



AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

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Apple Computers was started in the '70s by two guys in a garage—Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs. Wozniak was the technical genius, Jobs was the visionary. Jobs had a vision of literally changing the world with what he considered “insanely great” computers. He had a passion for the Macintosh.

In fact, there's a story told about how Jobs got the president of Pepsi Corporation to leave his very prestigious, secure, and extremely well-paying job to come work for this upstart company. He asked him to come, gave him his pitch told him of the need, but the Pepsi executive wasn't willing to leave behind his future of power, prestige and money. Not willing to accept a “no,” Jobs looked at him and said, “Do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugar water, or do you want a chance to change the world?” With that question ringing in his ears, John Sculley left Pepsi and came to work for Apple.

I think we all have a desire to make a difference with our life and to invest in something that really matters. In fact, God encourages us to think about our life from the standpoint of eternity. To ponder and invest in the things that are eternal. Consider the words of Colossians:

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the

right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3)

In fact, it's when we lose sight of the eternal things that we often lose our way in life, becoming solely focused on the here and now. Time passes, and before long, you realize - like Sculley - that you're simply making “sugar water.”

FOCUSED ON THE ETERNAL

Well, what are some of those “things above?” What are the things that the scriptures say are eternal and worthy of investment? Here are a few:

God is eternal and our relationship with Him is the only relationship that will last forever. (John 10:27-31)

Souls of men and women are eternal – all people will spend eternity in either Heaven or Hell. (John 3:16-18,36; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Thess. 1:5-12)

God's Word will never pass away. (Matthew 5:17-18) The writings of every other teacher or philosopher will fade away, but the wisdom of God in Scripture will remain forever.

Jesus taught that He was coming back and that we should always be ready and looking for His coming (Matthew 24-25). He will give out rewards to us for faithful service and, in fact, His expectation is that we will be faithful in using what He has entrusted to us.

MIRRED IN THE TEMPORAL

In contrast to things that are eternal, the scriptures



have this to say about the temporal:

Our life is like a vapor; it appears for a little while and then vanishes away. (James 4:13-14)

The world is passing away and also its lusts - earthly glory, fame, and worldly recognition is all fading and will pass away. (1 John 2:15-18)

Do not lay up treasures on earth because rust and moth destroy them. Earthly wealth will not last, so lay up your treasures in Heaven. (Matthew 6:19-24)

“I’m going to start a savings account next year.” I’ve actually said this to myself. Here’s what’s implied in that statement: I have a value in preparing for the future, but I’m too embroiled in today’s concerns to do anything about it.

And if we are not careful, this can easily become the story of our lives. Today is when we must begin saving for the future: living for the eternal, investing in those things that are eternal and affect eternity.

LIVING FOR THE LINE

Consider a line representing eternity—infinite in both directions. How would you represent your 80 years on earth on that line?

eternity past

eternity future

Our life here would be nothing more than a dot on that line. This is an eternal perspective and it compels us to consider how we might invest our lives in the line instead of the dot.

Because we are totally identified with Christ—actually hidden—secure in Him, belonging to Him, protected in Him, and also suffering with Him. But one day, we will be glorified with Him.

Consider these three promises we can look forward to:

1. We will share in His glory - when He is exalted and honored, when every knee bows to acknowledge He is Lord (Phil. 2:9-11). We, as saints, also will share in His glory and be honored with Him.

2. This future reality of glory helps us endure suffering in the present. Paul spoke of this clearly in Rom. 8:18

and 2 Cor. 4:17. He speaks of an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison - the joys and pleasures of Heaven, seeing the Lord face to face, no more sin, pain, or death.

3. We will receive actual rewards at the Judgment seat of Christ - rewards for faithful service (2 Cor. 5:9-10, 1 Cor. 4:5, Matt. 25:14-30). The rewards that Scripture indicates seem to be:

- We will reign with Christ in His coming kingdom.
- We will receive crowns that we can throw back at His feet to express our gratitude for what He has done for us.
- We will receive personal praise from Jesus for being faithful servants.

REFLECTION

In light of the brevity of life and all that lies ahead in eternity, reflect on these questions:

1. Where are you setting your mind on at this time in your life? Why? Why is it so difficult to keep our minds on things above?
2. Are you living for the dot or the line?
3. Are there any changes you need to make in order to live more for eternity in your every day life? Changes in what you value? Changes in how you spend your time? Changes in your priorities?
4. When you look back on your life, what things will you want to have accomplished or been true of you?
5. What do you want on your tombstone?
6. How can even temporal things be done in such a way as to gain eternal reward?

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