

Scriptures and Doctrine :: How can a God of love.....

How can a God of love....., on: 2013/10/6 18:48

Thought I would out the question before the forum. How can a God of love send people to a literal, eternal burning hell? Do the scriptures teach that hell is eternal? Do the scriptures teach all will be saved?

Personally I hold to the traditional view that hell is eternal and reserved for those who do not accept Christ. But I am willing and open to discuss this.

Please, I ask this to be a round table discussion. I believe the issues of hell and universalism need to be discussed in light of the impact of the Rob Bell book on the church. Please observe the SI rules and guidelines. My prayer is this thread can lead to some fruitful discussion and understanding of the scriptures.

Let us be respectful of one another. I would like to hear from the forum on this issue.

My reason for opening up this thread is a brother I once respected has now turned toward universal salvation. He says hell is a temporary place of punishment. All will be saved.

What are your thoughts? What does the Bible teach?

Blaine Scogin

Re: How can a God of love..... - posted by MaryJane, on: 2013/10/6 21:32

Greetings Bear

Here are some scriptures that speak to the teaching that "all will be saved" I have also shared some that speak to the truth of hell being eternal.

Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.'™ But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'" Luke 13:22-25

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." Matthew 7:13 & 14

God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

In Revelation 14:11 it says, "The smoke of their torment rises forever and ever." Revelation 20:10 says, "There is no rest day or night."

Matthew 25:46 "They will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

"As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of man will send out his angels and they will weed out of the kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into t

he fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father. He who has ears, let him hear.â€•
Matthew 13:40-43

â€•Throw that worthless servant outside into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.â€•
Matthew 25:30

â€•If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off, for it is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands and to go to Hell where the fire never goes out.â€•
Mark 9:42

â€•â€•the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.â€•
Mark 9:48

Here is something to consider from a teaching I read a long time ago.

" Jesus spoke far more about Hell than He did about Heaven. Jesus spoke more about Hell than virtually any other subject during His time here on earth. He wanted to make Hell very clear to us. I think you can see how it would be an injustice to withhold such a prominent part of Jesusâ€™ teaching. If we donâ€™t bring that truth to you in about the same proportion that Jesus did, we really wouldnâ€™t be â€•walking as Jesus walked.â€• â€•Knowing the fear of the Lord we persuade men,â€• were the words of Paul. He certainly had a crystal clear understanding of what it was he was dealing with."

" I am sure that, intellectually, most of us believe in the fairy-tale version of Hell, but being able to hear and understand with the ears of our heart the screams of agony of millions of people that are in torment right now, is harder to grasp. To actually believe that they are in the torment of Hades, in the fire of torment right now, is a little bit hard to relate to. But it is happening. And those who are full of faith, full of the Holy Spirit will understand and be able to actually hear those screams, and it will motivate them to tell others."

God bless
maryjane

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2013/10/6 21:54

Mary Jane, here are some more as well

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Mat 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Mat 13:50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Way too many very plain references for any honest person to believe that hell is anything but a place of judgment and that at this judgment is final and permanent.

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2013/10/6 22:08

Greeting Twayneb

you shared Mat 13:50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

I always am reminded of something that was shared with me once, if hell is not eternal and those who are cast in are instantly destroyed how can there be wailing and gnashing of teeth. If someone is destroyed they can not wail or gnash their teeth because they would be no more...

Thank you for sharing
God bless
maryjane

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/10/6 22:43

Here is a sobering message on this very important topic:

Hell, What Is It Like? by David Wilkerson

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=8084&commentView=itemComments>

an article: The Mental Agonies Of Hell by Robert Murray M'Cheyne

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=article&aid=469>

We also had a LONG series of posts on the eternal punishment of hell many years ago before it has been questioned by many popular evangelicals. I believe this is a serious sober topic that needs to be considered.

We must never put human reasoning above the Word of God.

Re: , on: 2013/10/6 23:26

MaryJane and Twayneb thank you for the good verses. Very thought provoking. Greg than you for the links. Lord willing, will check them out.

Blaine

Re: How can a God of love....., on: 2013/10/6 23:37

Blaine,

The question should be asked, "How can a God of Love allow Lucifer and sinners (unregenerate men) to abide in heaven. If you ask the question that way, you will have your answer. Because He is love, He will not allow Satan and sinners to abuse loving people. That is done on earth for the sinner's sake, but it will not continue in heaven.

Re: - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/6 23:51

Over the years I have heard many bring up this human dilemma, how could a loving God consign anyone to an eternal Hell. It sets the terms of the discussion putting God on the defensive, and invites human emotion to rule the discussion.

How about a little rephrase?

How could a violent and selfish human being ever expect anyone to care about his eternal destiny? God should mind His own business and let them do what they want!

Man has cleverly devised a strategy for this already. Since he wants his own way, wants to set the terms, control the outcomes, and live in praise of his own happiness- he invented religion!

That way there can be a God, any god, and we build a little place for him that is in view, but not in the way. We decide what he can do, what he can't do, what he would say, how he will help me get what I want, and how I can buy him off if I decide he is angry with me.

So the natural state of man and god is emotionally driven idolatry. I let him pretend to be god, but in reality I am perfectly capable of being god all by myself, thank you very much.

No wonder He who sits in the heavens laughs, on one level it is highly amusing. On another, cold dead serious. Man does not make the rules, a holy and loving real God does. He who ordered the universe and designed all the participants both living and incapable of life makes decisions according to the laws of nature and the laws of His character.

We will be ill served if we twist His Word to serve our own emotional needs, and fail to recognize that we are His doing, His property, subject to His law and authority.

God offers Salvation out of that profound love, but by His own admission He cannot save those who refuse a free gift. He does not send people to eternal Hell, He saves people from it. In reality, people needlessly send themselves to Hell.

Re: - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/6 23:55

I guess Just-in and I were thinking and typing in some pretty cool unity!

Re: , on: 2013/10/7 1:22

Amen, sidewalk. Ultimately, we will all dwell with the (F)ather whose nature we have. Kin will be together. It would be kidnapping on God's part to take one of Satan's kin when Satan has legal ownership.

Some would say today, that "no, Satan does not have legal ownership anymore since Christ died for all men". Yet, we become children of God by exercising faith in and towards Christ, the same way that many become children of Satan by unbelief (not having faith in Christ).

People like to say today that we are all children of God, but what saith the Scriptures?

Gal_3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/7 6:39

sidewalk wrote:

"God offers Salvation out of that profound love, but by His own admission He cannot save those who refuse a free gift. He does not send people to eternal Hell, He saves people from it. In reality, people needlessly send themselves to Hell."

I think most people here have a pretty high view of God's sovereignty, so I want to make sure I get this line of thinking correct.

God created man; man did not create himself. God, being sovereign, created man innocent. But God in his sovereignty allowed Satan to enter Eden to tempt man. God always knew that man would sin (He's sovereign, remember?). He was not surprised. So God in his sovereignty created a place of everlasting, eternal torment in which to cast these sinners who do not avail themselves (or even know) of the plan He has also ordained to keep them out of this infernal place.

Sure, we can say things like "How could a violent and selfish human being ever expect anyone to care about his eternal destiny? God should mind His own business and let them do what they want!"

But that is not helpful, because does man really have a choice in the manner? Can you or I not sin? Of course not. We're hell-bound, my friend.

So God in his sovereignty created a system where everyone sins (and yes He did know this was the system he created)

and since the vast majority of mankind will not avail themselves of his redemptive plan (or even know about it), then perhaps 98% of every person who has ever lived will burn in torment for all eternity (that's an awfully long sentence) for committing sins for maybe 70 or 80 years while on this earth. "And God saw that it was good."

Really?

"Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen 18:25)

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/7 6:45

1. Eternal Torment (aka "Traditionalism")

Primary Texts: Matt.25:41, 46 / Mk.9:43-48 / 2 Thess.1:9 / Rev.14:10-11; 19:20; 20:10, 15

Notable advocates: Tertullian, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and the majority of evangelical theologians throughout most (though not all) of church history

Affirmations and Arguments:

A. As a consequence of being made in the image of God (Gen.1:26-27), people, unlike animals, are immortal beings, and must necessarily spend eternity consciously in one state or another (alternatively: immortality is not innate, but will be conferred by God after the resurrection);

B. Though the wages of sin is "death," this does not preclude continuing conscious existence beyond the grave, as is seen in the story of "Lazarus and the Rich Man" (Luke 16:19ff). The terms "dead" and "death" do not necessarily refer to a cessation of existence, nor of consciousness, in scripture (Eph.2:1; Col.2:13; 1 Tim.5:6);

C. Only those who believe in Christ may dwell in God's presence for all eternity (John 3:16). All others, must remain forever absent from God, apart from all light, joy, and consolation (2 Thess.1:9);

D. After the final judgment, the souls, as well as the bodies, of the lost will be cast into Gehenna (Matt.10:28; Mark 9:43, 45, 47), which is also called "the lake of fire" (Rev.20:10, 14-15);

E. In Gehenna, the unbeliever will suffer torment, possibly of both body and soul, suggested by terms like "furnace of fire...weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt.13:42, 50) and "cast into outer darkness" (Matt.8:12; 22:13; 25:30);

F. That this torment never ends for the lost in hell is suggested by terms "eternal" and "forever" in phrases like "eternal fire" (Matt.25:41), "eternal punishment" (Matt.25:46), "eternal destruction" (2 Thess.1:9) and "tormented...forever" (Rev.20:10). All this is contrasted with the "eternal life" enjoyed by the redeemed (John 3:16; Matt.26:46);

G. Justice demands eternal punishment. Only a punishment that is eternal is suited to the crime of sinning against the eternal God. Sinning against God is a crime against infinite Majesty, and warrants punishment of infinite duration;

H. There will be no eternal grieving on the part of believers for those who are lost. God will wipe away all tears from their eyes (Rev.21:4). This may involve the erasing of memories about former relationships (Isa.43:18), or it may involve a change in perspective on the part of believers, once they see the matter from God's point of view (Isa.55:8-9; Job 42:5-6).

2. Conditional Immortality (aka, "Conditionalism," "Annihilationism," "Extinctionism," "Terminalism")

Notable Advocates: John R.W. Stott, Clark Pinnock, Greg Boyd, Roger Forster, John Wenham, Michael Green, Edward William Fudge, Glenn Peoples, Ben Witherington III, F.F. Bruce (open but undecided)

Affirmations and Arguments:

- A. Only God is immortal by nature (1 Tim.6:16)
- B. Man, not innately possessing immortality, must seek to obtain it (Rom.2:7)
- C. God gives eternal life (immortality) to men, on the condition of their believing in Christ (John 3:16; 10:28/ 1 John 5:11-12/ Rom.6:23)
- D. In scripture, the lost are never declared to be immortal. Their fate is described using terms such as "destroy," "consume," "perish," and "death" (Matt.10:28/ 1 Thess.5:3/ 2 Thess.1:9; 2:8/ John 3:16/ Rom.2:12);
- E. Certain scriptures assert that conscious existence does not continue beyond the grave (Ps.6:5; 146:4; Eccl.9:5);
- F. After death, the wicked will be punished proportionately to their guilt (Luke 12:47-48), and not all suffer equally (Matt. 11:22, 24), which means that the suffering is not infinite or eternal;
- G. The punishment (though not the punishing) of the wicked is eternal, permanent and irrevocable (Matt.25:46);
- H. God's eternal loss of those who will not repent is the terrible cost that He Himself endures out of His determination to honor the creature's freedom of choice (Isa.5:3-7; 66:3-4; Ezek.33:11; Matt.23:37; Luke 19:41-44). Nonetheless, it brings a just and final solution to the problem of sin in the universe, and does not require God (or us) to eternally endure the grief of knowing that millions of souls who were loved in this life are being tormented endlessly in the next;
- I. The lost will be resurrected, along with the righteous, in order to face the judgment (John 5:28-29/ Acts 24:15). Upon being condemned, they will be cast into the lake of fire (hell) where they will either be immediately consumed, and cease to exist, or they will suffer punishment proportionate to their guilt (Luke 12:47-48), after which they will be allowed to pass into natural non-existence (the same condition they were in before they were born). In the end, it will be as if they never existed;
- J. Though this view does not have as happy an ending as does Christian Universalism, it nonetheless ends with a tolerable and just resolution to the problem of sin in the world, and it takes seriously the scriptures about the eternal forfeiture of eternal life by those who die in rebellion against Christ.

3. Universal Reconciliation (aka, "Christian Universalism," "Restorationism")

Notable Advocates: Clement of Alexandria (AD 150-215), Origen (185-254), Gregory of Nyssa (332-398), Gregory of Nazianzus (329-390), William Law, George MacDonald, Hannah Whitall Smith, F.W. Farrar, William Barclay, Jacques Ellul, Thomas Talbot, Rob Bell (apparently, but not certainly).

Affirmations and Arguments:

- A. God desires for all people to be saved (1 Tim.2:4/ 2 Peter 3:9/ John 3:16/ Ezek.18:23, 32)
- B. Christ died to redeem the whole world (John 1:29/ 1 John 2:2/ 1 Tim.2:6)
- C. If all for whom Christ died are not ultimately reconciled, then Christ will never receive all that He died to obtain, and He becomes the cosmic Loser for all eternity, while the devil wins his desired object—which hardly agrees with biblical statements about Christ's victory over sin, death and Satan (Isa. 42:1-4/Col.2:15/ Heb.2:14/ 1 John 3:8);
- D. The Bible often speaks in terms of universal salvation and restoration (1 Tim. 4:10/ Rom.5:18-19/ Col.1:19-20/ Eph.1:9-10/ John 12:32/ Isa.53:11);
- E. After death, the wicked will be punished proportionately to their guilt, or until they are brought to repentance (Luke 12:47-48);
- F. There is no obvious reason (in scripture or in logic) why the God who desires that all would repent, and who will accept

pt the genuine repentance of a life-long sinner even the moment before death, would arbitrarily declare death to be the cut-off point for any opportunity to repent and be forgiven.

G. Given enough pressure and time, all men willâ€”if not before death, then afterwardâ€”turn to Christ and be saved (Phil. 2:10-11);

H. There is nothing in this teaching to offend the sentiments of Christians, since it affirms every cardinal doctrine of the evangelical faithâ€”in fact, it is the view that would most satisfy those who share Godâ€™s heartfelt desire for the salvation of the lost.

Re: - posted by murrcoir (), on: 2013/10/7 7:06

Quote: So God in his sovereignty created a system where everyone sins.

No - God did not create a system where everyone sins.

As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Rom 5:12

Re: , on: 2013/10/7 8:23

Quote:
-----God created man; man did not create himself. God, being sovereign, created man innocent. But God in his sovereignty allowed Satan to enter Eden to tempt man. God always knew that man would sin (He's sovereign, remember?). He was not surprised. So God in his sovereignty created a place of everlasting, eternal torment in which to cast these sinners who do not avail themselves (or even know) of the plan He has also ordained to keep them out of this infernal place.

The scriptures says, "Hell was prepared for the Devil and his angels", not man. Matt 25:41

Quote:
-----Sure, we can say things like "How could a violent and selfish human being ever expect anyone to care about his eternal destiny? God should mind His own business and let them do what they want!"

But that is not helpful, because does man really have a choice in the manner? Can you or I not sin? Of course not. We're hell-bound, my friend.

Adam had the capability (being made in God's image and created pure and innocent) of choosing to obey God, otherwise God would not have given Him choices.

Quote:
-----So God in his sovereignty created a system where everyone sins (and yes He did know this was the system he created) and since the vast majority of mankind will not avail themselves of his redemptive plan (or even know about it), then perhaps 98% of every person who has ever lived will burn in torment for all eternity (that's an awfully long sentence) for committing sins for maybe 70 or 80 years while on this earth. "And God saw that it was good."

Everything God created was good (righteous). He did not create a system where everyone sins. It was the fall of man that brought corruption. Adam was a blameshifter and so was Eve, but God did not let them get away with shifting the responsibility of their sin to someone else and He won't let us get away with it, either.

Man continues to shift the blame, even back onto God. "Let God be true and every man a liar". Rom 3:4

The Garden of Eden was not a system that promoted sin.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/7 18:02

In Revelation John describe Jesus as the "lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Why?

Because God knew before he created man that man would sin and would need a savior.

The question you have to ask is: Did God know that Adam and Eve would sin when he created them?

If so, did they really have a choice?

I know this gets pretty deep pretty quick. But I believe that God had the plan of salvation worked out before he even created Adam and Eve.

This means he knew men would be sinners. I agree that in some sense Adam and Eve may have had a choice not to sin, but we don't, in general. Everyone has sinned. And, by the way, Adam and Eve really didn't have a choice. God knew they would sin. I know we can debate this but unless you believe in Open Theism then you can't get around that conclusion.

When I say that this was the system that God set up, I mean it in the sense that none of this took him by surprise. We can say that God didn't set up Eden as an environment for sin. But why then did the plan of salvation pre-date Eden?

The issue on the table is whether it is also God's plan to throw sinners into hell to suffer in agony for all eternity, or whether we have possibly "missed it" big time as to whether the scriptures actually teach this.

It is my belief that perhaps they do not. I listed scripture above that support each of the three views and respected proponents of the three views.

The issue is worthy of serious consideration.

For those of you who strongly hold to a view of eternal torment, do you HOPE that it is not true? Or are you glad about it?

I still believe that it is POSSIBLE that the doctrine of eternal conscious torment is true. But that really raises a lot of questions as to how to square that with the revealed character of God through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Re: The Foundational Attribute of God, on: 2013/10/7 18:56

Perhaps I should have titled this thread How can a holy God not send sinners.....But deferred to the common questions people ask.

In doing some Google searches on universalism the common premise is God is love. Thus a loving, forgiving God would not send sinners to hell. But one thing is forgotten. God is holy. Indeed this one attribute is echoed by the angels as they fly in the throne room saying holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty. This is the one attribute echoed by the angels 3 times continually. Perhaps the three holy descriptions given to God or to a triune God.....Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit.

All the other attributes flow out of God's holiness. His love is a holy love. His justice is a holy justice. His mercy is a holy mercy. His anger is a holy anger. His wrath is a holy wrath. And so on.

If we approach the question of hell from a standpoint of God's holiness. Then the discussion of eternal punishment can make more sense. More sense from God's point. If not from ours.

Blaine

Re: - posted by Lordoitagain (), on: 2013/10/7 19:00

One of my FB friends Lisa Moeller posted this on her wall:

"i sat through a documentary called Hellbound??? on netflix last night which was pure propaganda and 90 min of religious heretics twisting Scripture in an attempt to prove there is no hell. In the midst of their psychobabble they stated how unjust it would be for millions of Jews to go from Hitler's furnace to Satan's. First of all it is erroneous on many levels to perceive our puny brains could master the infinite wisdom of God. Secondly these "deep thinkers" obviously never contemplated the idea that since He knows all there is to know about a person along with the beginning to the end that He would also know which ones would have accepted Christ had they been given a chance. Hell is a very real place regardless of what the skeptics say and God is a just and righteous God. The world needs to stop trying to pick His brain and be so clever in their own sight and go out and take the world for Jesus which is their only Hope to escape what is coming."

I didn't know anything about the "documentary" (as usual) but it is really sad that Hell's preachers are flooding the media with such perversions of truth!

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/7 22:35

Bear...

You aren't paying attention. Credible proponents of either universal reconciliation or annihilationism do NOT deny the existence of hell. Both groups believe that God sends people there.

The issue is whether hell is an eternal punishment.

When you make the statement that a proponent of UR does not believe that a loving God sends people to hell, you are grossly misrepresenting their position. Once again, they do believe there is a hell and God sends them there. The issue is one of duration, not existence.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/7 22:43

Lordoitagain...

Your friend's name calling is not very productive, and that program would seem like propaganda to a person who has only been taught one thing their entire life and has not made any effort to truly look into this issue for themselves.

I can tell you one thing...i would rather be called a heretic for believing in an alternate view of hell, than to be heretic associated with the Westboro Baptist church, who is also featured in that program.

If we can't have this discussion without labelling people who disagree as heretics, then we have serious issues.

Re: TMK, on: 2013/10/8 0:00

Respectfully brother I never said Universalist denied the reality of hell. But their belief in a God of love prompts them to ask the question how can a loving and forgiving God send people to hell. But yes, the question is also one of duration. Is hell eternal punishment?

My previous post suggested we have to start with the holiness of God. All other attributes will flow out of His holiness.

The holiness of God requires His nature to not tolerate sin. It has been said God would rather extinguish heaven than allow it to be tainted with sin. Thus sin has been punished in the sacrificial work of Christ's death on the cross. Which a person may choose to accept and believe. Or sin will be punished by the sinner in hell. I believe the scriptures teach that will be an eternal torment. Thus all the need to tell people about Christ and implore them to believe in Him.

One weakness of the Universalist position is there is no need to evangelize. If everybody is going to be saved. Why tell them about Jesus.

Blaine

Re: So many tracks, so little time! - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/8 0:32

When James writes in his epistle "For him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not it is sin," he proclaims the word and law of God. He also cuts the legs out from under the notion that God's sovereignty allows Him to do whatever He wants.

God's sovereignty is limited by the fact that He submits to his own law, and since "The law of the Lord is perfect," this is not a problem for Him. But He is content to exist with these limitations because He is a loving Sovereign and not a tyrant. He is able to work all things according to the counsel of His own will, but does not violate the freedom he has given man to love and obey him- or spurn and reject Him.

If it were in His power to save men without Christ's suffering, He is morally obligated to do that. Any less would certainly be sin.

Believing this way, Hell is a very sobering concept to me. This is why I see God as desperate to see souls repent and be saved since He has no other plan by which to save them. Any alternative that cooks them in the fires of Hell for a limited duration, then sets them free to come to heaven would be an insult to the fact He gave His Son up to death and humiliation, not to mention Jesus' own words proclaiming that there is no other way into the presence of the Father except through the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God.

While each is free to draw his or her own conclusions from the Scripture, I fear that these alternative confabulations will be a dangerous distraction. It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgement. His love and grace will not be mocked, and the decision we each make is for keeps.

And I still like Finney's prayer, the one where Hell is emptied of a believer's fear.

"God if I can serve you best in Hell, send me there!"

Re: - posted by Lordoitagain (), on: 2013/10/8 0:51

TMK,

Whether or not you consider my friend's name calling productive or not would be irrelevant to her. She is an ex-homosexual who is very thankful for the truth which helped her get deliverance from that binding sin. That truth she found in God's Word which includes the repeated theme of eternal punishment for the wicked.

I haven't done it, but I would venture to say that if you were to take a poll of the Christian testimonies of people who have been delivered from powerfully binding sins such as homosexuality, drug addiction, alcoholism, fornication, adultery, etc., you would find that the majority were converted using the belief of eternal punishment.

To a person who believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, this discussion is almost a joke. Jesus spoke more about eternal punishment than he did about eternal bliss!

A person would have to believe that Jesus is deranged, or an outright deceiver to state such things as this:

Mar 9:43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Mar 9:44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Mar 9:45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Mar 9:46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Mar 9:47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

Mar 9:48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

... to state such things as this knowing full well that the punishment is NOT eternal. Wouldn't it be a foolish or demented act to amputate your eye, hand or foot if you were going to just burn up when you went to that place, or if in reality you were going to be shuffled away from it into the universalist's heaven?

As to her "name calling" (as you label it), it is certainly within the Merriam Webster dictionary definition of what they are:

heretic
noun \ˈhɛr-ɪˈtɪk, ˈhɛ-rɪˈtɪk\

: someone who believes or teaches something that goes against accepted or official beliefs

If she is being unproductive in calling them heretics, by your own rule, are you not being unproductive calling the Westboro Baptists heretics?

You may label them "Credible proponents" but I would have to agree with Lisa and with the dictionary.

I also agree with you that the Westboro Baptists are heretics, but just because one group of heretics gets together and spotlights the horribleness of another group of heretics it doesn't take away the treachery of the finger-pointing heretics!

This website is about the promotion of Bible based revival. All of the revivals that have happened in American history have been drenched in the magnification of Christ's teaching on eternal punishment ... Sinners in the hands of an Angry God ... If such "traditionalists" have "missed it" all these years, isn't it odd that the Holy Ghost has powerfully accompanied such preaching with millions of transformed lives?

Sal 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

What would there be to fear about the LORD if His threats were not eternal?

1Co 15:32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

And if the dead rise to just be annihilated if found guilty with no pardon? Zip ... and it is over with ... let us eat and drink for to morrow we die.

Jesus' blood cleanses from sin, and keeps a person clean so that he is preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord (1 Thes 5:23) and therefore will not have to go to eternal punishment.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/8 6:41

And they shall go forth and look
Upon the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their worm does not die,
And their fire is not quenched.
They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh. (Isaiah 66:24)

Jesus was clearly alluding to this passage in his teaching in Mark 9. A common mistake people make is not understanding that in Jesus's day Gehenna (which for some reason is translated as "hell") was a real actual place, actually a garbage heap, outside the walls of Jerusalem, with real fires burning perpetually and with real rotting corpses. Do some research on the horrors of what the Romans did to the Jewish people in 70 AD.

When Jesus said the word Gehenna, his listeners would think of the real burning garbage dump where bodies of criminals were thrown, that's all.

A Bible teacher I really respect says this:

"I think it is a good idea to be fair-minded in considering alternative views of hell. This is one of the more recent changes I have made in my own theology. I have known of three defensible views of hell for 20 years, but was pretty stuck on defending the traditional view (eternal torment) partly because I grew up thinking of this view as a litmus test for conservative evangelicalism. I have recently been more willing to release my grip on this traditional view as the biblical evidence has become overwhelming.

I am aware of two biblically defensible alternatives to the "eternal torment" view of hell. One is the universalist view, and the other is the conditional immortality view (annihilationism). Over the years, my studies have convinced me that the eternal torment view has very little biblical basis, and depends heavily on poor exegetical practices and mistranslations of relevant biblical terminology. Of the two alternatives, I find the universalist position to be the more attractive, but the annihilationist view somewhat better supported in scripture. I realize that I could be wrong, but this is my present leaning. Christian universalism and annihilationism both teach that there is a hell of punishment for those who die faithless, but they believe that the punishment is not eternal, but proportional (in the case of annihilationism) or else remedial (in the case of universalism). According to annihilationism, souls are not naturally immortal, and after the lost have been appropriately punished, they will pass into non-existence. According to universalism, all who are punished in hell will eventually be brought to repentance, and thereby reconciled to God.

The main arguments for universalism seem to be:

1. God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4/ John 3:16/ Ezek.18:23, 32)
2. Christ died to redeem the whole world (John 1:29/ 1 John 2:2/ 1 Tim.2:6)
3. The Bible sometimes speaks of universal salvation and restoration (1 Tim.4:10/ Rom.5:18-19/ Col.1:19-20/ Eph. 1:9-10/ John 12:32)
4. If Christ desires that all be saved, and paid for their redemption, but, because of the devil's resistance to this, billions of people are nonetheless lost, then this makes God and Christ the cosmic, eternal losers and the devil the winner, which seems to go against many biblical statements (1 John 4:4/ Heb.2:14/ 1 John 3:8/ Col. 2:15/ Isa.42:1-4).
5. This was believed by many in the early church. Of the six main Christian schools known to exist in the first four centuries, four taught universalism (Alexandria, Edessa, Antioch and Caesarea); one taught annihilationism (Ephesus); and one taught eternal torment (Rome).
6. If this view is correct, it would be the one of the three that would cause the most rejoicing in heaven among God and the saints.

The arguments for conditional immortality (annihilationism) are principally as follows:

1. Only God possesses immortality by nature (1 Tim.6:16);
2. Men do not possess immortality naturally, and the soul can be destroyed (Matt.10:28);
3. Men must "seek" immortality (Rom.2:7);
4. God gives immortality (eternal life) to men on the basis of their faith in Him (John 3:16/ 10:28/ Rom.6:23/ 1 John 5:11-12);
5. The fate of the lost is generally described using terms such as "death," "destruction," "consumed" and "perish" (Matt. 10:28/ 1 Thess. 5:3/ 2 Thess.1:9; 2:8/ John 3:16/ Rom.2:12/ etc.).
6. The view that men are naturally immortal is not taught in either Testament of the Bible, but it was a view of the ancient Greeks, prior to and since New Testament times. Some say it is a pagan idea that was introduced into Christian theology by the Greek fathers, and exploited by the Medieval Church to "keep people in line."

Problems with the eternal torment view include the following:

1. All the passages of scripture upon which it is based (and there are only a few) are found in apocalyptic contexts, where symbolism is a common phenomenon;
2. The Bible nowhere says that unsaved people live forever;
3. God never warned Adam and Eve (or anyone else) that, if they were to sin, they would be eternally tormented, but only that they would die (e.g. Gen.2:17/ Ezek.18:4/ Rom.6:23), which would be a misleading understatement, if the traditional view is correct;
4. Eternal punishment for temporal crimes seems unjust even by God's stated standards of justice (an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth). A debt or penalty that takes forever to repay will never be fully repaid, and there can never be any final justice or resolution of the problem of sin in the universe;
5. The Bible speaks of degrees of punishment of the wicked (e.g. Matt.10:22, 24/ Luke 12:47-48). If all sinners suffer eternally, then all receive equally infinite (not proportionate) punishment;
6. If men are not immortal by nature, what motive, apart from vindictiveness and cruelty, could God have for supernaturally keeping sinners alive forever, without any hope of eventual relief or rehabilitation? Does such a motivation agree with the picture of the merciful and loving God found in scripture?;
7. How could God and the saints rejoice in eternity knowing that their loved ones were all the while, in another part of the universe, experiencing endless torture and agony?

Now, if the Bible somewhere clearly taught that the fate of the wicked is to be endless torment (as I once thought it did), then we would have to simply ignore these objections and say, by sheer loyalty, "But notwithstanding these things, I believe that God is just in tormenting people for eternity" (as I used to say). My further studies of the scriptures, in general, and of the few verses upon which I once based my belief in eternal torment, in particular, have moved me away from my confidence that such a doctrine ever was taught in scripture. It was an effective tool for keeping the masses loyal to the church in the Middle Ages, and seems consistent with such a "God" as was presented in Medieval Christianity. However, I can no longer confidently assert that it is the doctrine of scripture, nor that it portrays the same God as He who was revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

in regard to the parable of Lazarus and the rich man:

I confess that, for all my life, it has been the story (parable?) of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19ff) that has stood out, in my thinking, as the most convincing proof of the universal immortality of all souls--both saved and lost. I understood the evidence to lean toward the conclusion that it is a true story, and thus representative of the respective conditions of the saved and the lost (at least prior to the death and resurrection of Christ).

I have always been aware that some people regarded this to be another of Christ's parables, rather than an actual case, but I thought the use of a proper name (Lazarus) made this inherently unlikely, since no other recorded parables of Christ give proper names to their characters.

I also felt that, even if the story was indeed a parable, it still argues for literal conditions like those described, since all the recorded parables describe real-life-like situations. It was my opinion that, if the conditions described in the story were not representative of reality, then Christ could be charged with misleading His audience concerning the state of the dead.

Some argued that it must be a parable because the rich man is charged with no sin, and the beggar is not described as righteous, and so the story cannot be describing the real lot of dead people--unless we want to conclude that rich people go to hell simply because they are rich, and poor people go to Paradise simply because they are poor. This objection seemed weak to me, however, since one could, on the same grounds, argue that the parable of the sheep and the goats (Matt.25:31ff) does not teach the truth about the final judgment, since only good deeds are mentioned as a criterion. It is clear from all relevant scriptures that the final judgment will be based upon "every man's work" (Matt.16:27/Rom.2:5ff/1 Peter 1:17/ Rev.20:12-13) as the evidence of whether a man had faith or not.

I confess, it always bothered me a bit to think that those who had died 6000 years ago and were even now burning in hades, and have been all that time, were getting a worse deal than, say, those who die much later in history, and who therefore have to put up with much less suffering. I explained this to myself by saying that, since everyone there is going to suffer for eternity ultimately, a difference of a few thousand years is negligible. However, if the suffering is proportionate to guilt, it still seems that those who have been burning for thousands of years already have been experiencing suffering for a very long time, from their point of view!

I have come to a change of mind about this story however, based upon two considerations. One is that my recent studies of the scripture have given me a far greater respect for the view that the lost are not immortal by nature. The story of Lazarus and the rich man would seem to be the only passage in the Bible to teach the immortality of the human soul, and there is such a body of scripture against this proposition as to raise doubts about the literalness of this unique story.

Second, Thomas Thayer (the respected lexicographer), in an article I read some time ago (and to which the original post in this thread provided a link) wrote: "Dr. Whitby affirms, 'we find this very parable in the Gemara Babylonicum.'" I have had no success in getting my hands upon this document, but if this is true, it means that Jesus was referencing a non-canonical story, familiar to those of His day, without committing Himself to its truthfulness. In other words, if this was a familiar story to the Jews, but they knew it to be a make-believe story, Jesus might have used it to illustrate, in parabolic fashion, some spiritual principle. I am still looking for the text of the Gemara Babylonicum, to see whether this story really resembles one found there.

This is the state of my inquiry concerning the story of Lazarus and the rich man. Obviously, if it is a true story, then the immortality of the soul must be considered as established, if only on this one passage. If the story is simply an illustration drawn from a known religious fable, then it cannot be easily employed to overthrow the doctrine of conditional immortality.

I encourage those who are interested in this subject to do their own research and to reach their own conclusions. Thayer was himself a Christian Universalist, and his article at <http://www.auburn.edu/~allenkc/tbhell.html> is a valuable piece of propaganda in the defense of that view.

Re: - posted by Lordoitagain (), on: 2013/10/8 10:17

TMK, you are evading the reality of the issue:

... to state such things as this knowing full well that the punishment is NOT eternal. Wouldn't it be a foolish or demented act to amputate your eye, hand or foot if you were going to just burn up when you went to that place, or if in reality you were going to be shuffled away from it into the universalist's heaven?

Since you, and those that you respect like to lean on human reasoning so much instead of taking the book at its clearly understood words ... try your reasoning on this issue! It would not be reasonable ... not even to the natural man who cannot perceive the things of the Spirit ... to amputate a body part just to evade a temporary state of pain. It would be just the trading of one temporary pain for another.

When you quote Bible perverters that you "really respect" who "reason away" simple truths that Jesus stated, it makes me wonder who you respect most ... them or Jesus.

Take Jesus at his words:

Luc 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

Luc 16:20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

He said "There was", and "There was". He did not tell a fairy tale nor did he even call it a parable. He simply told a real account of two men.

Please for the sake of your eternal destiny, take Jesus at His word!

Luc 16:28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Re: Tben these verses must ve explained away, on: 2013/10/8 10:26

Those who argue that the Bible does not teach eternal punusment in hell will need to explain these verses sway. Please consider.....

2 Thes. 1:6-10

For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction, othose who afflict you and to give relief to you who are afflicted a nd to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retr ibution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the P EBALTY OF ETERNAL DESTRUFTION, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints in that day and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to y ou was believed.

Rev. 14:9-10

if anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark in his forehead or in his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of his anger; and he will be tormented with fire and bri mstone in the presence of the Holy Angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up F OREVER AND EVER; they have no rest day or night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receive s the mark of his name.

Rev.20:10

And the devil who discieved them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast in a false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night FOREVER AND EVER.

...Caps are for emphasis only...

The above verses will tell, even the casual reader of scripture, that hell is eternal punishment for those who reject Christ and His gospel. For sure there will be eternal torment for those who embrace the antichrist and his mark.

Those who argue for an alternative view of hell will need to explain these and other verses away. Those who would rea son such will be hard pressed to go against the plain truth of scripture without having to do some fancy theolgizing or ex egesis. For the New Testament does not teach any other view but that hell is eternal for those who reject Jesus Christ a nd do not obey His gospel.

Blaine Scogin

Re: A Comparison, on: 2013/10/8 10:47

Mat. 25:46

These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

The above verses clearly teach the contrast between an eternal bell and heaven. Eternal punishment and eternal life.

It stands to reason that if one argues that hell is temporary and punishment is not eternal. Then one who would reason such that heaven is temporary and that there is no eternal life.

The plain truth of scripture teaches that there is an eternal punusment in hell for the lost just as the scriptures teach ther e is eternal life in heaven for those who trust in Jesus Christ.

Blaine Scogin

Re: One more thing... - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/8 12:06

One of the arguments for universal salvation is the idea that all the sins of all men were literally placed on the dying Christ. This is called retributive justice and is a widely held view of the atonement. It therefore naturally leads to doctrines of universal salvation in one form or another, since all the sins are literally paid for.

But there is another view that I hold, that of Public Justice. In this view, the sacrifice for sin only applies to those who will ingly participate and receive the sacrifice as their own. (As in "accepting Christ as a personal savior.")

Here, Christ dies in substitution for one man and his sin. Any man, every man who receives it, just as valid before God for all men or no men. His sacrifice is sufficient for the salvation of the whole world if they will believe into it, but the death alone does not obligate God to save any one.

In Glory we will have a full and true perspective, but now we have the Word and hopefully the knowledge that whatever happens on the other side has been carefully crafted by a God whose character of love seeks the very best for all His created beings.

Re: - posted by murrcolr (), on: 2013/10/8 13:05

Quote: In Revelation John describe Jesus as the "lamb slain from the foundation of the world." - Why? - Because God knew before he created man that man would sin and would need a savior.

Justification by faith was taught in the church of God, long before the times of the gospel. It is, in truth, the only way where sinners ever can be justified. Though deliverance is not to be expected from the law, there is a way open to escape the curse, and regain the favour of God, namely, through faith in Christ.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law; being made sin, or a sin-offering, for us, he was made a curse for us. The heavy sufferings of the Son of God, should loudly warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, than all the curses of the law; for how can God spare any man who remains under sin, seeing that he spared not his own Son, when our sins were charged upon him? Yet at the same time, Christ, as from the cross, freely invites sinners to take refuge in him.

edit :- spelling

Re: , on: 2013/10/8 15:15

Sidewalk I have heard this view described as Christ's death is sufficient for the world but effective for the elect.

But what of the fate of those who do not accept the sacrifice of Christ?

Blaine

Re: Colin, on: 2013/10/8 15:24

Indeed we should look to the cross to see God's attitude towards sin in the wrath He poured on His Son. I do agree if God did not spare His own Son will he spare the one who will not accept the sacrifice of Jesus.

Would that men look to Him and be saved.

Blaine

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/8 18:11

Bear- in reference to your scriptures:

2 Thes 1:6-10-- it says eternal DESTRUCTION. this passage is better support for annihilationism than eternal torment.

Rev 14: Apocalyptic literature- directly referencing language in Isaiah (also and apocalyptic passage)- see Isaiah 34:8-10

Rev 20: makes no mention of people- also apocalyptic language

Mt. 25: the Greek word translated "eternal" does not necessarily mean everlasting or endless.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/8 18:19

Lorddoitagain-

I am not avoiding anything. I believe hell is real and is very nasty. I would not want to spend 10 minutes there. A million years in hell would be pretty bad. Chopping off a hand would be a small price to pay to avoid this. A proponent of UR or annihilationism does not attempt to say how long a person will be punished in hell- just that it won't be eternal. even a billion years in hell is infinitely less than an eternity in hell. Something to think about.

As an aside, do you think that Jesus was really telling people to cut off their hands and gouge out their eyes, or might he have been using rhetoric? I think if one of his listeners had taken out a hatchet after hearing his words, I very sincerely believe he would have told him to put it away.

Why in the world are you worried about my eternal destiny? Do you really believe that a person who may lean toward an alternate view of hell is destined to go there? I can assure you that Hannah Whitehall Smith and George MacDonald are in heaven.

Re: TNK, on: 2013/10/8 18:36

Respectfully brother, the scriptures stand on their own merit. Paul tells us in 2 Tim. 16 all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be adequate for every good work. Those in the Reformation appealed to the scriptures as the final rule of faith and practice.

That being said the scriptures I quoted and others teach there will be eternal punishment in hell. If you take the view in Mat. 25:46 that eternal does not imply everlasting then you are going to have to make the same conclusion about heaven. That it is not everlasting.

Brother you can argue about literature and translation. But God did not leave the interpretation of scripture to theologians. The Bible was written and translated so that the plough boy and servant girl could understand God's word. And most important the Author of scripture Himself lives in us.

All the above to say the plain truth of scripture and witness of the Spirit teach that hell is a place of eternal punishment for those who reject Christ.

Respectfully Bearmaster.

Re: TMK - posted by Lorddoitagain (), on: 2013/10/8 19:38

As Bearmaster pointed out, such passages as: "And the smoke of their torment goes up FOREVER AND EVER" from Rev. 14: 9-10 and "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." Mat. 25:46 should remove any doubt that there is no time limit, regardless of how many people try to reason it so.

Your "aside" question makes me think of the master deceiver's very first words to a human being: "Yea, hath God said ...?" When Satan convinced Eve that God was using rhetoric, sin entered into the world. When I have discussed that passage with people, I have always pointed out to them that ANYthing in our lives that could cause a person to offend, regardless of its usefulness should be done away with.

You can read about Thomas Cranmer who burned his offending hand:

<http://www.prca.org/books/portraits/cranmer.htm>

"And forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, therefore my hand shall first be punished, for, if I may come to the fire, it shall be first burned." ... True to his word, when he was brought to the stake, he put his right hand in the fire first. And, as he was burning, he held up his right hand and said: "This unworthy hand! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

No, TMK, you cannot assure me that Hannah Whitehall Smith and George MacDonald or any other human being is in heaven because you are not the Eternal Judge. Regardless of what we think about the "greatest" of Christians we will not know until we are there who made it there and who did not.

One thing that Jesus made clear before he talked about the amputations was this: Mar 9:42 And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

Look at that word "offend":

G4624

ἰσχυρίζομαι

skandalizo,,

skan-dal-id'-zo

To scandalize; from G4625; to entrap, that is, trip up (figuratively stumble or entice to sin, apostasy or displeasure): - (make to) offend.

If the teachings of Hannah Whitehall Smith and George MacDonald have caused others to stumble by casting doubt on God's Word ("Yea, hath God said ...?"), it is very doubtful that they are in heaven! We will all find out on the day of Judgment.

Many souls at the point of deciding for true repentance may have read their errant opinions and decided that it is not all that important to surrender to Christ. They may very well be responsible for many souls that are screaming in the torments of hell right now.

Rev 22:18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

Rev 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Tampering with God's words is a serious offense to Him.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2013/10/8 20:11

In reference to a couple of things TMK has shared...

I do not believe the parable of the rich man and Lazarus teaches us anything about hell. The context and the "punch line" show that its purpose is to show the unwillingness of the Jews to accept Christ as messiah and savior.

As to Christian universalism, in my 34 years of being a believer and studying the bible, I have never seen a single scripture in context that could support the view that hell would in any way be remedial. However, annihilation could be defended scripturally I think just about as well as eternal torment.

Re: To Bearmaster and others in the conversation - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/8 20:42

I know the word "elect" is used in the scripture, but it should never be used to suggest God has favorites and holds others in contempt. I watched my mother-in-law die believing, from her old Presbyterian Sunday School tapes in her head, that God had favorites and she wasn't one of them. Satan had used a little piece of the Bible to convince her against the love God had for her, and as far as I know she slipped off into eternity with that bitter lump in her heart.

One of the griefs that my heart must carry.

As for taking the important truth that Christ is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world as evidence that man was intended to sin- Whoa!

Do you have an airbag in your car? Do you believe that unless it is used you aren't getting your money's worth for owning the car??

Yes the provision for human salvation was conceived before Adam's foot ever touched the soft warm earth of the Garden. As the only One capable of governing the universe, it would be irresponsible for God to create moral agents without a plan for redemption should one of them go south in rebellion. He had already witnessed what happened to Lucifer!

To me, the most poignant part of this whole discussion is that God has done all He can to rescue fallen men from the consequence of their sin. Do you not feel it in Christ's parable of the landowner who let out his vineyard to men and then sent servants to collect his rightful payment? How all the servants he sent were beaten and thrown out, how he sent his son in hopes they would at least respect him?

But they killed the son, expecting to gain the vineyard for themselves. The story drips with the patience of a loving father, and the surety of his wrath on the wicked servants.

I particularly like the way Ezekiel put it to the people.

"Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!" (18:31)

No excuses.

Dagnab republican, he was...?

Re: How can a God of love..... - posted by RogerB (), on: 2013/10/8 21:12

God has been falsely represented as a dictator. Obey me or else. When God prepared the plan of salvation he wanted to save all. Not willing any perish.

I always wondered about hell too. In the end there is a resurrection of the unjust. Acts 24:15. We must take a close look at what Jesus said on the cross. "Father forgive them for they know not what they do". We too should look at our brothers in the world who are unconverted with that same mindset. After all they are potential sons of God. Each in their own order. We shouldn't speak evil or think evil of anyone.

At the resurrection of the unjust we see death and hell give up all, Rev 20:13. Hell is cast into the lake of fire. What we must look at is not the knowledge of the word but the big picture. Here all are standing. They see the Holy Camp of the Saints. They see Yahushua. There are no TV preachers or silver tongue evangelists. All know they have been lied to by the world and false religion.

On their side with them is Satan telling them "come on, we can take this thing." "It can be ours!" I've often thought many won't listen to him anymore but come forth with weeping. Yahushua will be seen in his glory, not evil as portrayed today. Some will join with Satan and go down to try to take the camp as in Ezekiel 38. That's where God says "Are you crazy". These are immortals. Paraphrasing. These will be destroyed.

The Bride consists of those who believed not seeing. The last harvest believes after seeing. This is what I see. Kind of reminds me of the time when Jesus poured out the water at the Last Great Day with an invitation, and I believe that this is that last great day of salvation.

I don't have all the answers either. I do know you can read the Bible intellectually, but it's good to picture the event.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/8 22:15

Bear...

I guess i am a tad confused. In your very first post you said you wanted to have a discussion on this topic.

But i don't really think that is the case. As per usual, no one really does. People love their traditional view of hell and get pretty excited when any alternative is discussed.

We don't have to discuss it. I thought you wanted to, but i believe you have changed your mind.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/8 22:57

RE: //I know the word "elect" is used in the scripture, but it should never be used to suggest God has favorites and holds others in contempt. I watched my mother-in-law die believing, from her old Presbyterian Sunday School tapes in her head, that God had favorites and she wasn't one of them//

I have also heard of real life cases of this exact thing.

Keith Daniels also brings up similar accounts in his "walking the tight rope" sermon

Re: , on: 2013/10/8 23:30

One must be saved in the body, in this life. There is no redemption after this life. You can only have faith in this life. There is no such thing as faith once you die and SEE everything.

God does not make people suffer.

God has nothing to do with sending people to hell.

This is a choice made by each man.

Jos_24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

We choose who (Jesus Christ or Satan) we derive our life from, who we want to be part of, who we live in and they live in us.

When you die, you stay with your father whether He is God or he is Satan. There is no purgatory, no further suffering so that you can pay for your sins.

If God does not want them to suffer, then He would annihilate them before they ever went to hell, but that is going beyond Scripture or reading into Scripture.

We must be "in Christ" in this life, to be with Him in the next.

Re: TMK - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/9 0:52

Be not confused! This is at least for me, a very helpful conversation. I appreciate your well thought out comments, and I see the persuasive elements in them.

But a real discussion will always take twists and turns as smart and wise people drop in with thoughts and ideas no one could anticipate. We have no authority to establish or alter doctrines, but we do get our thinking patterns challenged. Some may even change some aspect of what they formerly believed- if they indeed have a heart in pursuit of truth. Ultimately truth just is, and it is joie de vivre getting it fresh and new.

Any discussion like this in my mind is intended to enrich my Christian walk and increase Christian love to share. That's why I'm here anyway!

Re: , on: 2013/10/9 2:59

Amen to that, Sidewalk!

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/9 6:26

just-in wrote:

"God does not make people suffer.

God has nothing to do with sending people to hell."

On the surface this sounds reasonable enough, but you don't have to peel back the layers very far to see that it really doesn't hold up.

Who created hell?

I think you previously brought up the point that hell was originally created for the devil and his angels. True enough-- but when mankind fell, God obviously made a decision to cast them in there too. OK- I can possibly concede the point that man chooses to sin (he can't help it- that is his nature) but nonetheless the penalty for same was God-ordained.

Your comment is sort of like saying the state doesn't send people to prison- criminals send themselves there. In a sense they do send themselves there by choosing to commit a crime, but the state created the justice system and the prison and the punishments.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2013/10/9 6:40

I wanted to post an article or blog post I came across a few years back. I am not sure who wrote it.

Now, I want to preface this to say that it is clearly SATIRE. Its purpose is solely to make a point, for what that point is worth.

As we embark on this perilous journey, I am mindful that with many readers I will offend no matter how I proceed. Therefore, today only, I choose to write in the style of Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events. That said, I must warn you. If you came here to read a warm fuzzy story that will brighten your hum drum day, please go away and come back tomorrow. Indeed, (if you are still reading) I must warn anyone remaining who has a weak heart, a fear of fable, or if they are great with child, I highly recommend that they return to pouring white chocolate into bunny molds, and picking cellophane grass off the floor where it spilled as you hid baskets in the closet. This story does not have a happy ending, it is macabre, even vulgar, and worst of all it will tear at the very foundation of things that make you comfortable. This is a story about what I do not believe, but it's a story you have heard many times before and hoped against hope that it could not be true. Proceed at your own risk:

UNCLE JOE AND THE SECRET BASEMENT CHAMBER OF BAD BOB

Uncle Joe was well liked in the community. He had many children who were all well behaved, except for the occasional cuss word and some lewd thoughts which no one but Uncle Joe knew about. All in all they were good kids, and they loved their dad. That is, all of the children except Bernice. Bernice was not evil. She wore dowdy dresses that kept her out of trouble with the boys, and her grooming was quite good. She even flossed those hard to reach molars the rest of us tell the hygienist we cleaned, but really did not. Bernice did not love her father. She was insolent, and sometimes downright disrespectful. She did not come when she was called, and in fact generally chose to watch American Idol while the rest of the children sat at their father's table. Uncle Joe was quite gracious, but the one thing he could not, indeed would not tolerate was being ignored. As the years went by He grew more and more jealous of all the things Bernice loved more than him. Finally, when she turned seventeen, Uncle Joe had enough. And Uncle Joe had a secret.

Many years ago Uncle Joe had an employee named Bob. Bob was a fabulous employee, but at some point or another attempted a hostile takeover of Uncle Joe's business. Uncle Joe fired Bob. (pun intended) Still, when Bob had no where to go Uncle Joe allowed Bob to live in the basement of the rather stately home where all the children lived. No one ever saw Bob, but they knew he was there, and that he had become a little crazy---because he would scream at night. The children called him (insert ominous whistle through the trees) Bad Bob.

Uncle Joe pulled Bernice into the kitchen and with him at the head chair at the table he listed in shocking detail every bad thing she had ever done. But nothing in her life was as bad as her impertinent attitude towards Uncle Joe. Did he not give her a good home, and make sure she had clothes and food? Still, she chose not to love Uncle Joe, and that was the last straw. Uncle Joe nodded towards the basement door. Bad Bob emerged and suddenly grabbed Bernice and with violence that would make the most fearless reader wince he threw Bernice down the stairs and into the basement. Uncle Joe looked at Bad Bob and said, "I do truly love her; she had her chance; now do what you must."

Bad Bob was forbidden to kill Bernice, but he chained her to a corner of the cement basement---near the furnace. Several times a day Bad Bob poured kerosene on Bernice's limbs and torso and set her on fire. Never enough to kill her of course, just enough that her pain would never end. This went on for decades. The other children suspected what had happened to Bernice, because late at night, when everything was quiet they could hear Bernice screaming and begging Uncle Joe to forgive her. And every once in a while, they would hear Uncle Joe open the basement door, and whisper down the stairs, "I love you Bernice, I really love you, but you had your chance. You missed your window of opportunity. You can never ever come back to the house."

Finally, in a remarkable coincidence wherein a fireman was looking for a lost kitten, Bernice was discovered and rescued. Uncle Joe was put on trial before a stunned community. On the stand Uncle Joe said that Bernice deserved being cast into the basement and all her torment because she had failed to respect him. Uncle Joe also said that he could not be guilty because it was not him who tortured the girl but Bad Bob. The defense put Uncle Joe's children on the witness stand so they could testify of how good Uncle Joe really was, but on cross examination, the other children admitted that yes they really did love Uncle Joe, but more than anything else, they were afraid of being thrown into the basement with Bad Bob.

And here, dear vigilant reader (I really can't believe you stayed this long), the story must end because the jury is still out. Might I be so bold as to ask your opinion? Was Uncle Joe's punishment too severe? Or does disrespecting the head of the house justify a seemingly endless torture that would have made the worst of the Nazis turn away in horror?

In my humble opinion, dear reader, this story simply cannot be true.

Re: - posted by Lordoitagain (), on: 2013/10/9 10:02

TMK: "I wanted to post an article or blog post I came across a few years back. I am not sure who wrote it."

FYI: It was written by Kelly Vickers and posted on a website created by a former pastor who is now bitterly against Biblical Christianity.

The article: <http://theooze.annex.net/articles/article.cfm?id=1086>

About the website that it was posted on:

<http://theooze.annex.net/articles/article.cfm?id=827>

The satire is obviously written for the purpose of accusing God of being unjust. Why would you post it? You are exposing your true character more and more. This story doesn't even include a representation of the sacrificial horrors of the death of Christ. It is a good-deeds/bad-deeds representation of God and yet accusing what He declares in His Word to be unjust.

Mat 12:30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

Mat 12:31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

Mat 12:32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

Mat 12:33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

Mat 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Mat 12:35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

Mat 12:36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

Mat 12:37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Re: TMK, on: 2013/10/9 10:12

Brother the story that you posted maligns the character of God. It also maligns the redemptive work of Christ Jesus on the cross for sinners.

Discussion is one thing. But posting things that are maligning God's character is another. And violates Eph.4:29-30. And does not respect SI rules.

Therefore I ask Greg to knock this thread down.

Blaine Scogin

Re: , on: 2013/10/9 10:45

Quote:

-----I think you previously brought up the point that hell was originally created for the devil and his angels. True enough-- but when man kind fell, God obviously made a decision to cast them in there too.

Man's sin separated him from God. Man separated from God, not the other way around. God cast them out of the garden that man would not partake of the Tree of Life. He did not cast them into hell.

Quote:

-----OK- I can possibly concede the point that man chooses to sin (he can't help it- that is his nature) but nonetheless the penalty for same was God-ordained.

It was not man's nature to sin when he was created. He was created pure and innocent and given the Word of God. He chose to follow another's word, disregarding what He was told.

Quote:

-----Your comment is sort of like saying the state doesn't send people to prison- criminals send themselves there. In a sense they do send themselves there by choosing to commit a crime, but the state created the justice system and the prison and the punishments.

Yes, now you've got it. Criminals do send themselves to prison. (our sins will find us out). The State just administers the justice system and the prison.

God will not let what happened in heaven, happen again. This time, redeemed, regenerated souls will populate heaven.

How could God allow murders, rapists, God-haters, jealous (that one got Lucifer), envious and prideful (Lucifer again), self-sufficient souls into heaven? They would only try to rise up against Him. Since their father is the devil, God would in effect

effect, be allowing Satan back into heaven.

Remember, in the garden, God protected the Tree of Life so that sinful man (Adam) would not eat of it and live forever.

So, there is no way unredeemed man will be in heaven.

Gen 3:22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

Now, "annihilationists" use Gen 3:22 to say, "See, sinners will be annihilated. They will not live forever".

But the word "live" is to save life or live. Also revive.

khaw-yah'ee

A primitive root (compare H2421); to live; causatively to revive: - live, save life.

It is the difference between Life and Death.

Rom 2:6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

Rom 2:7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

Rom 2:8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

Rom 2:9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

Those in hell will not enjoy anything associated with LIFE. They will be tasting of death, forever.

Notice, in Romans 2, that the Holy Spirit contrasts "eternal life" with "Tribulation and anguish".

Rev 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

At first, this could possibly mean that being thrown in the "lake which burneth with fire", does not annihilate a person. The Scriptures don't tell us. When you look at the full counsel of God, "annihilationism" is not something you want to "hang your hat on". No one can prove or disprove it. It becomes theological wrangling.

Some people take a chance and think that they will be annihilated once they live their life however they want to (apart from God). But, I don't see anything in Scripture that speaks of annihilation being a fact.

Other verses to consider:

Mark 9:48

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"

Isaiah 34:10

"It shall not be quenched night or day; Its smoke shall ascend forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; No one shall pass through it forever and ever."

The question should not be, "will I be annihilated, once I die". The question should be, "What must I do to be saved"?

But I would say, don't underestimate God, because He is not led by feelings, like man is.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/10/9 11:54

Quote:
-----Brother the story that you posted maligns the character of God. It also maligns the redemptive work of Christ Jesus on the cross f
or dinners.

We deleted that same article a few years back. Yes that man is apostate from the Christian faith who wrote that and it is sad to even consider posting it for others to see. We all will be before the Lord soon, may we not be as pre-occupied with our daily life that we are not then therefore eternally minded and sobered towards what is coming for the righteous and unrighteous.

2 Peter 2:9

New International Version

if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment.

we feel the discussion has gone its course in this thread and are locking this thread.