

Eternal Life.

– C. A. Frank.

We need other dialect than that we know to speak the fulness and glory of immortal life. For even he that was caught up into Paradise, St. Paul who was caught up to the third heaven – heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. And as Moses looked out from the mount upon the sweet land of Canaan, the land which he had thought so very much of and sought so eagerly, the very thought of which would bid him sing, “O Canaan, bright Canaan my soul still pants for thee,” so the Bible gives us many Pisgah heights from which we may look over the fair heritage of the saints, over the “inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.” Though we are unable to ascertain by our senses the grand consummation of all happy experiences in the world of pure delight, though our feeble reason is unable to grasp the blissful peace that passeth all understanding, yet the Word of life assures all those walking through the desert of this world, that there is in store for us a life of endless bliss. “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,” (John 3:16). “The righteous shall go into life eternal,” (Matthew 25:36). “For them that love God, He hath prepared things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,” (1 Corinthians 2:9). “God will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life,” (Romans 2:6-7). The first glimpse we receive of our future happy state is that in the city bright and fair we shall enjoy deliverance from all evil. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain” (Revelation 21:4). “Sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isaiah 35:10). On the radiant shore, where the people are blessed and sin is no more, the curse is no more known. The blackness of ruin and the desolation of death will no longer occasion depths of misery; sorrow shall not spread her raven wings about us there, nor affliction fold us in her heavy mantle. No hidden grief, no wild and cheerless vision of despair, no tearful eye, no broken hearts, no sickness and no weary wasting of the frame dwell in the land where everlasting spring abides and never withering flowers. How blessed a truth that there is one place, one world, where order, harmony and sympathy are perfect, where there are no differences and contentions, no jarrings and confusion.

Another glimpse of our future happiness God gives us by the assurance that when we awake out of the dust we shall see Him and His image shall be fully restored in us. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God,” (Matthew 5:8). “For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face,” (1 Corinthians 13:12). “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is,” (1 John 3:2). To behold the Fountain of all that is good, of all that is beautiful, of all that is true, what an enjoyment will this be. “If our earth which is the abode of the fallen, apostate man, a universal scene of moral depravity – if this presents a beautiful and variegated prospect of lofty mountains, romantic dells, and fertile plains; meandering rivers, transparent lakes, and spacious oceans; verdant landscapes adorned with fruits and flowers, and a rich variety of the finest colors, and a thousand other beauties and sublimities that are strewn over the face of nature – how grand and glorious a sight may we suppose will be presented to our view in a world where moral evil has never entered, where God is all in all, where perfect love to the Supreme and to one another fires the bosom of all the inhabitants, producing a rapturous exultation, and incessant adoration of the Source of happiness.” God’s presence is rich in everything that can gladden and bless body and soul. “Measureless affluence” is written upon everything at His throne, and upon every joy that thrills the beatified spirit there is traced in fadeless characters “forever and ever.” From His Throne flows the freshness of immortality and happiness in a perpetual stream. At His right hand there are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11).

Another divine consideration which will add to our bliss, is that in the rest under the tree of life, we shall enjoy the glory with which the sufferings of the present world are not worthy to be compared – and all this in the communion of “the glory and honor of the nations” (Revelation 21:26). The sun shone upon Eden, but the Paradise above is sunless, and yet inconceivably bright. In Eden, evening and morning were known, and day and night alternated where Adam and Eve dwelt; but there will be no darkness, no night in Heaven. Better than all, the tempter will never be there to lure with his enticing words. The pearly gates will be opened to receive none but the pure and the good, who “came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” (Revelation 7:14). If the disciples on the favored mount were so affected by the recognition of Moses and Elijah, that in the intensity of

their emotion they exclaimed, "It is good for us to be here," what infinite blessedness will we experience when we recognize our Savior and with Him the angelic hosts and the throngs of the best and noblest and purest men that have preceded us and will follow us to the better land. We shall meet again not only our own dear ones who departed this life as children of God, but the very flower and glory from all nations in all times. When the heavenly courts will resound with anthems of praise from the blood-bought ones forever, we shall hear the united devotions of myriads of pure and fervent hearts. An almost infinite number of the ransomed, all infinitely blest shall know the full truth of the words: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: They shall obtain joy and gladness," (Isaiah 35:10). And as the High Priest of old had a diadem on his forehead with the inscription, "Holiness of the Lord," so shall the servants of God and the Lamb, the royal priesthood on the golden streets of Jerusalem be adorned, for "His name shall be in their foreheads," (Revelation 22:4). Readers, this is the hope of our glory! Surely we ought to make a careful preparation to attain to life everlasting. Well might Jesus exclaim, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul?" To lose his soul is to lose life eternal, and to lose life eternal is to lose God and everything that is most valuable and dear throughout an endless eternity. "There remaineth a rest to the people of God. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest" (Hebrews 4:9, 11). In the days of hard work, in the hours of sad affliction, in seasons of trial and self denial let us not forget that great and wonderful goal, the immeasurable joy, sweetness and immortal glory in the presence of Him whom we may adore with the words of the Psalmist transported in ecstasy: "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I will be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15).

"Eternal Life." by C. A. Frank is here reprinted from The Lutheran Witness, July 7, 1882, Volume 1, Number 4, page 25. This electronic edition was edited and made available for distribution by:

1580press.com