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The  
Eternal  
Living Series

*Mayan Revelation Number 199*

*Some Ingredients of Eternal Living*

*Faith*

*Hope*

*Love*

*Truth*

*Beauty*

*Honor*

*Wisdom*

*Prayer*

Beloved Centurion:

The following are some of the important qualities which go to make up the ingredients of Eternal Living. Great men throughout history have used the words of the quotations below to describe these qualities:

FAITH - Faith is a certain image of eternity. All things are present to it - things past, and things to come; it converses with angels, and antedates the hymns of glory. Every man that hath this grace is certain there are glories for him, if he perseveres in duty.  
-- Taylor

HOPE - Hope is the best part of our riches. What difference if we have all the wealth of the Indies in our pocket, if we have not the hope of heaven in our souls.  
-- Bovee

LOVE - Love is the greatest thing God can give us, for Himself is Love; and it is the greatest thing we can give to God for it will also give ourselves and carry with it all that is ours. The Apostle calls it the bond of perfection. It is the Old, the New, and the Great Commandment, and all the Commandments, for it is the fulfilling of the law. It does the work of all the other graces, without any instrument but its own immediate virtue.  
-- Jeremy Taylor

TRUTH - Truth lies in character. Christ did not simply speak the truth; He was Truth; Truth through and through; for truth is a thing, not of words, but of life and being.  
-- Robertson

BEAUTY - Beauty is but the sensible image of the Infinite; like truth and justice, it lives within us; like virtue and moral law, it is a companion of the soul.  
-- Bancroft

HONOR - Let honor be to us as strong an obligation as necessity is to others.  
-- Pliny

WISDOM - There are but two classes of the wise; The men who serve God because they have found Him, and the men who seek Him because they have found Him not.  
-- Cecil

The above are the words of wise men describing the qualities which you will study in this lesson. It is the sincere wish of your Instructor that you will gain much in wisdom, as you ponder and meditate over the material which has been prepared for you. Let us take up the study together now of some ingredients of Eternal Living:



## Some Ingredients of Eternal Living

### FAITH

WE have already emphasized the fact that the theme of this series of lessons is not merely immortality, but rather the stuff of which immortality is made, the kind of living without which there could be no such thing as eternal life. Eternal life is the fruit, but we are dealing with that without which there could be no fruit, namely the root. Eternal life is the result, but we are dealing with the means to that result.

We now come to a partial analysis of eternal living, an effort to see something of what it is made of. That should enable us to begin building it element by element, but as you do so remember that this list does not pretend to be complete. It only attempts to list the major items, and surely as you proceed to build them into your life you will keep discovering and adding others.

You will discover, unless you already know, that these elements are cumulative. They expand as you work with them. They are like knowledge in that the more you get, the better you realize how much more there is to get. You can go on indefinitely, and whatever else you do you may be working on these for a long time. So let us begin with faith, which certainly is one of the fundamental ones. To try to live in terms of eternity without it would be like trying to raise crops in a desert without irrigation. One just couldn't even begin.

We will not spend much time trying to define faith. It is a difficult thing to do, and when we have built a definition we never feel that it is adequate. One has to learn what faith is by experience, by practicing it, working at it, and living with it. Let us just say that faith is confidence in God. That will do to start with, and after all our searching and experience we shall probably not be able to improve on it much. Details might be listed, but the sum of them would still be confidence in God.

What we want to consider here is how to get this confidence and keep it growing. We are attempting to compound eternal living, but we have to produce the ingredients ourselves. This is the first one, and since it cannot be obtained from anyone else, the problem is how to produce it, or at least to begin.

This too can be reduced to simple terms. Do not think any complex process on your part is required. Faith is a form of belief, so the way to begin is to believe. Believe in God, however little you understand His nature. You know at least, or you can surely assume, that God is infinitely wise, powerful, loving, and good. Believe that and go on from there. However much or however little more you learn will not make much difference, but how intensely you believe this much will make great difference, especially if you realize that the benefit of all these divine qualities is available to you.

Are you one of those people who think they cannot believe? Well, you probably could; but if you think you cannot believe these things, assume them till you find them to be true. If you cannot even assume them, then act as though you believed them. If you start anywhere and keep going, the rest will take care of itself. Begin now, and be on your way.

## HOPE

YOU now have the first element started, and are ready to begin mixing the second one with it. Keep in mind that you are starting to produce a life lived in terms of eternity, and you are assembling a list of ingredients that never perish or change.

Knowing that a life built of them will be as abiding as they are, the next element we will add is hope.

This is another thing not easily defined, but very real and commonly experienced. It is the optimism of the heart, that something that is always telling us not to lose courage, the clouds will pass, and the sun will shine again, that it is better farther on, and no matter how difficult things are they will turn out well.

Hope is always singing. Its face is always bright. It is fearless of any load. It never gives up. In fact, someone has called it the heart's one unbroken string.

Faith and hope have an affinity for each other. They are usually found together. If you have acquired either of them the approach to the other is then easier. Probably one could not have either of them in its highest form without some measure of the other. Faith is faith partly because it hopes, and hope is hope partly because it has faith.

The way to mix hope into the vital compound you are making is first to include it in your way of life, and the way to do that is to have it in your heart. As it is with having faith, the way is to begin and keep going.

In learning to have faith your struggle is against doubt. In learning to have hope your struggle is against the tendency to look on the dark side of things and give up. We tend to do that because we put the worst construction on things instead of the best. Some do so because they are not physically well, some because they lack strength of will, and some because they have fallen into the habit of surrender. These things MUST BE MASTERED before hope can thrive.

The contradiction of hope is despair, and despair is one of the blackest of the demons. Nowhere and in no case is there any excuse for admitting it into your life. No matter what happens, and no matter what the situation is, there is ground for hope. Most of the people who surrender to despair and stop trying do so just before the skies would have begun to brighten.

The forerunner of despair and one of the destroyers of hope is fear. Nothing is ever as bad as fear paints it. Most of the things we fear never happen, and most of those that do happen are not as bad as we thought they would be. Anyway, fearing anything makes it much more likely to occur.

If you have not learned the habit of hope, begin now. If you have, begin now to increase your supply. Watch, and when you catch your hope failing, get back into step with God. Loose the chains you have bound on it and let it bring you back again to the way of victory. You cannot get through any gate of triumph with a burden of despair upon you. Get rid of it.



LOVE

THE third ingredient of eternal living we will mention is love. These first three we have considered make up the combination of eternal values with which St. Paul concludes his great series of comments on love in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

In this last sentence he says that faith, hope, and love abide. That is because they are supremely eternal things. Whatever may be said of anything else, these three are everlasting, indestructible, and unchanging. Of that there is no room for doubt or question.

In any medical formula you will find some ingredients that are helpful in some way and measure, a few that are basic or active, and perhaps one or two that are specific or sure. They are the elements that make the prescription what it is and the compound capable of doing what it does. So in the compounding of eternal living there are many ingredients that help in one way or another, but these three are basic, even specific. It is they that activate the compound. It is being related to them that gives the others whatever value they possess.

St. Paul makes a choice, even among these three. One, he says, is greatest. That greatest one is love.

In the course of the chapter he lists several things that make love great. It is kind, it is longsuffering, it is forgiving, it rejoices in truth, and so on; but there is one particular quality that makes it infinite, universal, and eternal, one thing that makes it a condition of eternal life, one thing that can be said of nothing else whatsoever - it never fails.

When we have added love to our compound, then, we will have the basic part of our formula already mixed. How do we go about adding love and blending it with the mixture made thus far? For each person that process will be a little different according to our varied personalities and situations; yet however we go about it there are certain things we all must do. They are general enough to apply to you, whoever you are, and whoever you are now is the time to begin.

The first thing to do is to stop hating. For some that is not easy, but it must be done. Till it is done hate will keep on poisoning your soul and unfitting it for the higher reaches of living. To accomplish it will require whatever forgiving is necessary and the righting of any standing wrongs.

But that is only the passive part of the process, and therefore the one requiring the least effort. It is only clearing the ground and getting ready for the essential thing - living a life motivated by love.

You must open your heart wide enough to take in and adopt all that Coleridge meant in these lines from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*:

"He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things, both great and small;  
For the dear Lord who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all."

You must sincerely want every other person to do as well as you want to do and be as happy as you want to be. You must make it your business to add everything you can to the sum total of welfare and happiness in the world, helping, encouraging, rescuing, saving, improving, beautifying, cleansing, and lifting wherever you can.

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## TRUTH

WE now come to four additional ingredients that relate themselves to the three we have already considered. At this point let us list truth. It is a passive kind of value, but it is not negative. Indeed it is wholly positive. It is a measuring rod for thinking, a determinant for justice, a mould for action, and a qualification for permanence. Nothing that does not conform to it can last, so without it there can be none of the kind of living that builds up into eternal proportions.

The word truth is related in meaning to the old word troth, agreement on something by two people who feel that they can depend on each other. Truth, then, is dependability, a quality which means that whatever is characterized by it will stand.

Even in the remotest ages and among the most undeveloped peoples we find great emphasis properly placed on dependability. Even in days of semi-savagery one of the first things expected of a man was that he be honest, that he be one who honored his vows and kept his promises. Broken assurances made more trouble than anything else did between the white man and the American Indian. The Old Testament rings and echoes with the word integrity, and the New Testament does the same with the word truth, the basis of integrity.

Where does truth come from? What creates it? What makes it like it is? Consider deeply, and see if you do not agree that the source of truth is the divine mind itself. God sees a thing, and it is so. God thinks a thing, and it becomes a part of the eternal verity.

You can see, then, how closely truth is related to eternity and how closely it relates us to the infinite. The person who searches for it is learning to think and know with God. The person who expresses it is speaking for God. The person who lives by it is shaping his life to the plan of God, which is the eternal plan.

Take your stand on the bedrock of truth, and nothing can overthrow you or defeat you. It is the one sure position, and from it there is no appeal.

But how is one to know the truth? That is not necessarily a difficult thing to do, but it is a very easy one with which to make a mistake. A thing is not necessarily true because we think it, or wish it were true, or know others who believe it. Confirm your beliefs. Talk with the wise. Read the writings of master minds. Search the scriptures. Think much and carefully. Ask for light and guidance. Study the experience of others, past and present. Avoid hasty conclusions. Put things to the test. Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.



Enough truth is revealed in the Bible, - experience, investigation, thought, and your own inner consciousness, to find the way; and enough will be added day by day to enable you to keep going. Judge and decide things by the surest principle you know and find more such principles to use as you go along.

Remember that truth and right are inseparable. Truth can never be wrong, and right can never be untrue. Truth is the pattern of right, and right is truth carried into action.

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## BEAUTY

CERTAINLY one of the ingredients in eternal living is beauty, for it was in a moment of inspiration that it was said that a thing of beauty is a joy forever. Beauty is harmony, and harmony is the health of body, mind, spirit, and condition.

Beauty is an important facet of religion, for religion is nourished by the practice of beholding the beauty of the Lord.

We tend to become like what we continually see. A truly good life becomes a beautiful life because the beauty it looks upon is contagious and becomes a part of itself.

Men like Moses, Isaiah, and Paul became what they were because they caught glimpses of the glory of God, and it was a transforming power upon them and within them.

In "East of Eden" John Steinbeck speaks of the way the "glories" we behold make the day, and life, and ourselves, different - happier, stronger, better, truer - and the importance of our lives is determined and measured by the glories we see.

But burning bushes by the path, and winging cherubim in the temple, and mid-day gleams on a road, are not the only kinds of glory. There are glories that are humbler, yet patterned in the same infinite mind, fashioned by the same creative power, and bearing the message of the same eternal spirit. These too are realized thoughts of God, and the thoughts of God are always beautiful. A rose is a thought of God that no wayward human hand could spoil before it became what its creator meant it to be. The same power will make an act, a thought, or a life beautiful too, like a snow crystal, or a sunset, or a starry sky.

It is tragic that there has risen a kind of a cult of ugliness, an apparent revolt against beauty; a tendency to discord in music, sordidness in literature and grotesqueness in art. Flee from it. It is an unholy thing which will, if you let it, mar the image of God in your life. The true and good are beautiful, and the beautiful is true and good.

One morning a teacher in a poverty-ridden section of a large city placed a single white lily in a bud vase on her desk and went about the work of the morning. An unkempt little girl who had taken on the look of the poor home and the squalid slum in which she lived came in. As she sat down the lily caught her



eye. She stared at it for quite a while, then rose and quietly left the room. A while later she was back again with a clean body in a fresh dress and with her face washed and her hair combed. Ugliness never uplifted anyone, but beauty will do it; and what it will do for the body it will do for the spirit.

The aged Emerson said at the bier of Longfellow, "I do not remember that man's name, but I know he had a beautiful soul." That is what people will remember when they have forgotten everything else, because the beauty of one soul somehow gets into others souls too.

Things of beauty may be marred or destroyed by a rough, irreverent touch; but the creative hand keeps replacing them because the spirit of beauty is deathless. It is a never-failing fountain which is accessible to you. God makes only the beautiful, so the beautiful and the immortal is his pattern for your life.

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## HONOR

WE now come to blend the ingredient of honor into our living to give it the eternal quality. We are now beginning to have one of the most wonderful of compounds, if not the most wonderful one. But what is it that we are now so busily mixing with these other qualities and values, and how is it made? Honor is not honesty but the source of it and at the same time one of its results. Honor springs from honesty and, in turn, begets more honor, to give rise to more honesty. So it goes on in a ceaseless chain reaction.

Honor must be an inborn quality, for we find the rudiments of it in children, animals, and savages. In other words, it must be a phase of the divine image in us, like the sense of immortality; and like the sense of immortality it can be crushed and weakened by the clash and drive of a materialistic world life as time passes.

The people who have decided that the day of honor is past, that one can no longer continue to be honorable and expect to get on well in the world, are making a tragic mistake. What they really should say is that they no longer have the courage to try to walk the path of honor because they are afraid the price would be too high.

Do not share their weakness and error. People of courage need to make honor again the accepted custom. No ticket for immortality is valid unless it bears the stamp of honor on its face.

Picture a world ruled by honor. It would be a safe world, a world in which business could be carried on with confidence, a world in which we would all have good neighbors, in which strangers could be trusted, and in which righteousness and peace would walk side by side. Best of all, it would be a world in tune with eternity.

How is such a world to be brought about? By constantly increasing the number of honorable people in it. That is where you come into the picture. Heaven bends very near to such a world and those who make it so.



Building honor into our living is like doing so with any of the other immortal qualities we have mentioned. The problem is not how to finish but how to get started. We know that if we get under way and keep going we will arrive. That focuses the matter on just one thing - getting going.

We might say the first thing to do is to love honor, but for some that might not be immediately possible. They think dishonor is more profitable because they have not yet learned that its rewards pale and disappear, while the day always comes when even they will desire the fruits of honor more.

The way to begin, then, is to live and act honorably, whether you like it or not, till it becomes the natural thing. After that you would not be willing to change it for any other way. It will have begun to be a part of you, an undying part. In other words, you will have come to love it, and it is never hard to travel a way one loves. Do not fail to try this formula because it looks too simple to be successful. The most workable plans are always the simplest. There need be no period of confusion. All you have to do is to begin.

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## WISDOM

WE come now to add the last in our list of most essential ingredients of eternal living, the qualities which lift life over from a temporal to an eternal basis, somewhat as air compartments change a ship from a sinkable vessel to one that can safely brave the deep. You will finally find more, but these are the primary ones. That final one, which we now come to consider, is wisdom, the quality which the Bible repeatedly says begins with the fear or reverent recognition of the Lord.

What is wisdom? A satisfactory definition is a little hard to frame. It is one of those things one just has to recognize by seeing it, or better yet by seeking it through practice. It is more than knowledge, more even than understanding, for these are passive qualities, and nothing can be called wisdom that does not ripen into action. We will, then, undertake a definition which we know is not complete, but which will perhaps give us enough of an idea to begin with. Let us say that wisdom is knowing what to do and doing it.

Wisdom, then, is not turning a light on the road but the ability to see the light that is already there, plus the courage to walk in it. The root of it is a process of perception and decision in the soul. The fruit of it is a life made rich and full by acting in accordance with it.

Most of us are really wiser than our outward lives indicate, wiser even than we ourselves realize, because we do not use all the powers of wisdom we possess. If we would always act as wisely as we are capable of doing and as God would help us to do, there would be no problem. That is why we say a part of wisdom is having the courage to act.

How is it that so many of us fail to make as much of our lives as we might? It is not because we lack understanding or the capacity for it, but because we do not develop and use it. Sometimes the reason is that we let the



appeals of sense shut out the true light.

Instead of doing our own thinking we let the crowd do it for us. We assume that the majority is right when that may not be the case. We think we must follow the crowd and we suppose we are living our own lives when we are really only imitating those of other people, and often the very ones whose lives are least worthy of imitation.

We assume that we are thinking when we are not. We are only responding to impulse, or assuming the reality of the visible, or being led about by desire. Even if we are using our brains we are not always touching the level of wisdom. Wisdom is using the accumulated power of a mind relaxed, free from prejudice, and open to the light of the divine; and then acting on the conclusions it reaches.

Do you do that? You can, and if you will, you will have at least one of the foundations of eternal living.

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PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, I thank thee that thou hast provided the elements of eternal life as definitely as thou hast provided the making of all the physical substances. Guide me in the blending and let the result be life in its fulness. Amen.

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May this lesson and all lessons to follow be blessed unto you.

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.