



Joseph Strauss, D.C.

On Life and Death

Eternal Life • Everlasting Life
Everlasting Existence • Perpetual Life

There are technical, but important, differences in our understanding of *eternal life*, *everlasting life*, *everlasting existence* and *perpetual life*.

Eternal life has no beginning and no end. Only the three Members of the God-Head truly possess eternal life. They existed in eternity past, having no beginning, and will exist into eternity future, having no end.

Believers in Jesus Christ are given **everlasting life** at the moment of their belief in Jesus Christ alone as their personal Savior from sin. John 3:16 clearly states *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* I am aware that the NIV Version of the Bible reads *"eternal"* life which I believe may be an incorrect rendering of the Greek word *"aionios."* Although we as believers will live forever with God, there was a point in time when we were created by God. It is true however, that at the point of salvation God imputes his eternal life to us.

Angels also possess **everlasting existence**. They were created by God in eternity past. Satan and some of his angelic followers rebelled and became fallen angels (demons). By their negative choice, they will suffer everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:41, 46 and II Thessalonians 1:9) with unbelievers forever in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10, 15).

Adam and Eve possessed what we might call **"perpetual life"** based upon their obedience to God. They were permitted to eat of the tree of life. They were forbidden to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and were warned by God that the day that they ate of the fruit, they would *"surely die"* (Genesis 2:17). Scripture doesn't tell us how long they lived in a state of what we call *"innocence."* Was it days, months, or years? The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was desirable to the eye and to the taste. Satan wasted no time in his deception of Eve and tempted her to disregard God's command and disbelieve His warning. Indeed, Satan is using the same deceptive tactics today, is he not?; throwing God's authority and Word under suspicion and tempting people to doubt God. At some point, Eve was deceived by Satan's lie and ate of the fruit, in disobedience to God's command. Adam then knowingly also ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and suffered the personal fatal consequences of disobedience, as well as causing the entire human race to perpetuate with a sinful human nature (Romans 5:12). We know that they did not die *physically* the day that they disobeyed God. That being said, they both experienced physical changes that would eventually lead to their physical deaths. They lived, albeit outside the Garden, for many more years. We read in Genesis 5:5 that "Adam lived 930 years, and then he died."

The result of their disobedience was that both Adam and Eve immediately died *spiritually*, what we call the Fall of Man (Genesis 2:16-17). Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden so that they would not eat again of the

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fruit of the tree of life and thus live perpetually in a sinful state (Genesis 3:24). They were now sinners. Each now had a sinful nature, and that sinful nature has been passed on to subsequent generations through the genetic material of the man, not the woman. But that's another article! We are born into this world physically alive and spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:5), thus the need to be born again (John 3:3-7). Generations later, a virgin named Mary conceived a child by the Holy Spirit, not by a man, thus Jesus was born without an inherited sin nature.

There is much more that could be written on these subjects but space is limited! I hope to share more thoughts with you in the future.

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