

Matt 10:26-33

Three Things Every Disciples Needs to Know About Hell (That Jesus Taught) Part 1

How does one enter a sermon series on a subject matter and place that many disciples see as nothing more than conjecture, metaphor, simile, fairytale and/or mere scare tactic? You teach them what their Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, has to say on the matter, an expert and eyewitness to the reality and horror of this place. Take the words of the Apostle's Creed as witness to this fact, "He descended into hell and on the third day he rose again from the dead."

Why teach on a matter very few in the church speak on and are divided on? Well, Jesus. We talk about because Jesus talked about it. As a matter of fact, Jesus spoke on hell more than anyone in scripture, which makes it clear to me that hell must be preached and taught. So, over the next three Sundays we will talk about it and in talking about we will come to know Jesus' position on hell, which as his disciples I believe should be our position. This series is not about who's in and whose out. Neither is this sermon series scare tactic. However, I will say if you have not received him, you should be troubled, though I fear most are not. This sermon series is about the truth of hell and the sense of urgency it should create in every disciple. So, three things every disciple needs to know about hell that Jesus taught.

**Thing number one, hell is not metaphor, hyperbole nor simile. Jesus believed and taught that hell is a real place. V28** "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." Whether or not the words we find in scripture describing hell are to be understood metaphorically

or literally, the fact remains that Jesus spoke of hell as a real place. Jesus never taught hell as metaphor for hardship, or hyperbole for discomfort or an simile for the unpleasanties in this life. **No, Jesus was quite emphatic that hell was a literal place and one should take seriously the threat of it.**

**Mark 9:42-48** <sup>42</sup> “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. <sup>43</sup> And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. <sup>47</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, <sup>48</sup> ‘where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’” **ESV**

**Matt 25:35-41** <sup>31</sup> “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? <sup>38</sup> And when did we see you a stranger and

welcome you, or naked and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' <sup>41</sup> "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" **ESV**

**As a real place this means that both body and soul will be in peril.**

**V28b** "Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

That is to say that those who, unfortunately and tragically, end up in hell will be fully aware of their eternal state emotionally, physically and spiritually. Jesus wants this fact to lead one to put fear in its proper place. Here's this push. For those who do not take God seriously (fear Him), that which awaits them is far more horrific than anything man could ever bring about. The worst a person can do is kill you physically, which is but momentary. But eternal death, that which God can inflict, puts in agony both body and soul, which will be unending.

**Matt 25:46** "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." **ESV**

It's an amazing thing to me that in America that most believe everybody goes to heaven, though few believe in a literal hell. No matter how one lived or what one believed, he/she receives his wings upon death (side note: you don't receive wings when you die, sorry). In America, it seems we have acquiesced to the lie that all paths lead to God's kingdom. No wonder, there is no fear of God. I am not talking reverence. No, literal fear. The kind of fear some of us had of our

parents when we were younger. A fear that kept us safe and out of trouble, at least serious trouble.

**Heb 10:26-31** <sup>26</sup>Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins. <sup>27</sup>There is only the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies. <sup>28</sup>For anyone who refused to obey the law of Moses was put to death without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. <sup>29</sup>Just think how much worse the punishment will be for those who have trampled on the Son of God, and have treated the blood of the covenant, which made us holy, as if it were common and unholy, and have insulted and disdained the Holy Spirit who brings God's mercy to us. <sup>30</sup>For we know the one who said, "I will take revenge. I will pay them back." He also said, "The Lord will judge his own people." <sup>31</sup>It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God." **NLT**

**Hear me! Acceptance of hell as a real place is a direct reflection of one's view of God, or stated this way, one's fear of Him.** I hear persons say routinely I just can't believe that a loving God would condemn anyone to such a place. And yet, we, human beings, condemn persons to life in prison, to death row, among many other things, and then celebrate that justice has been served. We, humans, cry out for justice. Protest in the streets for justice. Yet, we say a holy and just God could never do such a thing as administer His eternal justice. How arrogant and hypocritical! I am convinced that persons who make such statements have no idea of how serious of a matter sin is because they fail to recognize how holy and just God is. Not only that, but I believe such statements raise a very serious question on

whether persons who hold this view can believe a loving God would crucify his Son for sinners. **Romans 5:8** “<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Does God not have the right to enact eternal justice upon those who reject His grace, who trample Jesus underfoot? **Heb 10:29**, again, “<sup>29</sup> How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?” **ESV**

One final question that I believe will help bring hell into proper view. What has Jesus saved us from? Did he die to save us from ourselves? Did he die to save us from one another? Did he die to save us from oppression or being the oppressor? Did he die to save us from sickness and disease? Did he die to save us from poverty or riches? What has he saved us from?!

**John 3:36** “<sup>36</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” **ESV**

Sisters and Brothers, hell is not metaphor, or hyperbole, nor simile. It is a real place. And scripture teaches that those who die in their sin will spend an eternity there. Should this truth not light a fire in us? Because we, disciples of Jesus, want no one to experience an eternal existence apart from God, from Jesus. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.