

The Last Things: Hell & the Lake of Fire

Revelation 20:11-15

Systematic Theology

**Main Idea: Hell is a real place of
eternal, conscious suffering filled
with real people.**

10.24.12

Compassion & Hell

"If our hearts are never moved with deep sorrow when we contemplate this doctrine, then there is a serious deficiency in our spiritual and emotional sensibilities... The reason it is hard for us to think of the doctrine of hell is because God has put in our hearts a portion of his own love for people created in his image, even his love for sinners who rebel against him."

- Wayne Grudem, 1152.

Luke 16:22-24

The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, ²³ and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

What is in hell?

- 1) **Memory**
- 2) **Consciousness**
- 3) **Physical sensation**
- 4) **Flames that cause torment**
- 5) **Regret**

Rev. 14:10

he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

What is not in hell?

1) Fruit of the Spirit

2) Friendship

3) Hope

Is hell a metaphor for the grave?

- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Liberal theologians

What is Annihilationism?

- **The wicked will suffer God's wrath for a time and will then cease to exist.**
- **An eternal hell is inconsistent with God's loving nature.**
- **An eternal hell is overkill.**

Phil. 3:19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

1 Thess. 5:3 While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

2 Thess. 2:9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

2 Peter 3:7 But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

Response:

- **Context of Ecclesiastes ‘...under the sun...’ = life without God.**
- **Biblical passages: hell is a place you don’t want to be...**

Eternality of Hell

- 1) God's nature is eternal - Heb. 13:5
 - 2) God's nature is just
 - 3) People continue to sin in hell -
'...gnashing of teeth...'
- *Hell doesn't change a sinful heart.

Facts of the Final Judgment

- 1) Unbelievers will be judged - Rev. 20:12**
- 2) Degrees of punishment**

Romans 2:5-6 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ He will render to each one according to his works:

Facts of the Final Judgment

2) Degrees of punishment

Rev. 20:12b-13 And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

Luke 12:47-48 And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.

Matthew 11:22-24 But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. ²³ And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴ But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.”

Luke 20:46-47 “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁷ who devour widows’ houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.”

Matthew 12:36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak,

Luke 12:2-3 Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. ³ Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

3) Angels will be judged

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;

Jude 6 And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—

Wayne Grudem, “This means that at least the *rebellious* angels or demons will be subject to judgment on that last day as well.” p.1145

1 Cor. 6:3a Do you not know that we are to judge angels?

Application

- 1) Understanding the final judgment satisfies our inward sense of a need for justice in the world**
- 2) Understanding the final judgment enables us to forgive others freely - “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord” (Rom. 12:19).**

Application

3) Understanding the final judgment provides a motive for righteous living

***How could the knowledge of a future judgment day benefit a person's life today?**

Application

4) Understanding the final judgment provides a powerful motive for evangelism.

Discussion Question

Is there anyone who has wronged you in the past, and whom you have had difficulty forgiving? Does the doctrine of final judgment help you to be more able to forgive that person?