

Apologetics: The Problem of Hell?
Wednesday December 4 ,2024 24097

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2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

1 Timothy 2:4 state that God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth,"

Then how do people end up in hell? _____

1. Why does the subject of hell disturb us so much?

a. _____.

- i. If there is a God, then, of course, he's supportive of us. That's what he's there for.
- ii. And so that means he must be loving.
- iii. It means he must be forgiving and must accept everybody.
- iv. And any idea of God being a judge or getting upset about things, that's sort of an ancient, unsophisticated idea from primitive cultures.
- v. But we know better today, a God of wrath or a God who judges is offensive.

b. Why doesn't God smite the wicked right now?

- i. Why would he delay his judgment of wicked men,
- ii. even offer forgiveness to those who seem to enjoy and profit from injustice?

"Number one hell is reserved as a place for people like you. And as a Christian I can say that there is a God who's a God of grace, who can forgive people like you." Rachel Denhollander to Larry Nassar.

2. Are you offended by the God of _____?

3. Are you Offended by the God of _____?

Corrie Ten Boom

"When They See Us" on Netflix

Can God forgive the people who did that to those kids?

4. I just want us to consider both sides this evening.
 - a. If you're here and you're _____ at the notion of a God who judges people,
 - b. let's also talk about how upset we ought to be about the idea of a God who _____ every kind of person.
 - c. Your perspective depends on your situation

5. If the _____ your reality, then you are a person who believes that hell and judgment are as real as heaven and love. And if you're uncertain about that, the Bible isn't. Hell and God's wrath and judgment are absolutely vital to the gospel story.

6. What does the _____ regarding hell?
 - a. The Bible clearly teaches that hell is real.
 - b. Every New Testament author mentions it.
 - c. So, we've got to take hell seriously.

Punishment, destruction, and exile. Each of these descriptions teaches us something of the nature of hell.

7. _____ is the main way the Bible describes hell, and it is usually portrayed as _____ by fire.
 - a. Jesus consigns the wicked to _____ and grants the righteous _____. Matthew 25

Mark 9:43-48, 2 Thessalonians 1, Revelation 20

8. Hell is _____ because God is the judge who justly sentences the _____.

9. Destruction _____.

Matthew 10:28, John 3:16, Galatians 6:8, Hebrews 10:26-27, Revelation 21:8

10. Hell is _____ because God is a _____ who vanquishes all his _____.

_____. This is _____ from the kingdom of God, exclusion from his presence, or being cut off from eternal life.

11. Jesus regularly portrays hell as being outside the kingdom and in outer darkness.

Matthew 13:40, Matthew 25

12. Hell is _____ because God is a king who allows _____ into his kingdom.

Jesus says in Matthew 7:21, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

Hell is _____.

13. Destruction immediately ravaged the world in the form of _____.

- a. He _____ them from Eden. Genesis 3:23 says, “So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden.”
- b. From Genesis 3 to the end of Revelation, sin always brings with it punishment, destruction, and exile. All three, all the time.

14. It is _____.

2 Thessalonians 1:9

15. How does the Bible deal with our _____ to hell?

- a. Hell is an _____.
 - i. Why can't God simply forgive?
 - ii. How can any sin deserve everlasting destruction?
- b. Sin is far _____ than we realize. We get glimpses of its seriousness when we see its _____.
- c. God can't and won't just look the other way at wickedness.
 - i. The heinousness of sin is not measured by the sin itself but by the value and dignity of the one being sinned against. Which makes it a very big deal.
- d. Every emotional reaction you and I have to the doctrine of hell is a direct reflection of our view of God's holiness and glory.
 - i. We'll only believe hell to be an overreaction if we have a small view of God.
 - ii. The more we know the _____ of our sin, the more we'll appreciate the _____ of God against it.
- e. But what's the difference in each of these scenarios?
 - i. The sin is the _____ (pulling the limbs off).
 - ii. The only difference is the one _____ (from the fly to the baby).

16. The more _____ the creature, the more **heinous and reprehensible** the sin. And the same is true with _____.

- a. He is the most _____ being in the universe.
 - i. His glory and worth are infinite and eternal.
 - ii. To sin against an infinitely glorious being is an infinitely heinous offense that is worthy of an infinitely serious punishment.

Hell is _____ an overreaction. Hell makes sense when we realize how infinitely serious it is to rebel against a perfectly holy God.

Psalm 5

Hell is _____.

17. Even if hell isn't an overreaction, isn't it unloving that people suffer for eternity?
- The biblical picture is that sin is what separates us from the presence of God.
 - Pastor Tim Keller puts it this way, "hell is simply one's _____ apart from God on a trajectory to infinity."

"Hell begins with a grumbling mood, always complaining, always blaming others... but you are still distinct from it. You may even criticize it in yourself and wish you could stop it. But there may come a day when you can no longer. Then there will be no you left to criticize the mood or even to enjoy it, but just the grumble itself, going on forever like a machine. It is not a question of God "sending us" to hell. In each of us there is something growing, which will BE hell unless it is nipped in the bud."
C.S. Lewis

There will not be people in hell begging for the mercy of God and wishing to be where Jesus is in heaven. They will still be in hell rejecting the glory of God.

Hell _____ unloving. Hell is simply one's freely chosen identity apart from God on a trajectory to infinity.

Hell is **unfair**

18. "What about my unbelieving neighbor or family member? Will they be in hell with Hitler?"
- if there's a secret back door, then is not Jesus the most foolish person who ever lived? Shouldn't we feel sorry for him? Saying there's a backdoor way into heaven that ignores and goes around the cross means Jesus died for _____.
 - When we reject the free offer of _____ through Jesus Christ,
 - forging _____ in a world that is not our own.
 - We're choosing to live as our own god.
 - Flat out rejecting what the Bible tells us, in that there is only one way to God and that is through faith in Jesus Christ. So on Judgment Day the little old lady still has to have an answer for God's wrath regarding her sin, she still has to have a covering to shield her from the fury of his righteous love. But the scandal of it is that she's rejected that in her lifetime.

“In the long run the answer to all those who object to the doctrine of hell, is itself a question: ‘What are you asking God to do?’ To wipe out their past sins and, at all costs, to give them a fresh start ...? But he has done so, _____. To forgive them? They do not want to be forgiven. To leave them alone? Alas, I am afraid that is what he does.” C.S. Lewis

Rachel McLaughlin has written,

1. If Jesus is the Bread of Life, rejecting him means _____
2. If Jesus is the Light of the World, rejecting him means _____.
3. If Jesus is the _____, rejecting him means wandering alone and lost.
4. If Jesus is the _____, rejecting him is eternal death.
5. And if Jesus is the Lamb of God, sacrificed for our sins, rejecting him means _____for ourselves.

No one can make it to God on their own merit.

No matter how good that merit looks to us here and now.

19. What does the cross say to us about all of it?

- a. The cross teaches us that we are more _____ in ourselves than we ever dared believe...
 - i. This is why the cross is so _____.
 - ii. This is why Jesus wasn’t euthanized.
 - iii. This is why he didn’t just pray a prayer, take our sin upon himself, and pass away in the night.
- b. In the cross we see the full effects of the aftermath of sin and all of what it does to humanity all laid on the innocent life of Christ. And in that judgment we see the Righteous God pouring out his hatred on our sinfulness on the cross.
- c. We see the punishment. Isaiah 53:4 says Jesus was stricken by God, struck down and afflicted.
- d. We see the destruction. Isaiah 53:5 says he was crushed for our iniquities.

- e. We see the exile. Isaiah 53:8 says he was judged, taken away, and cut off from the land of the living.

- f. The cross teaches us that we are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe...yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.

“Stand unclean, no one else could

In my place condemned He stood

Now his nearness is my good

Hallelujah! What a Savior!”