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2  **“The Best Is Yet To Be!”**

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• ***“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” - Romans 15:13***

4 

• **“The lack of an eternal perspective sets us up not only for discouragement but also for sin. We tell ourselves, ‘If I don’t experience intimate relationship now, I never will.’ Or ‘If I don’t have the means to go there, I never will.’ Then we feel desperate, tempted to take shortcuts to get what we want (what we think we want). We’re tempted toward fornication, dishonesty, or theft.**

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6 

“Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, The last of life, for which the first was made.”

- Robert Browning

7 

• ***But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.”*** II Peter 3:13

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9  **The effect which this biblical perspective of the future should have on different individuals**

- An individual who does not have the hope of eternal life [i.e. the biblical perspective of the future] will likely become discouraged and frustrated as they grow old and experience the deterioration of their physical body.
- A Christian who is declining with age, on the other hand, should realize that he hasn’t ‘passed his peak,’ he hasn’t even come close to it.
- **“The best is yet to be!”**

10 

“Plus Ultra”

“More Beyond”

11  **The Hubble Deep Field**

12  **God more than makes up for any losses we suffer here in this life!**

- **“Grab all the gusto you can! You only go around once!”**
- **“If you are a child of God, you do not just ‘go around once’ on earth. You don’t get just one earthly life. You get another - one far better and without end. ... those who go to Hell are the ones who go around only once on this earth.”**

13  **How Do You Define “Eternal Life?”**

- “... we have redefined eternal life to mean an off-earth existence stripped of the defining properties of what we know life to be.” - Randy Alcorn
- However, as human beings, material creatures living on the physical earth God created us to live on, our experience of ‘life’ itself is tied to earthly experiences.

14 ☞ How Do You Define “Eternal Life?”

- “Life is an earthly existence in which we work, rest, play, and relate to each other in ways that include the cultivation and enjoyment of our culture. ... Eternal life will be enjoying forever what life on earth is at its finest moments, what it was intended to be.”
- It is “... *God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.* - I Tim 6:17

15 ☞ Injustices, misfortunes and disappointments will be set right in the New Heavens and the New Earth

- The future New Heavens and New Earth will be a place of compensation for lost earthly privileges!
- In the future eternity, God “... doesn’t merely wipe away tears; he replaces those tears with corresponding joys. Hence, ‘our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us’ (Romans 8:18).”
- Randy Alcorn

16 ☞ “Will We laugh?”

- “If you’re not allowed to laugh in heaven, I don’t want to go there.”

17 ☞ “One of Satan’s great lies...”

- “... that God - and goodness - is joyless and humorless, while Satan - and evil - brings pleasure and satisfaction.”
- Randy Alcorn
- “We need a Biblical theology of humor that prepares us for an eternity of celebration and spontaneous laughter.”

18 ☞ Some arguments from common sense and reasoning

- The only laughter that won’t have a place in Heaven
- Prov. 15:13 - “*A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit.*”
- Zech. 8:19 - “*This is what the LORD Almighty says: “The fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.”*”
- “That [God] has a sense of humor is evident in His creation. Consider aardvarks and baboons. Take a good look at a giraffe. You have to smile, don’t you?” - Randy Alcorn

19 ☞ There are also arguments for the fact of laughter in eternity in Scripture, from our Lord Jesus Christ Himself

- Luke 6:21 - “*Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.*”
- Luke 6:23 - “*Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven.*”

20 ☞

- Alcorn’s point is: we can best “connect,” understand, and appreciate these truths when we realize that the specific sense in which we will experience joy

and laughter in the future eternity includes a physical life on a material earth similar to the one we live in now [i.e. the New Earth]!

21 

- *"Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.*

22 

23 

And where is that future Kingdom?

- *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."* - Matthew 5:3-5

- *"... in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness."* II Peter 3:13

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- **"Earth is the setting for God's ultimate comfort, for His reversal of life's injustices and tragedies"** [Randy A.] And this is so because we were created to inhabit a material universe and to experience and thrive on a physical earth! We can identify with this and we can make sense of a future hope which involves life in such a context! God knows this, He planned it this way. He made us for this particular mode of existence, now and eternally.