

What Happens After Death? Part One: Hell

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:2)

Different options after death

- **Naturalist:** we don't have a soul, just body, there is no existence after death
- **Universalist:** in the end, everyone goes to heaven, all paths lead to salvation
- **Reincarnationist:** multiple successive lives, we die and return until we get it right
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- **Annihilationist:** unbelievers could suffer for a bit in hell and then cease to exist, or just cease to exist
- **Catholic:** there is a purgatory, people can die, suffer for a while, finish work of salvation and go to heaven
- **Orthodox:** punishment for the wicked is everlasting and that it is punitive, not redemptive

Biblical terms describing where the dead are

- **Sheol** - a Hebrew term simply describing "the grave" or "death" - Does not refer to "hell" specifically
- **Hades** - a Greek term that usually refers to hell - a place of torment (Luke 10:15; 16:23)
- **Gehenna** - a Greek term that always refers to hell - a place of torment (Matthew 5:30; 23:33)
- **"Lake of fire"** - the final abode of unbelievers after they are resurrected (Revelation 20:14,15)
- **"Abraham's bosom"** - a place of eternal comfort (Luke 16:22)
- **"Paradise"** - a place of eternal comfort (Luke 23:43)
- **"With the Lord"** - where church age believers are after death (Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 5:8)
- **"New heavens and earth"** - where believers will be after they are resurrected (Revelation 20:4-6; 21:1-4)

Jesus wants us to know about hell | Luke 16:19-31

"Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28)

- **Our standing here does not guarantee our standing there (Luke 16:19-23)**
"Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom." (Luke 16:22-23)
- **Eternity includes a place of blessing and a place of agony (Luke 16:24-25)**
"But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.'" (Luke 16:25)
- **A decision needs to be made on this side of eternity (Luke 16:26-30)**
"And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us." (Luke 16:26)
- **We have all we need to make this decision (Luke 16:31)**
"But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'" (Luke 16:31)

Jesus has provided THE way to be saved from hell

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

- **There is only one way to heaven, but many ways to Jesus (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)**
"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'" (John 14:6)
And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)
- **Enter through the narrow gate (Matthew 7:13-14)**
"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

Quick References About Hell:

Key Facts about Eternity

- (1) Everyone will exist eternally either in heaven or hell (Daniel 12:2, 3; Matthew 25:46; John 5:28; Revelation 20:14, 15).
- (2) Everyone has only one life in which to determine their destiny (Hebrews 9:27).
- (3) Heaven or hell is determined by whether a person believes (puts their trust) in Christ alone to save them (John 3:16, 36).

Key Passages about Hell

- (1) Hell was designed originally for Satan and his demons (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).
- (2) Hell will also punish the sin of those who reject Christ (Matthew 13:41, 50; Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8).
- (3) Hell is conscious torment.
Matthew 13:50 - "furnace of fire...weeping and gnashing of teeth"
Mark 9:48 - "where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched"
Revelation 14:10 - "he will be tormented with fire and brimstone"
- (4) Hell is eternal and irreversible.
Revelation 14:11 - "the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever and they have no rest day and night"
Revelation 20:14 - "This is the second death, the lake of fire"
Revelation 20:15 - "If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire"

Erroneous Views of Hell

- (1) Purgatorial/Second Chance - After death there is still a way to escape hell.
Answer: "It is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).
- (2) Universalism - All are eternally saved.
Answer: It denies the truth of salvation through Christ which means that a person decides to either trust in Christ or else they reject Christ and go to hell (John 3:16; 3:36).
- (3) Annihilationism - Hell means a person ceases to exist.
Answer: It denies the resurrection of the unsaved (John 5:28, etc. - see above). It denies conscious torment (see above).

Objections to the Biblical View of Hell

- (1) A loving God would not send people to a horrible hell.
Response: God is just (Romans 2:11). God has provided the way of salvation to all (John 3:16, 17; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15; 1 Timothy 2:6; 4:10; Titus 2:11; 2 Peter 3:9). Even those who haven't heard of Christ are accountable for God's revelation in nature (Romans 1:20). God will seek those who seek Him (Matthew 7:7; Luke 19:10). Therefore God doesn't send people to hell, they choose it (Romans 1:18, 21, 25).
- (2) Hell is too severe a punishment for man's sin.
Response: God is holy-perfect (1 Peter 1:14, 15). Sin is willful opposition to God our creator (Romans 1:18-32). Our sin does merit hell (Romans 1:32; 2:2, 5, 6). What is unfair and amazing is that Christ died for our sin and freely offers salvation to all (Romans 2:4; 3:22-24; 4:7, 8; 5:8, 9).

LifeGroup Questions:

1. Christians often look very close-minded when it comes to heaven and hell, what happens in the afterlife. What experiences have you had in this conversation with other people and how did you navigate it? Did it go well? Did it go poorly?
2. Read and discuss this quote from atheist, Penn Jillette, of magician duo, Penn and Teller: "I've always said that I don't respect people who don't proselytize. I don't respect that at all. If you believe that there's a heaven and a hell, and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life, and you think that it's not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward—and atheists who think people shouldn't proselytize and who say just leave me alone and keep your religion to yourself—how much do you have to hate somebody to not proselytize? How much do you have to hate somebody to believe everlasting life is possible and not tell them that? I mean, if I believed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that a truck was coming at you, and you didn't believe that truck was bearing down on you, there is a certain point where I tackle you. And this is more important than that."
3. Do you have an urgency to tell others about Jesus' plan of salvation from hell? Why or why not?

Next Steps:

1. **Place your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord today.** Use the booklet in the seat rack in front of you called, "Connect with God" to help guide you through this life-changing decision.
2. **Proclaim you are a follower of Jesus through baptism.** The next opportunity to be baptized is during the Memorial Weekend One Service on May 24 at 10:00 am. If you are interested in being baptized or want to learn more about baptism join our 1-hour class TODAY at 8:45 or 10:45 in the Prayer Room (located to the right side of the stage in the Worship Center).



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