

The Reality of Hell

This subject is one I can rejoice over if, for no other reason, than that I have never been in Hell, and because of the blessed gift of Christ I will never be there as a permanent resident! I use the word permanent because I have read and heard the testimonies of those who have been there and returned, and it leaves me deeply disturbed and saddened that the church in this generation has stopped preaching and teaching about Hell and the Lake of Fire!

An old evangelist, Billy Sunday, used to preach about Hell a lot during his meetings, and it is told that one time a man asked Billy why he preached so much on Hell. He simply replied, "It's in my Bible; isn't it in yours?" Charles Spurgeon, another old time preacher said that a man who preaches on Hell should be preaching with tears.

Certainly knowing what Hell is like should shock our hearts and cause us pain in our hearts that many are going there including people we love and work with every day of our lives. Perhaps, no matter what we believe on the existence of Hell, the thought that someone would be separated from God forever and be alive and aware of that separation should spur us to action on their behalf. What could be more horrible than being separated from God's love in a place where existence goes on and on with no change? Unfortunately, I believe there is enough scripture through the pages of the Bible to tell us that Hell is not merely spiritual but physical anguish that never ceases no matter what the person there would wish to the contrary.

Let us examine a few scriptures concerning Hell. Before doing so I remind the reader that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." We cannot segregate scripture that contains hard truth of judgment and torment from scripture about God's love and mercy merely because one is attractive and the other is not! To do so is foolish, and leaves the reader of scripture to be his or her own authority and seriously in error. God's word will not change according to our whims and fancies. We must accept all of it whether it pleases us or not!

Deuteronomy 32:22 speaks of God's anger burning unto the lowest Hell.

II Samuel 22:6 declares, "The sorrows of Hell compassed me about."

Psalm 9:17 – "The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Psalm 86:13 – "For great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest Hell."

Psalm 116:3 – "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of Hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow."

Proverbs 9:18 – “But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her Guests are in the depths of Hell.”

Proverbs 15:11 – “Hell and destruction are before the Lord, how much more then the hearts of the children of men.”

Proverbs 15:24 – “The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from Hell beneath.”

Proverbs 23:13-14 – “Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with a rod and shalt deliver his soul from Hell.”

Isaiah 14:15 – “Yet thou shalt be brought down to Hell, to the sides of the pit.”

There are at least eighteen more references to Hell in the Old Testament that are not listed above. that demand a study if you wish to compare scripture with scripture and get a complete picture. Suffice it to say that God doesn't repeat Himself without good reason, and this subject is vitally important when considering how many verses refer to it throughout the entire Bible.

An interesting thing about the New Testament references to Hell is little known among professing Christians today. When most modern Christians think of Christ and His ministry the central theme is how loving He is. That is a far deeper truth than most of us comprehend. However, it ignores the fact that He taught things that angered his hearers, he drove the money changers from the temple, very fiercely confronted the scribes and Pharisees about their hypocrisy, and spoke more about Hell than anyone in scripture. As a matter of fact, of all the references to Hell in the New Testament, Christ spoke 19 of them which is a large percentage. Let's examine some of them and see what He had to say since every true Christian admits Christ is the greatest authority on anything there is to be an authority about.

The references in which Christ spoke are Matthew 5:22, 29 and 30, Matthew 8:12, Matthew 10:28, Matthew 11:23, Matthew 16:18, Matthew 18:9, Matthew 23:14-15, Matthew 23:33, Matthew 25:41 and 46. Four references in Mark and Luke repeat the teachings of our Lord on this. Luke 12:5 and 16:23 are further words on the subject in the teachings of Christ. In Revelation 1:18 Christ declares that He has the keys to Hell and death.

Bearing the above in mind, I find it amazing that what the Lord thought was very important is so greatly ignored in the teaching and preaching of His church. Are we greater than Christ, or do we seek to pacify this generation as well as those in church assemblies by neglecting to warn them of the danger of rebellion and apostasy from Christ? What is it that keeps us silent on this vital subject

while millions are in mortal danger of going there both in and out of church? I am convinced that we know nothing of what Hell is all about, and some that attend church are taught to believe that Hell doesn't exist or is irrelevant. To allow this to continue would be criminal to the highest degree! People must be told!

They must be warned to stay away from Hell because, whether people choose to believe it exists or not, it does! Death will reveal the truth if the body of Christ will continue to withhold it from those in danger of going there, but then it will be too late. We must repent of our ignorance for the sake of multitudes of people within our sphere of influence.

According to scripture Hell is a place of eternal darkness and torment. Descriptions include a place where "their worm doesn't die." their fire is not quenched, and there is no rest day or night! The Bible further tells us that the smoke of their torment ascends up forever and ever. The descriptions of Hell show it is a place totally void of any hope of relief in a place where time is swallowed up in eternity! Worst of all it is a place where those who go will never be able to find the forgiveness and peace that come through the precious blood of Christ. They will never feel love. All their fears on earth will be magnified a hundred fold and more, and memories of chances offered to turn from sin to Christ will echo over and over in their minds throughout eternity! And then Hell shall be cast into the lake of fire when all souls are called into the presence of a Holy and Just God for review of their lives. Those not found written in the "Lamb's Book of Life" shall be cast into that lake of fire – Revelation 20:15 to burn there time without end!

What I am about to share in this chapter will prove shocking to others as it was to me, but I believe it is necessary to spur us to understand how much preaching about Hell is needed. It is necessary to some of us, and I hope many of us, to move us to intense prayer and activity on behalf of those who are headed there.

There are some who have said they died and went to Hell, and God graciously gave them life again so they could come back and warn others not to come there. Those who have said this were both Christians and non-Christians. Of the non-Christians I heard tell their experience, all were atheists, totally rejected Christ and never entered a church, confessed to living selfishly and only for themselves and every one of them turned their lives to Christ immediately upon coming back from the dead. Their descriptions vary only in small details, but none conflict with the idea of a place of torment, demon activity, burning and smoke. One saw people he knew in life crying out to them to run from Hell. One man was attacked by demons that at first appeared friendly to him until he got into total darkness with them and they ripped his flesh to shreds and bit him and cursed violently at him. The others had their stories of horror and suffering before coming back from the dead.

I also heard testimony of two Christians that God took to Hell, and in both cases God took away knowledge of their salvation so they could experience Hell as a lost sinner. Their testimonies were identical, although they did not know one another and had no connection in life prior to their experiences. They told of intense heat magnified so that

no human would be able to exist in it, yet it did not consume the people that were there. Hell's inhuman occupants would have flesh on them, but the fire would burn it off and then it would grow on them again only to be burned off. In addition there were worms eating at their bodies, and they could not stop them. This was an eternal condition with no hope that it would ever change. Huge demons 13 to 15 feet tall delighted in torture they inflicted on individuals there. There were also other demons of different sizes and shapes and body structure. They were ugly beyond any earthly description of demons, and they were powerful. The tortures they inflicted were different for different people according to their life on earth. There were special places reserved for those who worked closely with the devil while on earth and to whom the devil had imparted special powers. They were called forth to bow to Satan and he would mock them and torture them expressing great delight in how he had deceived them and what he could do to them there.

Some of the things experienced by these two Christians were things that humans fear the most on earth. There were rats, snakes, maggots, spiders and other ugly creatures of all sizes and shapes that delighted in tormenting the people and they weren't burned by the fire, but would bite and frighten their victims incessantly. There was also a stench so horrible that it made breathing unbearable. Screams were everywhere and so many that it was impossible to rest for even a moment from them. The air was dry without moisture, and water and blood were non-existent there. There were pits reserved for every individual surrounded with demons whose joy it was to torture them. Vivid descriptions were given by these Christians of different people who suffered different things at varied levels based on their lives on earth. Some were mightily used of God in leading souls into God's kingdom but became so puffed up in their imaginations that they began to take glory that belonged to God and lifted themselves up with pride. They forgot God and even blasphemed Him in their folly and died without repenting even though God extended many offers of forgiveness if they would repent. Some would be preaching in Hell as if they could save those that were there, but their preaching was in vain. Nobody would listen to them, and then they would curse in anger. So many of the people in Hell had heard the words of the gospel and foolishly neglected to listen; thinking that they could respond sometime later in their life. They died never taking God seriously. My heart grieved over this because I had seen it so often during my life and ministry.

There was so much more that I could share concerning what these Christians saw, but the one thing both said that was worse than any other in Hell is significant. Worse than the torture or fire or heat and smoke and the awful smells of that place was the utter hopelessness of knowing they would never be able to leave. They knew in a way nobody on earth can possibly know that they would be there forever. It was despair deeper than it is possible to know in this life, and they could not express it enough! To know their loved ones had no idea they were there, and they could not tell them where they were was also very painful to them.

I can feel my heart crying inside at the thought of anyone going there. I have been to funerals where I know the person lived an ungodly life, and I heard a preacher telling those gathered there that the person was at rest with God even though I knew they never

repented and turned to Christ. What a horrible deception to give false hope to people and allowing them to think that their loved one is safe in the arms of Jesus. Worse, what a horrible deception to give that same false hope to people who attend the funeral and have never turned to Jesus. Some will say that we are not to judge others, but the Lord tells me that we can know a tree by its fruit. The Bible says we are to judge righteous judgment and that he that is spiritual judges all things. Further it states that from inward out of the heart of man the mouth speaks.

Cursing God does not come from those who love Him.

I pray God will break my cold heart for the sake of those who will not listen to the gospel. The people of God in this generation must wake up! There is so much at stake! No matter what we believe about Hell, the awful separation from God without any of the torments should be enough to spur us on to reaching the lost. If you have ever experienced the wonderful loving touch of God; please imagine what it would be like to live without it forever! Then ask God to help you put aside your own desires and plans in order that others may know Him! God will show you what He requires of you. Hell is real! Don't let anyone go there if you can possibly do anything about it. The love of Christ must compel us! There is nobody but Christians who know the truth about God's love and mercy for those who will repent and turn to Him. If we don't speak up many will die in their sin without hope and without Christ and go to this terrible place! What will you do reader?