The Benefits of Eternal Life

Edgar Allen Poe wrote a poem called Eldorado that goes like this:

Gaily bedight,

 A gallant knight,

In sunshine and in shadow,

 Had journeyed long,

 Singing a song,

In search of Eldorado.

 But he grew old—

 This knight so bold—

And o’er his heart a shadow—

 Fell as he found

 No spot of ground

That looked like Eldorado.

 And, as his strength

 Failed him at length,

He met a pilgrim shadow—

 ‘Shadow,’ said he,

 ‘Where can it be—

This land of Eldorado?’

 ‘Over the Mountains

 Of the Moon,

Down the Valley of the Shadow,

 Ride, boldly ride,’

 The shade replied,—

‘If you seek for Eldorado!’

The poem implies, among other things, that death, is the only thing that will bring us to the golden city we are seeking.

U2’s song “still haven’t found what I’m looking for” implies something similar. That even as a believer in the gospel Bono still hadn’t found Eldorado so to speak…the last verse says

I believe in the kingdom come

Then all the colors will bleed into one

Bleed into one

But yes I'm still running

You broke the bonds

And you loosed the chains

Carried the cross

Of my shame

Oh my shame

You know I believe it

But I still haven't found what I'm looking for

But what if fulfillment in life isn’t about a destination but about a life experienced with a person. Jesus once said…

“…this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.” John 17:3 NLT

And Jesus also said…

24 “I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.” John 5:24 NLT

As believers eternal life is about having a relationship with God that begins the moment we believe and enjoys different experiences with Him forever. And putting our faith in Jesus is what gives us the opportunity to fully embrace and experience the journey. So today, I want to share with you a few ministries of Jesus that allow us to enjoy life eternal with our God.

**Reconciliation**-**-Reconciliation is bringing again into unity, harmony, or agreement what has been alienated. According to Biblical teaching, there is need for reconciliation between God and man because of the alienation between them which has its source in human sin and the righteous aversion to it and hatred of it on the part of God. The Bible Encyclopedia and Dictionary**

18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. 19 For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. 20 So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!” 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,[e] so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 NLT

**Forgiveness--The act of forgiving the pardon of an offender, by which he is considered and treated as not guilty. King James Bible Dictionary**

13 For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, 14 who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.

Colossians 1:13-14 NLT

**Propitiation**-**The act of appeasing wrath and conciliating the favor of an offended person; King James Bible Dictionary**

25 For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, 26 for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.

**Adoption/New Life--Spiritual. An act of God's grace by which he brings men into the number of his redeemed family, and makes them partakers of all the blessings he has provided for them. Adoption represents the new relations into which the believer is introduced by justification, and the privileges connected therewith, Easton’s Bible Dictionary**

11 He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. 12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. 13 They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

John 1:11-13 NLT

4 But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. 5 God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. 6 And because we[c] are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.” 7 Now you are no longer a slave but God’s own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.

Galatians 4:4-7 NLT

**Co-Inheritor with Christ--One who is entitled to possess. In Scripture, saints are called heirs of the promise, heirs of righteousness, heirs of salvation, etc., by virtue of the death of Christ, or of God's gracious promises. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary**

17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

Romans 8:17 NLT

**Kingdom of Priests--The whole priestly system of the Jews was typical. It was a shadow of which the body is Christ. The priests all prefigured the great Priest who offered "one sacrifice for sins" "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10, 12). There is now no human priesthood. (See also Epistle to the Hebrews throughout.) The term "priest" is indeed applied to believers (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6), but in these cases it implies no sacerdotal functions. All true believers are now "kings and priests unto God." As priests they have free access into the holiest of all, and offer up the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and the sacrifices of grateful service from day to day. Easton’s Bible Dictionary**

9 But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

10 “Once you had no identity as a people;

 now you are God’s people.

Once you received no mercy;

 now you have received God’s mercy.”

**Eternal Life--The newness of life which the believer derives from Christ (Romans 6:4) is the very essence of salvation, and hence the life of glory or the eternal life must also be theirs (Romans 6:8; 2 Timothy 2:11, 12; Romans 5:17, 21; 8:30; Ephesians 2:5, 6). It is the "gift of God in Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). The life the faithful have here on earth (John 3:36; 5:24; 6:47, 53-58) is inseparably connected with the eternal life beyond, the endless life of the future, the happy future of the saints in heaven (Matthew 19:16, 29; 25:46).**

17 After saying all these things, Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you. 2 For you have given him authority over everyone. He gives eternal life to each one you have given him. 3 And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.

John 17:1-3 NLT

24 “I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.

John 5:24 NLT

I want to leave you with a final thought.

Is it truly possible to want for nothing?

You know what racers think about right after they cross the finish line?

The next race.

Even after the most satisfying meal ever, in a few hours we begin to get hungry again.

This is God’s design.

Eternal life is knowing God and experiencing Him and His purposes more and more forevermore. So don’t wait and don’t think that Heaven is the Eldorado that comes after death.

Through Jesus, we can already enjoy the eternal journey and look forward to looking for more and more of God knowing that we, in some ways can keep singing “we still haven’t found what we’re looking for.”