

Sunday, March 2, 2014

Hell is Real
Pastor Charles Mendenhall

Statistics tell us that 35% of Baptists don't believe in a literal hell, 54% Presbyterians don't, 58% Methodists and 60% of Episcopalians don't.

Out of 8 of leading seminaries, which is after graduate school for preparation in ministry, 71% of the students don't believe in a literal hell or literal heaven. This is alarming. How can the future religious leaders/teachers not believe in hell or heaven?

Jesus says in The Word that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. Jesus also said that he has prepared a place for us and that is heaven and he has mansions that he is preparing there for us.

There are doctrines that the young people are being exposed to and taken in by. One being how a loving God can send someone to hell, but the truth is how we can reject such a loving God. Many of the doctrines that are so damning take the free will and choice out of man.

There are the atheists who don't believe in God so they don't believe in heaven or hell. They believe we have evolved from nothing and that is what happens when we die. An agnostic believes there may be a God but they aren't sure. Annihilationist believe that condemned unbelievers will be annihilated, or destroyed after death, instead of spending an eternity of punishment in hell. Ultimate reconciliation believes everyone is going to heaven and hell is just a purifying place to get us to heaven, and that ultimately satan himself will be reconciled to God and no one will be in hell. There is the Universalists who believe everyone will go to heaven. They would say that the 911 terrorists and the Christians went to heaven.

The Great White Throne judgment

One of the greatest judgments is the Christian judging himself.

Christians will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and this is where rewards will be passed out. There are degrees of rewards in heaven and punishment in Hell.

Matthew 25:41 (KJV)

⁴¹ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

There is not two hells, but there is another place of torment, a bottomless pit, which is referred to, and it is the place that satan will go to forever after the 1000 year reign.

Hell is always referred to as a place of torment. Heaven is always a place of comfort.

V. 22 is a time before Jesus was resurrected, a time before his total triumph over the devourer, or satan, Lucifer, or the devil whichever term you use.

When we read in the scriptures about when Jesus rose victorious and made his ascension into heaven, one thing he did was descend into the bowels of the earth and went into the realm of Abraham's bosom or the righteous and released him and those that were in captivity he led them to heaven and released them. And so actually the place for the righteous to go now is not like it was before Jesus went back to heaven. WE go, our spirit and soul into the presence of the God because to be absent from the body is to be present with The Lord.

God is full of grace and mercy but there is a time that it is cut off. As an act of our free will we keep rejecting it and if we do until we die without accepting Jesus we go to hell.

Luke 16:24 (KJV)

²⁴ And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

Torment is used four times in these passages. Torment in the new testament means a fire that is hot enough to melt metal, another is acute pain from a debilitating disease, another meaning is for when Christians or individuals are being tormented, sharp spikes were put in a wrap or cloth and then the person would be wrapped tight in the wrap until they were pierced through and died.

Hell isn't good. It is so bad you don't want your family or friends going there.

Luke 16:25-29 (KJV)

²⁵ But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

²⁶ And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

²⁷ Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

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

²⁹ Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

There are basically three things that happen when a person goes to hell besides the torment.

One will desire to be comforted. There will be a tremendous amount of discomfort, and it will go on and on. No matter how long you have been there you are no closer to the end when you began, because it is eternal, no end, everlasting.

Neglect brings regret. This applies in the natural and the spiritual. One gets concerned about their family. Neglect to spiritual things, being concerned about others going to hell. The gospel of Jesus needs to be spread so there is no regret.

One will see consolation in hell and won't find it. Is the bottomless pit, utter darkness. The absence of Jesus.

Isaiah 57:20-21 (KJV)

²⁰ But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

²¹ There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

The beautiful part is that hell was never prepared for Christians. It was prepared for the devil and his angels, and God gave us the right to choose if we go. Choose life. If you have accepted Jesus you are Heaven bound! Hallelujah!!