

HEALING THE PAST GOD'S WAY
CHAPTER 5 TEACHING NOTES
GOD IS ETERNAL

MEMORY VERSE:

“I AM the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God,
“Who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”
Revelations 1:8

This lesson is all about perspective. Looking at God’s love and goodness, it is possible to imagine (though wrongly) God to be a greater version of ourselves. But in God’s eternal nature, we can not sidle up to God and imagine that we stand in His shadow in any way. The chasm between Creator and creation reveals itself to be an unbreachable gap in the study of God’s eternal nature.

Eternal is a concept beyond our ability to comprehend. Don’t apologize for that. In fact, emphasis that we can not wrap our minds around the vanishing point from the horizon of the past to the vanishing point to the horizon of the future, from everlasting to everlasting. We are limited by time and space. Time and space are an aspect of God’s creation (Genesis 1), therefore, God is not restricted by them in any way.

As you walk through the building blocks of *eternal* – the continually present existence, the beginning and the end, the uncaused cause, etc. – know that you are have a natural crescendo upon which to work. The lesson ends with God’s perspective of our lives – it is an eternal perspective. Even as God is concerned about our lives in the here and now, He is focused intently on who we are and who we are growing to be in eternity.

GOD IS ETERNAL

I AM THAT I AM: GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE A CONTINUALLY PRESENT EXISTENCE

And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, “I AM has sent me to you.” Exodus 3:14

Jesus said to them, “Truly truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM.” John 8:58

Emphasis: all of time is now for God – He has no past and no future, He is the great I AM

THE BEGINNING AND THE END, FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING

Now to the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1 Timothy 1:17

Behold, God is exalted, and we do not know Him; the number of His years is unsearchable. Job 36:26

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. Psalm 90:1 – 2

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. Isaiah 40:28

Emphasis: eternal is an aspect of God’s character that defines Him; it’s like saying the sun is hot and bright. It would cease to be the sun if it no longer produced either heat or light. God can not be God apart from being eternal as nothing can come before Him or can anything come after Him in order for Him to be God.

GOD IS THE UNCAUSE CAUSE, THE ORIGINATOR, THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS THAT FOLLOW

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1:1 – 3

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. Colossians 1:16

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. Hebrews 1:1 – 2

Emphasis: all that is (was) caused has to have at its Genesis, an Uncaused Cause that caused everything that followed. God is the Uncaused Cause – the Creator of all that follows.

GOD’S PURPOSES ESTABLISHED IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. Galatians 4:4 – 5

remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’
Isaiah 46:9 – 10

But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. Matthew 24:36

Emphasis: God acts in time according to His will to accomplish His purposes.

GOD'S VIEW IS ETERNAL

For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. Psalm 90:4

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. 2 Peter 3:8 – 9

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. Colossians 1:28

Emphasis: God's purpose in my life is not comfort or ease; God's purpose is transformation and sanctification – He wants me to look like Jesus

When I think on these things - the suffering of the ages, murders in the millions, deaths in the hundreds of thousands as a result of natural disasters, personal tragedies – it makes me tremble at the prospect of living a trivial, self-serving, comfortable, middle-class, ordinary, untroubled American life. I can't keep eternity out of my mind. Life is short and eternity is long. Very long. It is a long time to regret a wasted life. . .all of this leaves me trembling that I not throw away the one short life that I will look back on for all eternity. Just think of it. You have one life. One very short life. Then an eternity to remember. . . God will hold us accountable in the age to come not for what others have done. He will call us to account for what blood-bought hope freed us to do for others in the name of Christ. We will give joyful and tearful thanks in that day for the grace that covered our sins and the grace that caused our love. John Piper, *Life is a Vapor*

*I like to use the story of Corrie ten Boom from the book, *The Hiding Place*, to define God's eternal perspective and how it looks in our life, even in and through our suffering

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

How can you apply the truth that "God's view is eternal" to your life circumstances right now?
How does that truth change you?

What does it mean to you that God is the Uncaused Cause?