

Articles and Sermons :: 23 Minutes in Hell?

23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by ccchhhrrriiss () , on: 2009/8/27 23:44

Hello...

My wife has been a teacher in public high schools and universities for over five years. However, she has been teaching at a private, Christian school for nearly a year. She enjoys the experience of working with young children without having to instruct them.

Recently, the owner of the school gave the teachers a book entitled 23 MINUTES IN HELL. The teachers are supposed to read the book and discuss it at a meeting next week. My wife asked me if I had read the book. I admitted that I had thumbed through it several times, but have never felt a desire to actually sit down and read it cover-to-cover. Why? While it's story about the terrors of Hell sound plausible, it just seems that the story contradicts some basic understandings about Hell -- while also adding some things that the Word of God is decidedly silent about.

The book, written by Bill Wiese, chronicles the author's tale of having visited Hell for 23 minutes. It is a fantastic-sounding tale about a man's supposed voyage to Hell and back. It is actually (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/myvideo/photo.php?lid668>) included here on SermonIndex as a video sermon.

Personally, I have a problem with this tale. II Peter, Luke and Psalm mention that Hell was created as a "dungeon" for fallen angels who are literally kept in chains. Of course, we know that fallen man will ultimately share this place with them. The Bible talks about the "slandering of angels" or "spiritual beings" and "dignities" (such as in II Peter 2:1-12). In fact, Jude 1:8-11 says that not even Michael the Archangel spoke against the devil with slanderous accusations.

I have read quite a few stories from different preachers who claimed to have visited Hell. Most of their stories seem to contradict one another -- especially on the details. Dr. Richard Eby, Mary Baxter, and many others have written and earned lots of money from books about their supposed journey. While the story written by Bill Wiese sounds somewhat familiar, it contradicts nearly every other story that contains "specific" information about each author's supposed "journey."

What do you think? do you think that guy is telling the truth? Is he making it up? Did Wiese have a legitimate and/or spooky dream...and then start stretching that dream into a novel?

Regardless, I know that Hell can only be WORSE than any story written by men. My wife began reading the book...and doesn't want to finish it. She has already found many passages within the story that she feels are either unscriptural or extra-scriptural.

I am interested in the opinions of the brethren here on SermonIndex. Of course, I am not trying to start a debate. I am just trying to see if anyone has an opinion on the matter. Thanks!

:-)

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by ccchhhrrriiss () , on: 2009/8/28 14:05

I have also been interested in many of the various stories of people who claim to have been caught up into the "third heavens." People like Jesse Duplantis, Mary Baxter, Dr. Richard Eby and the like -- they give conflicting accounts with their tales of visiting Heaven.

Is it possible that these people have seen ANYTHING? Did they merely have a simple dream...and then exaggerate it in to book form?

:-(

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2009/8/28 14:50

I have read this book and I also have a speaking by Bill Wiese called "23 Minutes in Hell".

I personally like the "story" that Bill tells. I look at it as a story. There are a lot of holes that you can poke in his experience, but that is his experience. If he is being truthful (which we have no reason to believe that he is not being truthful), then we need to take him at his word while we cross reference it to scripture.

The point is that regardless of what we think about Bill's story, Bill believes it. The Lord may have been showing something about hell to Bill. We should not take Bill's story as scripture, but we can learn from Bill's story never the less.

If "23 minutes in Hell" helps someone come to the Lord and get saved... it bears good fruit.

Re: , on: 2009/8/28 15:07

There is a book called "To Hell and Back" by Dr. Maurice Rawlings. He is a heart surgeon who has resuscitated many people over the years. He says there experience has been one of torment being in hell etc. I thought this was a very well done book.

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2009/8/28 15:41

Quote:
-----While it's story about the terrors of Hell sound plausible, it just seems that the story contradicts some basic understandings about Hell -- while also adding some things that the Word of God is decidedly silent about.

It seems many Christians feel they understand what Hell is all about. I for one am thankful for the day when I no longer felt the compulsion to understand all that's written in the Scriptures.

How little I understand about Heaven, much less Hell. And really, it's only by revelation that our understandings are opened to these things in the first place. Revelation, of course, will always harmonize with Scripture. But only revelation can cause us to see what is written in Scripture in its true light instead of in the darkness of our own understanding. "In thy light shall we see light" (Ps. 36.9).

So I'm pretty careful about all the stories these days of people who have visited Hell... or even Heaven.

I am content to leave what I don't understand in God's hands, trusting He will reveal to me what I need to know in order to please Him, and do His will.

AD

Re: - posted by anonymity, on: 2009/8/28 18:58

Isn't there a website or something somewhere that has a long list of questions and answers on this topic? I know there is one at the end of Bill Wiese's book.

My thought on the subject is that I was greatly moved when I listened to it. The guy is from the Calvary Chapel Churches that I am from which is a pretty Biblical place. He was also financially very well off. I can't see any motives why he would lie. He seems to be passionate for souls and ect. I don't think it would be a big thing for this to happen. Jesus speaks of hell and even in Lazarus gives us an image. So I think God wants us to know what it is like. When God raises up messengers like prophets of old he gives them revelations. Whether it is true or not the message is true. I don't really care too much I was moved by it. The best way to know is to know the person personally which is a hard thing sometimes or people around him. The last thing is were certain parts of it Biblical and that is where I bring up the question and answer list though I can't find it though I think I have seen it before.

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by Jimotheus, on: 2009/8/28 20:16

Greetings in the name of the Lord:

I want to say that I have not personally read the book, but I watched his video presentation(as much I could stand), and was sore grieved over it, and rejected it. It would seem that this kind of literature sales a lot of books. The more imaginative and fantastic the "personal testimony" the more revenue is generated. When I watched his video presentation given at a Church; his attitude was one of lightness and some levity. I also noticed that the people in the audience were not of a solemn demeanor considering such a serious subject as Hell. Maybe its just me, but I would think that if Bill was allowed to visit God's Hell for even one minute (let alone 23) he would be the most serious preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ in America, and perhaps the entire world. He would be in an earnest not seen in our generation of ministerial seminary graduates. He would plead with sinners with arguments, examples, and exhortations to repent. When I make a comparison of Bill Wiese with the rich man of St.Luke's gospel chapter sixteen; I do not see any similarities between the two. In fact when reading the account that the Lord Jesus gave us in Luke 16 we find this rich man in a terrible agony, and pleading with Father Abraham to send Lazarus back to the land of the living to warn his five brothers who were just as sinful and wicked as he. It would therefore seem to me that if this same rich man were to give his "23 minutes in Hell" presentation at this Church, it would have been vastly different than our friend, Bill's so-called, "23 minutes in Hell." I do not believe that the rich man's demeanor and composure would have been light, and certainly not giggly. May I make a little suggestion? If all possible, maybe your wife should give this book back the principal and maybe suggest an extensive BIBLE STUDY among the teachers on Hell and the lake of fire. Mr. Bill Wiese should be a tragic figure; a trembling ruin, not the smiley face he presents when advertising his "23 minutes in Hell."

Having said thus, I do believe that some few persons have had a very real experience of seeing Hell torments after having been resuscitated back to life. I believe that there have been many a persons on a death-bed who have experienced a taste of the Hell they were about to sink down into. Voltaire, Hume, and Alaric are outstanding examples of death-bed experiences of the visions of Hell. I have a book that I would rather recommend any day before I would Bill's book, and that is, "The dying testimonies of the saved and unsaved." This book was written by a preacher in the year 1898. I believe his name was George Shaw. This book is a collection of testimonies he himself collected from his own experiences from ministering by bedsides of the saints and sinners in their final trial here in this world. Rev. George Shaw was also helped by many other saints and ministers who had knowledge of the nature of the book. Rev. Shaw was compiling and sent him their own experiences and accounts. I obtained my copy from Pilkington & Sons. I think they are the same publishers who reprinted this work from 1898.

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by jimp, on: 2009/8/29 3:18

hi chris, sorry to shorten your name... as you know i was friends with bro. ravenhill ... the greatest man i was ever around was danny ost who after having a PERSONAL VISION of hell was driven almost beyond human strength to become an apostle to mexico... he saw the people suffering and crying out that they never heard the truth because the christians were too busy playing games to tell them of Jesus ... he started over 10 churches all self supporting with thousands in each church ... also bible schools... what fruit has come forth from this book... hell is eternal death and not a place you visit.jimp

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell?, on: 2009/8/29 8:50

23 minutes of a plagiaristic and creative nightmare. Why this fellow contrived this fable is debatable, but I would bet that the sensationalism and special prophetic mysteries of it all played into it.

When your trapped into a lifestyle where you depend on handouts from churches as you travel, well, it helps to have an edge. What is cooler than traveling to the heat of Hades?

This fellow is lying, and his yarn is contrived, along of course with being "fairy tale-ish". Yes, it has enough Bible in it to be palatable, but too much Disney in it to believe.

He did it for the cash...and a steady diet of undiscerning Pastors and Churches who would gladly pay him for such a titillating story.....an eye witness!

To me, it's sad. I think he was desperate , and probably his wife is in on it too. By the way, where is the Fear of the Lord in his preaching?...and the message of repentance from the World and the Flesh?

There is no doubt that the Lord has revealed Gehenna to many men over time. I think of General Booth...and others. David wrote about a pit, and Jesus spoke of torment and flames. I myself have had some limited revelation of Hell. God forbid that I, or anyone would dare to profit from any revelation, and how much more so a fib; designed to aggrandize the source for a steady income.

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by Lucash (), on: 2009/8/29 11:31

Just got done listening to the "23 Minutes in Hell" video on Youtube. I stand firm in my belief that this did NOT happen. Hell IS eternal, by no means is it to be simply visited. I do believe that Hell is real. I believe what the scriptures say about Hell, but when this man quotes scripture, it is taken out of context. Context is everything when interpreting scriptures. Look and see where the scripture was used and what was said before and after it. He didn't shed a tear when speaking about being at Jesus' feet. The camera looked to the crowd and you could see women wiping their eyes, and yet they didn't even go through this "experience". There is no fear of God in this man's preaching. He keeps a straight face with a mono-toned voice. No description of Hell can be depicted by man. Nor any description of Jesus can be depicted by man.

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2009/8/29 15:37

Hello...

Of course, I do believe in the reality of Hell and an eternal punishment. I also believe that God could give people a glimpse of such a place. However, there are so many conflicting accounts. Mary Baxter's account differs from the account written in 23 MINUTES IN HELL. This account also differs from the account recorded in Dr. Richard Eby's book, CAUGHT UP INTO PARADISE. Either one is right and the rest is wrong...or they are all wrong.

I have trouble with the account found in the book. It is a narration that seems decidedly extra-Biblical. We can argue that the book will serve to warn people and lead them to Christ...but what if the book is a lie? What if it is a pure lie or exaggeration written by a man who has a motive to keep people from Hell? Mary Baxter's A DIVINE REVELATION OF HELL is filled with strong detail that might warn people about the result of dying without Christ -- but her book is a direct contradiction of Bill Weise's 24 MINUTES IN HELL.

The Scriptures are clear that Hell exists...and that it is a place of torment. Yet the Scriptures are lacking in the details. We have Jesus' account of the Rich Man and Lazarus, but that is pretty much it (as far as specific details). Now, we have men and women who are writing 180 page books about the subject -- filled with conflicting details that are not found in the Word of God.

Anyway, I don't know what would cause a "successful" man like Wiese, Baxter or Dr. Richard Eby to *lie* with their accounts. However, two (or all three) of them are obviously lying. I wonder.

The rich man begged Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers about Hell. Abraham replied, "*If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead*" (Luke 16:31). It makes me wonder why God now decide to use such exclusive, extra-biblical narratives from people who claim to have visited the afterlife.

I wonder if it is wise to allow this book to go unchecked (or to consider it "true") simply because we think that it serves to warn unbelievers?

:-)

Re: 23 minutes in hell - posted by Christlives (), on: 2009/8/29 21:00

I have read the comments on this movie which as of yet I have not watched, but am going to. From Lucash who believes as I do to the last comment I can only imagine what I will see. Hello all. I obviously am new to this site, yet not to sermonindex. I look forward to leaving a comment or two. Matthew 11:28-30

Quote:

Lucash wrote:

Just got done listening to the "23 Minutes in Hell" video on Youtube. I stand firm in my belief that this did NOT happen. Hell IS eternal, by no means is it to be simply visited. I do believe that Hell is real. I believe what the scriptures say about Hell, but when this man quotes scripture, it is taken out of context. Context is everything when interpreting scriptures. Look and see where the scripture was used and what was said before and after it. He did n't shed a tear when speaking about being at Jesus' feet. The camera looked to the crowd and you could see women wiping their eyes, and yet they didn't even go through this "experience". There is no fear of God in this mans preaching. He keeps a straight face with a mono-toned voice. No description of Hell can be depicted by man. Nor any description of Jesus can be depicted by man.

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/8/29 22:00

Hello ccchhhrrriiss,

I too have taught in public schools and then in a private Christian school, and I share your wife's joy in the refreshing change of having students who are respectful and responsible for their own learning.

I have always believed that one should be deeply-rooted in God's word in order to properly assess writings and teachings of "Christian" authors. Too many are easily deceived by the "Christian" label. Without a deep understanding of scripture to refer too, it is easy to swallow false teachings, hook, line and sinker.

While your wife may feel unfairly pressured to teach on this book that she may not agree with, it could also present an opportunity to teach her students how to practice Berean nobility (Ac 17:11), by comparing passages of this book to those in the Bible, in order to determine whether the work is scriptural or not. Then she will help them develop an important skill that will serve them well as Christians in the future.

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by Lysa (), on: 2009/8/30 10:01

Chris,

I do not know anything about this particular book. I read some of the replies and thought of another book that might help some see what a "good" book is as opposed to a not-so-good book on after death!! LOL

She didn't go to hell, she went to heaven but only after God dealt with her for two weeks while in a coma. At the time, 1959, she was the only person on record to be dead almost 30 minutes (I think) and come back to life without any resuscitation.

Here again, there was a purpose to this story and experience: to make her more like Christ. That is what I remember about this book.

(<http://www.amazon.com/My-Glimpse-Eternity-Betty-Malz/dp/0800783638>) My Glimpse of Eternity by Betty Malz From Amazon: *It's the story of how God dealt with a proud, materialistic woman who had to die to learn how to live.*

Re: 23 minutes in hell - posted by Christlives (), on: 2009/8/31 0:19

I totally agree with you AD. I just finished watching it on You Tube and we should leave all in God's hands, and the contradictions were many. I think this will be a video talked about for some time to come.

Quote; George Whitefield "The riches of His free grace cause me daily to triumph of all the temptations of the wicked one, who is very vigilant, and seeks all occasions to disturb me."

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by pende, on: 2009/10/18 15:19

I have read the book and I do believe his account. He was not the first to have this experience. Many have written about it. Many doctors life after death, To hell and back, and others. Go on line to a christian bookstore and you will see. God does things in multiples. He never goes without a cloud of witnesses.

Re: 23 Minutes in Hell? - posted by JoanM, on: 2009/10/18 20:58

I suggest your wife read *One Minute After You Die* by Erwin Lutzer. It is short.

If she thinks it would be helpful, she could suggest it to the owner of the school. Maybe it would be a substitute or a follow-up, or corrective to the attractive story they have been given. A "now that I have your attention, here is some truth" sort of thing.

I could not find it on SI but I am a poor searcher. The Canadian Revival Fellowship may offer it. I would think the owner of this school has heard of Mr. Lutzer.

Re: , on: 2009/10/19 2:34

I believe his account is true too.

Re: - posted by KathleenP (), on: 2009/10/19 5:34

I guess I'm amazed that so many times we jump upon someone that we don't know and are zealous to attack them because they have experienced and preached something that is obviously bearing fruit.

When Bill and his wife first began to speak publicly, they paid ALL travel expenses out of pocket.

They are quiet and humble people and not showboats by any means. I could understand why after speaking to numerous congregations, that mentioning of seeing the Lord will not always be as poignant as the beginning because it would have been repeated often and I can understand how it would appear that he was being casual.

I have seen actual demon spirits and was belittled when I spoke about it. It kept me quiet for years until I met other believers that had experienced similar situations.

Our accounts were different, but what we saw was real. This includes a dear sister in Christ who died briefly in surgery and hovered over the pews while unsaved. She saw hell and fiery arrows shot forth. After her salvation, she read about them in Ephesians.

I guess we sometimes are far too quick to judge, and these people seem to have their share of ridicule and mocking, that is for sure.

After reading their accounts, I am much more sensitive about a place Jesus doesn't want anyone to go to and that is a good place to be.

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2009/10/19 12:46

Hi KathleenP...

Quote:

-----I guess I'm amazed that so many times we jump upon someone that we don't know and are zealous to attack them because they have experienced and preached something that is obviously bearing fruit.

I certainly understand your concern. Yet, I suppose that someone else could say the exact same thing about people who are so quick to embrace something without faithfully testing the claims (rather than a quick consideration of apparent "fruit").

The point that I was trying to make is that there are MANY people who have made claims of visiting either Heaven or Hell...or both. Of course, all of them have described Heaven as a wonderful place and Hell as a terrible place. Yet the only thing that seems to be common in most of their stories is that their stories all seem to contradict one another. Dr. Richard Eby (a doctor who died after falling from his balcony) spoke of both Heaven and Hell in a way that contradicts Bill Wies

e. Mary Baxter (in her book *A Divine Revelation of Hell*) claimed to have visited Hell on several occasions, and her stories are also in direct contradiction with the claims made by Wiese. Many other people have claimed conflicting tales of visiting Eternity and then returning. Some of them are OBVIOUSLY false (like Jesse Duplantis's ridiculous "Close Encounters of the God Kind," in which he claims that he has Gucci furniture in his eternal mansion, a picture of Mary and baby Jesus in his heavenly bathroom, the souls of unborn and aborted babies asking God that they can be born on Earth and gothic-clad angels playing heavy metal rock-n-roll before the throne of God).

Now, nearly all of these tales (about trips to Heaven or Hell) all seem to "inspire" fruit where people consider life after death. Yet some of them are false. So, are they truly bearing godly *fruit*? If so, is this even the type of fruit that would cause a person to remain in Christ Jesus? Remember, the rich man begged Abraham to send a person from Heaven or Hell back to life in order to warn his brothers. Abraham's reply? No, because, " *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead*" (Luke 16:31). Paul spoke about a man (possibly himself) who was caught up into the third heavens and saw things "which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (II Corinthians 12:1-4).

Sister, I am NOT saying that Bill Wiese is being untruthful in his claims. I am only beginning to look through his book and audio/video testimony in order to "test" his claims. The one problem that I already can see is that many of his claims cannot be verified by the Word of God. Yes, we know that Hell is a very real and very terrible place. Yet, Bill Wiese goes into specifics that are NOT included in the Word of God. Thus, many of the claims within his book cannot be tested by the Word of God because those claims are extra-Biblical. This is true of nearly every other claim made by people who tell stories about trips to Heaven and/or Hell.

Yes, many Christians can be "far too quick to judge." But is this what we are doing? Perhaps we are not quick enough to TEST. Paul encouraged us to do this in I Thessalonians 5:21. While we aren't necessarily to judge the heart of the man or his motives, we can test the claims. This is quite different from "fruit inspecting." I've noticed that some people are far too quick to also point out "good fruit." In spiritual terms, I have known some people who have a difficult time telling the difference between a cherry and a crab apple. Worse, there are "fruit" that appears lovely at the time but can be poisonous (or even deadly) if consumed.

A former professor of mine wrote a book that examines many of the claims made by people who speak about visiting Eternity and returning (along with other widely publicized claims of the supernatural). Dr. Bill Alnor wrote *Heaven Can't Wait*. Dr. Alnor, who served as a pastor of a Calvary Chapel for several years, shows how many of these claims strongly contradict one another. In fact, he even shows how some of the people actually contradict themselves with each subsequent telling of their story.

In regard to the purpose of this thread: My wife was assigned to read *23 Minutes in Hell* by the owner of a Christian school where she works as a teacher. When my wife met with the owner, she explained her hesitation about embracing many of the specific claims found within the book. My wife explained her view that Hell can only be described as a terrifying, eternal place reserved for people who do not know the Lord, and that this is already clear in the Word of God. My wife further said that she didn't really need a book to describe the precise details of a place that she already knows is horrible from the Word of God. The owner kindly agreed.

Anyway, I hope that you don't view this thread or the underlying question as an affront upon Bill Wiese. I don't know the man (or much about him) to even want to do that. Rather, my wife and I were inquisitive about this man's specific claims, and what others think about so many often-conflicting tales of visits to Hell (or Heaven). Since we had not read the book at the time, we weren't sure what to think. We have since read through the book and have already found some issues with certain specific claims. This wasn't meant to cast a reflection upon Bill Wiese at all, but just as a request for advice from anyone who might have been more familiar with the man's claims and had tested them by the Word of God.

As I said before, many of his specific claims cannot be verified by the Word (since the Word does not go into nearly as much detail about the layout of Hell as Wiese does). After my wife has (and to a lesser extent, I have) looked through the book, we do have some concerns with certain specific claims, which could potentially call into question the entire account.

Re: - posted by IWantAnguish (), on: 2009/10/19 14:17

This wicked generation seeks a sign. Or some garbage that titillates the carnal mind.

No sign will be given except the sign of Jonah.

This junk won't save America from the impending judgment of God.

Re: - posted by KathleenP (), on: 2009/10/19 18:41

Brother Chris, I wasn't specifically aiming my response at yourself as I did not get the impression that you yourself were judging Mr. Weiss. Maybe the careless use of words that get thrown around by some makes me nervous because I know that all we speak or say is being recorded, and I am concerned for those don't have great discretion when making replies.

When I look for fruit, it must also be evident in those that speak here. Is this fair to ask saints?

We all had a bad experience with the foolishness of Todd Bentley, and those from the wealth and prosperity sect, but we cannot group all into that category.

Jesus did not say that dreams, visions and miracles would end. The sad thing is; we've seen plenty of the counterfeit.

Maybe it isn't Mr. Weiss, but the sign seekers that are the issue. I did not get the impression that he was desiring to come as a prophet or someone great. He was sincere and we need to be cautious when using harsh words.

He is not leading folks into sin but urging them to repentance.

I truly do not wish to argue. It is not what the Lord has taught us to do. If you feel that he is in error, then that is not something I can convince you to change. I speak this to all that are responding. I just ask that we be extremely careful and also may we use scripture as to why we feel that a certain soul is not of God.

Brethren, in regards also to God judging this nation, I am so glad that He is not slack as some men count slackness. I have family members that need to be born again and I am so grateful for his patience.

Peace.

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2009/10/19 19:33

Hi KathleenP,

Quote:

-----When I look for fruit, it must also be evident in those that speak here. Is this fair to ask saints?

....

I did not get the impression that he was desiring to come as a prophet or someone great. He was sincere and we need to be cautious when using harsh words.

He is not leading folks into sin but urging them to repentance.

The only concern with this is that the same thing could be said of MANY of the people who claim to have visited Heaven or Hell...but whose story directly contradicts with the testimony told by Bill Wiese. For instance, the stories told by Dr. Richard Eby and Mary Baxter are in direct contradiction with the story told by Bill Wiese. All of these supposedly show "fruit" in a broad sense of the word. All three of these individuals "urge" others to consider life after death and also "urge" their readers/hearers into repentance. Yet, due to the contradictions, at least two of these individuals are not telling the truth.

Much more importantly, the specific details as described by Bill Wiese cannot be verified by Scriptures. Now, this is not to say that it did not happen. Yet, the tales of individuals who supposedly visited Hell seems to be in contradiction with the Scriptures that I mentioned earlier.

Quote:

-----I truly do not wish to argue. It is not what the Lord has taught us to do. If you feel that he is in error, then that is not something I can convince you to change. I speak this to all that are responding. I just ask that we be extremely careful and also may we use scripture as to why we feel that a certain soul is not of God.

I certainly understand your concerns. However, there is a difference between "arguing" and sincerely "testing" the words or claims of a mere man. The Bereans were counted as being of more noble character since they searched the Scriptures to see if what Paul was teaching was true. Yet we can't really "test" these stories with Scripture. Why? The Scriptures are decidedly vague in regard to the specific details about Hell (at least, compared with the precise details that Mary Baxter, Richard Eby, Bill Wiese and others have provided).

Do you see the problem with quickly embracing such a story? If the Bereans were considered "noble" for testing Paul's words, I believe that God expects His children to test the claims of others. There is no need to "convince" anyone of such a story that cannot be entirely verified by Scripture.

In fact, I believe that we should not be "convinced" of ANYTHING until it is verified by Scripture. The burden of proof (so to speak) isn't on people to prove his claims as being false, but on believers to verify the truth BEFORE they are willing to embrace such a testimony. So far, I haven't found anything in this story that makes me embrace Bill Wiese's claims. I am certainly not passing judgment on the man himself. His relationship with Christ is, of course, between him and the Lord (and, to a much lesser extent, the people that he preaches to). I would simply urge all believers to "test everything" and only hold onto the good (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

Re: - posted by KathleenP (), on: 2009/10/19 19:58

Thanks for the comments Chris. I guess the most important thing is.....may none of us come to see how accurate their descriptions of hell are...ever.

Selah

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2009/10/19 20:37

Quote:

KathleenP wrote:

Thanks for the comments Chris. I guess the most important thing is.....may none of us come to see how accurate their descriptions of hell are...ever.

Selah

Amen!

:~)

Re: - posted by KathleenP (), on: 2009/10/19 20:42

:~)

Re: - posted by kathleen1 (), on: 2009/10/22 20:29

As a new Christian in 2001 I read the books by Mary Baxter. I thought them scary, like a horror novel. As I grew and began to mature in the Word, though I have a long way to go, I began to doubt their validity.

The Bible contradicts this premise (the rich man in hell was told they had Moses and the prophets, if they wouldn't hear them, neither would they believe though one came back from the dead) so I don't believe this was God.

If this guy, or Mary Baxter had actually seen hell, which I do not believe, they would not dare come back and try to make a buck off it. Nor would they be traveling around the country with the same message, meaning, all they really speak about is their 'experience'. There is no spiritual depth or genuine concern for the lost. All they can talk about is their books and experiences when they visit churches, from what I've read and seen in videos on the internet.

I believe if hell were truly opened to the human for a brief moment, they would be so humbled, so frightened, so forever changed, money would mean nothing, reputation would mean nothing, material possessions would be meaningless, souls being saved would mean everything.

Him who helped create hell, (by whom all things were made) set the example of someone who really knew what hell was like because He was there when it was created-He poured out His life for others, knowing in spite of His sacrifice, many would perish. He still did it to make a way to salvation and redemption for those who would come. Man had an out. Jesus suffered greatly to give it to us.

Where is the cross in the lives of these who are making merchandise out of God's people with lies? Maybe they had a bad dream about hell, but Jesus didn't put His vision up for sale. Neither should they. I understand the cost of producing the books-but if it were a genuine testimony, God would foot the bill and the book would not cost so much, if anything, for if you'd really seen hell how could you charge people to know what you saw?