God for some understanding. So how often do we read and study and sometimes we just don't (12:38) get it? Over the course of a lifetime of being a Christian, I'm still learning stuff.

Scott and I (12:46) joke about it sometimes, how we can be in the Lord's church for so long and then be so clueless (12:53) on important subjects. But once we realize we were lacking, we apply ourselves to understanding. (13:03) For example, the whole subject of grace.

How often is grace taught in the Lord's church in depth? (13:14) Scott did a wonderful job. We both got together and realized, man, we got to have a class on (13:22) Romans, because Romans is a gold mine for the deeper teachings in God, the meat. It's not (13:32) spiritual milk, it's meat.

And Scott did a wonderful job and blessed us with a deeper knowledge, (13:42) and that took persistence. Scott was a nudnik. So in Psalm 25, 4 and 5, David says, (13:56) show me your ways, Yahweh.

Teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, (14:02) for you are the God of my salvation. I wait for you all day long.

So David was a nudnik. David (14:14) knew that God was the one responsible for getting him to understand it. We can read this all day.

(14:21) When I first became a Christian, I went out and bought a Bible and I read it through, (14:26) thinking I was doing good. And that, I'm not putting that down, that was good. Everybody (14:30) should at least read the Bible through once.

But it really did me no spiritual value other than (14:37) becoming a little more familiar with the Word. What did I get from it? You know, (14:44) I didn't get any deep spiritual understanding. God's Word isn't that way, it's so immense, so (14:53) deep.

Little bites at a time. You meditate on it, you apply it, and then move on to something else. (15:04) You can't get it all in one sitting.

That would be a glutton. (15:10) David recognized he needed to be immersed in God's Word and

that it was necessary (15:15) to know it in order to stay on the narrow path to heaven. He said in Psalm 119, 105, (15:24) your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

So God's Word illuminates your path on (15:34) the way to heaven, and it illuminates your understanding of his Word to give you (15:46) knowledge of God and understanding. It's a light. (15:54) We have to learn to petition God in prayer as we study his Word.

We've got to be involved and (16:00) rely upon the learning process. The Spirit will guide us in our understanding of the Holy Text. (16:08) Sometimes we can read God's Word and not get its meaning.

We can completely miss at times. We've (16:15) to be like David and wait upon God revealing its meaning to us. God says his ways aren't our ways (16:26) and his thoughts aren't our thoughts.

Some teachings have to unfold over time for us (16:33) to understand them. God may even withhold certain knowledge for us from us until we have more (16:41) experience in exercising our faith or just more experience with life in general before something's (16:50) revealed to us. And that's why we start out on spiritual milk.

As we grow, we work our way up to (16:59) solid food, which are God's teachings for the mature. And God is the God of water. So there (17:07) is a method to his ways.

And he uses wisdom in making sure we're being fed the right things (17:18) so that we mature to a mutual matureness in Christ. He knows what's best for each and every one of us. (17:29) It can be hard for the believer at times to understand God's ways.

The unbeliever is at (17:37) such a disadvantage when reading God's Word because they can't discern its meaning and it (17:45) seems like foolishness to them. Paul tells us that in the first Corinthian letter. (17:52) So they get very little or no spiritual value at all out of it.

And some people are so anti-Christ (18:00) that the Lord uses some very graphic metaphor and tells us not to cast our pearls (18:10) before swine. In Matthew 7-6 he says, don't give that which is holy to the dogs. (18:18) Neither throw your pearls before the pigs lest they trample them under their feet and turn (18:25) and tear you to pieces.

And we see that happening more often in this world today. (18:31) You bring up God before some people, before some groups, they will shout you down. (18:40) And like wild boars, they could trample you with their hatred towards God.

From God's Word we see (18:50) that our Christian journey is a growth process within the family of God model. God being our (18:58) Father, He's our example of behavior, showing us love and nurturing us to be healthy, functioning (19:05) members within the body of Christ. He is the rule maker and the disciplinarian.

He will discipline (19:12) us when we get out of line. He provides us with everything we need for life and godliness, (19:21) Peter tells us. And Jesus is our eldest brother who out of love obediently followed all of God's (19:29) rules and showed us that it was possible to fulfill the law with all of its rules and requirements.

(19:40) And being the only human ever to successfully do that, that made him the only righteous human (19:50) in the eyes of the law. He justified the Father that His law could be followed by us

humans. (19:58) So Jesus being perfect in following the law actually condemns us all because He did it.

(20:06) By Him being able to do it, we all stand condemned. Therefore, we need a Savior. (20:18) Jesus was faithful to God and also followed God's plan of salvation to a T. He lived a sinless life.

(20:28) He offered His life on the cross as the Father's perfect sacrificial lamb. (20:35) When we believe that Jesus is the Son of the Holy Living God and that God raised Him from the dead (20:43) by the power of the resurrection, being cleansed of our sins by the blood of Christ, we come out (20:50) of the water of baptism a new creature. We're born again, being adopted into the family of God.

(20:58) And then we're free to follow the teachings of Christ. We're not bound by law anymore. Once we (21:08) are a Christian, we've been set free.

And so out of gratitude and love, we still obey His commands. (21:19) We still listen to Jesus's words, love your neighbor as yourself. We're more than happy to (21:27) do those things out of the gratitude that Jesus went to the cross instead of Jim Wachenbauer being (21:36) nailed up there for all the wrong that he'd done in his life, being tortured with scourgings and (21:44) beatings and being spit upon.

Jesus suffered all that in our place so we didn't have to go through (21:54) it. That's compassion. And He did it for His enemies.

The very guys at the bottom of the (22:03) cross who were mocking Him, gambling for His clothing. But let me tell you, when it got dark (22:13) for those three hours, when earthquakes started happening, those men trembled and looked up at (22:21) Christ and said, surely He is the Son of God. Fear came over them.

But Jesus spares us from all (22:34) that. We don't have to experience any of that. Thank you Lord for that sacrifice you made on (22:41) our behalf.

So as an adopted child, isn't one of the first things that we want to do is find out (22:50) about our new adoptive family. Find out about God the Father. Find out about our wonderful brother (22:58) Jesus.

Find out about this mysterious character known as Holy Spirit. He truly is a mystery. (23:08) Even to those who open these pages and study it, we can't know everything.

It's one of the secret (23:15) things of God. But He does reveal Himself through these very words. We can know enough to satisfy (23:24) our curiosity.

And it's taken me years of study just to get where I am in the understanding of (23:33) God. And I feel like I've only scratched the surface. I do understand we can't know everything (23:40) about the Godhead.

It's one of those secret things that Moses mentioned in Deuteronomy 29:29. (23:48) The secret things belong to the Lord our God. But the things revealed belong to us and to our (23:56) children forever, that we may follow all the words of the law. So secret things, they're for God.

(24:05) They tantalize us at times. When is Christ coming back? We don't know. It's a secret thing.

(24:11) We don't have to know it. Just be ready for when it does happen. That's what Scripture tells us.

(24:24) So the series of lessons that I've been bringing you about the great I Am, (24:30) those, believe it or not, fall under spiritual milk. It's one of the elementary teachings of (24:38) Christ mentioned in Hebrews chapter 6. Faith in God. Part of our faith in God is to know God.

(24:46) And so I'm going to shove as much as I can information into you about what I know about God. (24:55) And I'm happy to do it. Because you gotta know God in order to be (25:04) pleasing to him.

You gotta know what makes him happy. You gotta know what makes him angry. (25:09) And then you gotta have the faith to understand that in his hands he holds life and death.

(25:19) He says don't fear man who can only kill the body, our flesh. Fear the one who can kill (25:28) both body and soul. That's God.

So there's some amazing qualities of our God that makes him (25:37) unique unlike any other living being that ever lived. Early on in our study of the great I Am, (25:48) we explored his personality and the essence of his various names which he revealed to Moses, (25:56) especially the holy name Yahweh that he uses, that when you see in your Bible, (26:02) especially in the Old Testament, LORD in all capitals, that should actually say Yahweh, (26:09) the most holy of names. But the translators, thinking we're dummies, oh that's actually LORD (26:19) in case we can't follow more than one name.

Anyhow, it's just a personal phone that's always (26:25) stuck in my throat. I'm sure if you've heard me up here blathering before I've complained (26:30) in the past about translators. But anyhow, early on in our study of the I Am we explored all those (26:39) things.

We examined some of his names and some of the many forms or faces that he appeared to man (26:47) as. And now, as Tom and Mike read for us this morning, we're going to explore some aspects (26:57) of his very nature that makes our finite mortal mind spin when you think about it (27:03) with amazement and wonder. Our God is eternal.

And before anything existed, He was. He has (27:14) no beginning and no end. For us humans, bound by time, that is a concept that is really hard (27:25) to fathom.

It can make you crazy trying to say no beginning and no end. (27:33) How does that happen? How does it work? God always was. And before He created, (27:42) believe that one, He created earth and the universe, He also created heaven.

And He's got (27:49) other children besides us believers. They're called angels and all those other beings in (27:54) heaven. He created that realm.

Well, what was the realm before He did any creation? (28:01) What was it? We're told in the Old Testament scripture that God can be in total blackness (28:10) and see His light. Nothing is hidden, as we're going to see when we get to omniscience. (28:19) God is just this amazing being.

And we just got to believe it. So, as mentioned in past lessons, (28:35) within the name Yahweh is the statement of perpetual self-existence. He will be (28:46) is what Yahweh means.

Ayah is I am that I am. And so that's when Jesus appeared to Moses (28:58) in the burning bush as the angel of the Lord. And Moses asked him, well, who should I tell you (29:07) the children of Israel sent me? I am.

Tell them I am has sent you. (29:17) And that is one of the most amazing names, and we're going to see the power of that name (29:23) in future lessons. So, in Genesis 21-33, this is the first time that the name of God is used (29:38) in an eternal sense.

In 21-23, I'll read it again. And Abraham planted a tamarisk tree (29:45) at Beersheba. He had just made a covenant with one of the residents in the land in which he was (29:54) dwelling that they would be at peace.

And there he called on the name of the Lord, the everlasting (30:01) God. And that's the first time we see that in Scripture, is the sense of him being an eternal (30:10) God, just going on infinitely. So, and this name, everlasting God, is Yahweh Olam El.

(30:25) Olam, meaning in Hebrew, concealed, that is, vanishing point, generally time out of mind, (30:35) past or future, eternity, combined with El, which we know is strength or almighty. (30:45) So, that's what the word means in Hebrew. Now, Noah Webster describes eternal this way.

I love (30:55) deferring to Noah Webster. He was the great American lexicographer. When we were just (31:04) becoming a fledgling country, he decided we, as a new American nation, need our own dictionary.

(31:14) He wanted to break from England, who relied upon the Cambridge Dictionary for words. So, (31:22) being the great wordsmith that he is, he produced the American Dictionary, which is unique. (31:30) And it's unique in the sense that almost every definition is centered around God.

(31:39) And I love him for that. I mean, you look at a lot of definitions in the Bible, (31:44) he'll make Bible references. Like when he describes the word and then uses the word in (31:52) a sentence, he'll make sure to somehow tie it in scripturally, which is really cool.

(31:58) That's the American way. We're founded upon the principles of God. So, why shouldn't our (32:04) dictionary be as well? Right? Makes sense to me.

So, Noah Webster says eternal is without (32:14) beginning or end of existence. And then he uses this as his usage of the word. He quotes from (32:23) Deuteronomy 33, 27 that Tom read for us.

The eternal God is thy refuge without beginning (32:32) of existence, without end of existence or duration, everlasting, endless, immortal. (32:40) So, a synonym for eternal God is ancient of days. And that Hebrew word is atikyam, atik (32:50) meaning venerable, meaning old, old of time, worthy of honor and worship, (32:59) ancient.

And yam, of course, is day in Hebrew. So, ancient of days. And in Daniel 7, 9 through 10, (33:12) Daniel uses this name to describe God and a vision that he had.

And he uses it this way. (33:20) I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the ancient of days took his seat. His vesture was (33:27) white like snow, and his hair of his head was like pure wool.

His throne was ablaze with flames. (33:36) Its wheels were a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing and out coming from before him.

(33:45) There were thousands upon thousands attending him, and myriads upon myriads were standing (33:53) before him. Wow! What a vision! No wonder Daniel fell as a dead man upon seeing such things. (34:05) And God had to come over and, stand up, Daniel.

Be strengthened. Don't be afraid. (34:11) So, this awesome description of an event in heaven talks about the ancient one, (34:20) giving the sense of God's eternalness, old, to be honored.

There was a time when if an older (34:29) man would enter a room, young men would stand up out of respect for that old person. Why? Because (34:37) they were old. They were wise.

They deserved to be listened to and respected. We've kind of lost (34:46) that these days. So, when talking about the ancient of days, there are several throne scenes mentioned (35:03) in the Bible.

And this is one of them. There's one in Revelation, too, that is jaw-dropping at (35:12) the description of what the eternal being looks like. God reveals himself to us in these little (35:21) bits.

You put them together. Do you want to appear before this being? A river of fire flowing from (35:38) his throne. He's got laps of fire.

When you combine that with Revelation, with the emerald (35:46) rainbow around him, and just in unapproachable light. And here we are on the day of judgment, (35:56) carrying our big Santa bag full of sin, unrepented sin, and standing before him. (36:08) What do we think is going to happen? But this being, this eternal being, is the God of love.

(36:21) And right now, he offers pardon for everybody. The opportunity to get rid of that load of (36:34) sin we're lugging around. He died for us on the cross so that we can be sin-free.

(36:46) And his mercy and his grace continuously rains Christ's blood on us so that as we believe and (36:56) we walk along, if we blow it, confess that sin and he is quick to forgive. (37:04) Unbelievers don't have that advantage. So when they appear before God, (37:11) how do they explain that great big burden, load they're carrying of sin? (37:20) He's going to say, depart from me, I never knew you.

Cast them out or there will be weeping and (37:27) gnashing of teeth. God doesn't want that for us. In this verse in the New Testament, Paul charges (37:38) Timothy and the readers of the letter with some of the qualities of God's nature, and he praises (37:46) God.

In 1 Timothy 1.17 he says, now to the king eternal, same language, expressing the everlastingness (38:00) of God. Now to the king eternal, immortal, invisible, to God alone who is wise be honor (38:11) and glory forever and ever. Amen.

This is the ancient of days, and Paul is giving him the proper (38:23) respect that he demands. In so many words, Paul stood up (38:33) and proclaimed this praise to God, knowing that God is the ancient of days. (38:41) In Hebrews 9.14, the Hebrew writer says, how much more will the blood of Christ, (38:47) who through the eternal spirit offered himself without defect to God, (38:53) cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

So this loving God (39:03) is offering pardon of sins through his son Christ, who through the eternal spirit (39:12) offered himself as a sacrifice. So there's salvation being held out to mankind. (39:23) And it also expresses that other members of the Godhead have this quality of eternalness.

(39:33) So remember, the Godhead, the Father, the Son, Holy Spirit are one. Remember when (39:42) Moses was giving the law to Israel? Our God, our God is one. So if one is eternal, (39:53) they're all eternal.

They're all, all powerful, as we're going to see when we go over on (40:01) impotence, omnipotence. So in 1 John 5.11, it says, the testimony is this, that God gave to us (40:10) eternal life, and this life is in his Son. So the life mentioned here is actually our destination, (40:20) heaven.

Through our belief in Jesus, the Messiah, we will receive life in our (40:26) immortal spiritual bodies that will last for eternity in heaven. And then when we're called (40:34) from our rest in paradise, or Abraham's bosom, and experience the resurrection of life, (40:42) if we reject the gospel from our torment in Hades, we will experience the resurrection (40:50) of condemnation, the second death, and that being thrown into the lake of fire, (40:57) reserved for Satan and his angels, where you'll be in torment for all eternity. (41:05) Jesus says in John 5.28 and 29, do not marvel at this, for the hour is coming in which all (41:12) who are in the grave shall hear his voice and shall come forth, those who have done good (41:18) to the resurrection of life, those who have practiced evil to the resurrection of condemnation, (41:27) so God not only has eternity as part of his makeup, but he has the power to create (41:35) life that is energized with an eternal nature.

When we were formed in our mother's wombs, (41:43) God created our soul first, this is from Psalm 139, God created the eternal part of us first, (41:52) our soul, and then knit our flesh around that as the baby develops in the womb. (42:02) And our spirit, the soul, is our thinking, feeling, emotional being that will go on (42:12) once this flesh dies. That's the immortal part of us.

So God is able to give us immortality, (42:22) and that, believe it or not, happens as soon as we're conceived. There's an eternal little being (42:28) in that womb. Now this flesh will die, it will cease to be, but the essence of us, (42:38) the thinking, loving, rationalizing, emotional being, that goes on, and it goes to one of two (42:47) places inside of Hades.

There's the good side with those who have faith in God, (42:55) are at rest in paradise, also known as Abraham's bosom, and there's the other side (43:03) of Hades, which is flames, where you're immediately put in torment. One place you're (43:10) at rest, the other place you are fully awake and aware of the pain you're in, and we see this (43:18) in Luke 16, in Jesus relaying the story of Lazarus and the rich man, where they both die. (43:26) One a believer, one not.

One is transported by angels into paradise, (43:33) the other wakes up and is immediately in torment, aware of it. (43:50) So God has the ability to give eternity and to assign eternal places at the end of our lives. (44:05) God creates angels as eternal beings as well.

They've already got eternity. They were created (44:14) to be immortals, and they live in the invisible realm, heaven, and they do God's bidding. They (44:21) come here specifically to help us, so they can pass between different realms, from heaven to (44:29) earth.

We know that when Jesus rose from the dead, he would just appear in the middle of his (44:37) disciples behind locked doors. Perhaps heaven is closer than we think. I doubt it's like a (44:50) rocket ship ride far away to go to heaven.

I think it's just a passing between realms we can't see. (45:01) Call it another dimension, maybe, maybe not. Gotta call it something.

Call it heaven. (45:08) Heaven's near to us. So that's the idea of eternity, and so I pose this question to you (45:21) right now.

Where do you plan on spending your eternity? Do you believe? If you do, (45:36) get rid of your burden of sin. Christ will meet you in those baptismal waters, and (45:45) there you're united with him in his death. When you rise out of those waters, you're a new person.

(45:58) You're free to do good. You're not that old person anymore. You're a born-again Christian.

(46:10) So if you'd like that, come forward as we stand in thanks.