

The Soul

Atheists, materialists and some religious people believe that man is composed of a body and life force. They contend that there is no soul that is separate and distinct from the physical body; a soul that will live on eternally after the body has died. However, the Bible says that we are composed of two parts. First, the physical body (flesh and blood), which God formed from the dust of the earth, is destined one day to so return (Genesis 2:7; 3:19,27). The flesh also referred to as the “*outward man*,” and easily gives in to the temptations and lusts of the world (2 Corinthians 4:16; Romans 6:12-13; 8:7-8; 1 John 2:16). It is this “*outward man*,” (our fleshly bodies) that will one day cease to exist.

Second, we are composed of the “*inward man*,” which is the soul or spirit given to all men and women by God at conception (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:7). James confirms that without the existence of a soul, our fleshly bodies would die (James 2:26). At His crucifixion our Lord said upon His death, “*Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit*” (Luke 23:46). Later, the Christian martyr Stephen said, “*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*” (Acts 7:59). Paul said, “*for we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens*” (2 Corinthians 5:1).

Lastly, no one can kill the soul (Matthew 10:28). It will live on forever in a conscience state, knowing (being aware of) its surroundings (Luke 16:19-31). Therefore, it is crucial that you take seriously the eternal destination of your soul. It is God’s desire that your soul repent and be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). There will come a day when Christ will return to judge the wicked and the righteous; separating the sheep from the goats, and casting ungodly souls into everlasting fire, where there will be much weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:12-15; Mark 9:44-48). Your soul is the most valuable possession you have, which will live on forever and ever.

God’s Justice

Most people believe God has changed His character from what it was in the Old Testament. They say He was a God of wrath then, but now He is a God of love and grace. The fact is that God is the same and His character does not change (Malachi 3:6). It is important that we understand why God would condemn to hell for all eternity every person that sins and refuses to repent and serve Him.

God is infinitely holy (pure; undefiled), hating with a perfect hatred everything that is morally evil (Isaiah 6:3; 57:15; 1 Peter 1:15-16). God expressed His hatred for sin by writing for us a book (the Bible), wherein He describes every act that He declares as unrighteous and worthy of punishment. Having given each of us a free will to choose right or wrong (Genesis 1:26-27), we are accountable for our own sins (Romans 3:23). God’s holiness, mercy, love, goodness, wrath, justice and fairness demands both punishment as well as reward. Paul said, “*Behold therefore the goodness AND severity of God...*” (Romans 11:22). His love and goodness is unwavering toward all that conform to His will (Psalm 100:5). All who refuse to obey God and live godly must face His wrath and punishment (Romans 1:18; Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 3:6).

It is not God’s fault if your soul ends up spending eternity in hell. Your refusal to love and fear Him by keeping His commandments will heap upon your own head the wrath of God (Ecclesiastes 12:13; 1 John 5:3; Ezekiel 33:2-6). Just the same as God’s justice rewards the faithful, so too it punishes the disobedient. God’s justice was right and perfect when Cain was punished for shedding of Abel’s blood (Genesis 4:10). God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). He treats everyone fairly and according to their own actions, whether good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 6:7; Colossians 3:24-25).

According to the Word of God, eternal punishment of the soul is justified. The choice is yours to make – will you obey God and miss Hell, or will you continue to rebel and suffer the consequences?

Second Chances?

There is no doubt that hell is not a topic that most people like to talk about, let alone desire to dwell in. So repugnant is hell that most people chose to deny its existence, or to believe a person will not be aware of their punishment. Then there is the belief held by many that once in the fires of hell, God will give you a second chance to make things right. But can this be true?

The Word of God teaches us that hell is eternal (Matthew 25:46). If this is true – and it is – then is it not reasonable to conclude that there will be NO escape or second chances? God created the earth as our one and only probationary period. It is here in this life that we have been given the opportunity to make the right choice – to serve God. The author of Hebrews wrote, “*and inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment*” (Hebrew 9:27). Jesus taught, “*we must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work*” (John 9:4). This refers to your duty on earth with no second chances afterward.

As good as the doctrines of Purgatory, Reincarnation and baptism of the dead sound, they are totally foreign to Scripture. The Bible says nothing of mortal or venial sins – sin is sin in the eyes of God, and lying will punch your ticket to hell just as quick as murder (1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Timothy 1:9-10). In Luke 16:19-31 Jesus gives us insight into the realm of the dead. Two men were taken to Hades at their death – one to the side called Torment, and the other to the side called Abraham’s bosom. Abraham reminds the man in Torment that he had his chance to change his life and the life of others while he lived (vs. 22-23). No, there are **NO SECOND CHANCES** after we pass from this life into the next. If you don’t get it right while still alive in the flesh, you can’t expect to turn it around in eternity (Romans 2:4-9; Matthew 25:34-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

God has granted to each of us only ONE chance, thereby giving you the freedom to choose how to use it (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Hell – A Place to be Believed!

Hell is no longer as frightening a word as it once was. Society in all its skepticism refuses to believe that a loving God could possibly condemn anyone to an eternal realm composed of eternal torment. In a poll taken among Americans only 58% said they believed in hell. Irreligious people flippantly use the word “*hell*” in their daily conversation to add profanity, emotion or force to what they are saying. This casual use of the word does nothing more than desensitize us to the eternal punishment awaiting all that fail or refuse to turn to God through Jesus Christ.

There is no doubt that there has not been enough preaching and teaching on this subject. Because of the outcry of ungodly men and women to preach more concerning the love of God, most preachers are unwilling to warn people of hell. But if we are going to obey God and preach the whole will of God (Acts 20:20,27), then the subject of hell must be included in our teaching. Jesus warned, “*Enter ye in by the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it*” (Matthew 7:13-14). Our Lord believed in the eternal abode of punishment to which He said “*many*” would enter in. Those who do believe there is an eternal hell, tend to hold the idea that only “*really bad*” people (i.e. Hitler, serial killers, etc.) will be the only inhabitants in such a place. Most believe that the average person, who doesn’t take part in “*really bad or evil*” things, will not qualify or deserve the punishment of hell. Yet the Word of God (the Bible) does not draw such a line of distinction between “*really bad*” or “*little*” sins. God considers ALL sin as “*bad or evil*.” From out right serial killers to the common gossip or liar, God sees them all as evil people who deserve the fires of hell for all eternity (Matthew 25:31). It is God’s will that no one be sentenced to the pits of hell, but it will be our own fault if Hell becomes our eternal dwelling place (2 Peter 3:9)

Hades

We must briefly mention that there is a difference between “Hades” and “Hell.” Two totally different Greek words (Hades & Gehenna). The Hadean realm is a temporary place where all souls go to await the final judgment and sentencing of Christ. When Jesus died, His soul was sent into the realm of the unseen – “Hades” (Acts 2:31). More specifically, “Paradise” in Hades (Luke 23:43). Hades is not just a polite way of saying “Hell,” it is a real and temporary place where all the dead now reside. Luke 16:19-31 tells of this realm and its two divisions – Tartarus (torment) and – Paradise (Abraham’s bosom). Therefore, no one is now in heaven or hell – they are all in Hades as Peter affirms that king David has not yet ascended into heaven (Acts 2:34).

God’s Word informs us what we need to know about Hades and Hell. His Word tells us that all souls who have departed their fleshly bodies are being reserved in Hades until the judgment. But which side of Hades (torment or paradise) will be determined by your choices while alive.

The Second Death

The Bible describes lost and sinful men in a couple of ways – walking in darkness or dead (1 John 1:6; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 1:13). Spiritually speaking of course, being dead or in darkness refers to the state that your soul finds itself when habitually transgressing God’s law. In Revelation 20:13-15 John writes, “*and the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.*”

If while living on earth after the ways of the devil and his world, you are found spiritually dead in your trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1), God will turn His face away from you, refusing to hear your prayers (Isaiah 59:1-2; John 9:31). However,

living in your fleshly tabernacle you still have a chance to repent and escape the second death. But once you die, the second death will be yours to endure forever and ever. That lake of fire – second death – refers to eternal Hell. Paul warns, “*you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might*” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Hell **IS** eternal separation from God! No second chances. No baptism for the dead, no reincarnation, no purgatory, prayers or money will be able to buy your way out of eternal darkness and suffering. Don’t think that the word “death” has anything to do with you’re ceasing to exist, thereby escaping any punishment whatsoever. Spiritual death means “*separation from God and all that comes from Him*” (love, goodness, grace, mercy, salvation). The question is: are you still willing to take your chances?

Conclusion

If you have not yet made the choice to obey God by putting Christ on in baptism, having repented and confessed Jesus as being the Son of God, then Hell is your destination (1 Peter 3:21; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33; John 8:23-24). Only in the church of Christ can true salvation be found (Acts 2:41-47; 2 Timothy 2:10; Ephesians 5:25; 1:22-23). Think of all the people you will spend eternity in Hell with, simply by refusing to be found “*in Christ.*” – fornicators, murderers, liars, idolaters, palm readers, unbelievers, social drinkers, drunkards, adulterers, atheists, skeptics, humanists, etc., etc. – even some of the most cruel and wicked people this world has ever known (Revelation 21:8; Galatians 5:19-21; etc.).

Just think of the words used to describe this horrible place called Hell – “*everlasting,*” “*consuming,*” “*weeping and gnashing of teeth,*” “*where the fire is never quenched,*” “*where the worm*

never dies,” “*fire,*” “*flame,*” “*second death.*” No one desires to go to Hell, but many will end up there simply because they refused to obey God, or neglected to take the time to search out the truth. No one can afford for his or her most precious possession, their soul, to dwell in such a terrible and awful place. Won’t you turn you life around today and live totally and completely for Jesus? Hell is no joke!

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Hell



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