

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Hell: Perspective Matters

Romans 2:1-16

Keywords: Hell, Judgment, Eternity, Wrath, Condemnation

PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: If you pull the idea of hell out of its context in the bible then you can do all sorts of reworking on the doctrine. But if you have a correct, biblically sound perspective on what hell represents and why it is present, then you will find a sobering, but beautiful doctrine.

I. Introduction.

- A. Last week we were given an introduction to the biblical doctrine of hell.
 - 1. Most of the time was simply trying to give a solid sense of how many influential teachers talk about hell and we saw quite a spectrum of ideas.
 - 2. But we also saw how theology is constructed by many. Rather than using the bible as its starting and ending point, often tradition, philosophy and presuppositions drive it.
- B. I asked you to consider the soul and what makes us human.
 - 1. The bible says that when God breathed into the body of Adam, he became a living soul. But this same term is used of anything living. This term, *nephesh*, carries the idea of life, emotion, health, and will.
 - 2. It does not define what makes you human. That comes from God alone. He makes us human and the mark of that humanity is the image of God upon every person.
 - 3. In relation to hell the question is then asked, “Does the soul exist for all eternity in hell? And is this because the soul is immortal?”
 - 4. In reality the bible does not explicitly state that the soul is immortal. And this fact then should make you be more aware that the issue of hell and how it functions might not be as clear cut as you wish.
 - 5. The bible does not treat the aspects of a person as individual units, separate from each other.
- C. I believe we should see hell as a literal place that is defined by being in the state of eternal dying and separation from the goodness of God in every respect, but fully conscious of the wrath, judgment and righteousness of God in His retribution.
- D. Read Romans 2:1-16.

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II. The Justice in Hell.

- A. A glimpse of God's character.
 - 1. This passage teaches us the key truth that God shall always act with justice and mercy.
 - 2. This is seen in saving sinners. God has righteously saved them through Jesus.
 - 3. Vss 1-3 is a fitting statement for today.
- B. The biblical basis for eternal punishment.
 - 1. The natural thought of hell is to say, what is it that we have done that would merit this? The bible says, "you are looking at the situation from the wrong perspective."
 - 2. We need instead to ask, if this is the punishment, then how great must be the crime that merits it.
 - 3. Every person has certain duties simply because they exist.
 - a. God has brought humanity into existence but in a Creator-creature relationship. We are His. He has built us to delight and worship Him.
 - b. Also to obey Him, which He has set in our hearts to do.
 - c. We must see that this is our calling and yet we despise it, we reject it. We see it as fetters that restrain us as we seek to shake them off.
 - 4. This begins to reveal the basis of the reality of hell and all who will exist in it. It is a wholehearted rejection of our Creator's purpose in creating us that lays the proper foundation to understand hell and God's righteousness revealed in it.
 - 5. One of the glories of God awakening a sinner to his situation is that awareness that you are guilty. You are looking at what you are and what you do and you fear.
- C. Is this judgment right and true? Can a loving God truly and righteously send people into eternal punishment?
 - 1. 2:8-9 shows the integrity of God to judgment.
 - 2. Vs 5 we are stubborn, only accomplishing the making of more wrath waiting to be righteously revealed.

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3. God's righteousness in judgment is that He has absolute integrity with His character.

D. Romans 2:1-16 gives at least seven specific ways that shows this.

1. A judgment that is utterly impartial (11).
 - a. Partiality is a great evil when it comes to judges and justice.
 - b. No one gets away with anything.
 - c. Two groups of people involved here, the Gentile and the Jew. Both have different levels of understanding about God..
 - d. At the core of impartiality is true justice.
 - e. And if you wish to see the greatest example of this you only need to look to the cross and Jesus Christ. The very Son of God who takes upon Himself, not His sin, but of everyone who would ever place their faith and hope in Him. And the justice of God demanded that He die. The one who is called the "beloved" still must be judged for God is impartial.
 - f. This leads to the second point...
2. A judgment made according to light (12).
 - a. He is saying that no matter how much or little revelation a person has, that knowledge will be judged.
 - b. God will not hold you accountable for something you did not know. And, you will not be able to say you did not know. For only that which you did know is your judgment
3. God will give each person according to what he has done. (6)
 - a. It will be according to truth. What we have actually done and not done—omission and commission.
 - b. This is what is meant about the "books" being opened, where smoke and mirrors are banished and only the pure light of reality.
 - (1) The book of Daniel (7:9-10) describes the day of judgment in a frightening manner. Jesus, as the Ancient of Days, seated on a throne that is blazing, a river of fire flowing all about out from the throne . . . and the books are opened.
 - (2) Revelation 20:12-15, *"Then I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were*

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opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them, and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

4. God's judgment will be appropriate to each person (6).
 - a. It is an individual judgment.
 - b. We must give account before the Lord.
 - c. We cannot hide behind another's greater sin. Each will stand before God alone, with absolute clarity to our guilt.
5. God's judgment will reach even to the secrets of man (16).
 - a. This is part of the glory of the true believer.
 - b. But this is part of the horror of the hypocrite, the false Christian, where his secrets are unveiled.
 - c. This is what God accomplishes in the Christian's heart as he hears and read the Word. It penetrates and separates and parses to the very core of us, opening our eyes ever more of things that must change and greater glories of our God.
 - d. The same happens with the non-Christian. The hearing of the Word reveals what is true about him. And he hates it, mocks it or ignores it.
 - e. In the end though, instead of the bible being the revealer of the heart. God will personally do it to each human and call each into account.
6. God's judgment will be consistent with our conscience (14-15).
 - a. This flows again from Rom 1:18-19.

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- b. This makes hell exceedingly painful for those who reject the salvation offered in Jesus Christ. They will have to agree that they are guilty.
 - c. As Romans 3:19 says, so that every mouth will be closed and the whole world is held accountable to their Maker and Sustainer.
 - 7. God's judgment it is through Christ Jesus (16).
 - a. The Father has given to Jesus the responsibility to judge mankind. The One who has come to save will then come to judge.
 - b. Part of this is to remove the possible excuse that we are but a human and God is....God. For the Man, Jesus shall be who condemns.
- E. Consider carefully the mercy and patience of God prior to that judgment (4).
 - 1. Jesus reminded us in Matthew that God causes the rain to fall on the just and unjust. The wicked enjoy the fruit of the harvest as much as the righteous.
 - 2. Every rainbow seen is a reminder that God has made a covenant with creation to never again judge it through a worldwide flood. Rather we are given the seasons to live and move through and in.
 - 3. Even the smallest of pleasures are simply the goodness of God to enemies. We take from His hand without a thought of the Hand that gave it. Those glorious scents of flowers in the spring, the rustling of leaves in the fall, ice cream, the Rockies and the Smoky mountains.
 - 4. He has given us the revelation of creation and the revelation of Himself in our very hearts.
 - 5. He has given us His revelation in the Word of God.
 - 6. He has given us His own Son.
 - 7. Mercy upon mercy, kindness upon kindness, patience upon patience.
 - 8. You shall be condemned not only because you hated God's holiness and His expectation that you be holy too.
 - 9. Even more so, you shall be condemned because you hated His kindness and patience. You thought it was owed to you. You thought it would last forever. But it doesn't.

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- F. This makes the reality of hell completely appropriate.
 - 1. A part of hell is the absence of God's mercy and patience. It shall be gone forever, so much so that people who have spurned and ignored that very mercy will long for even one drop of water and will not get it.
 - 2. Those who hated goodness, will find no goodness.
 - 3. Those turning their back upon the love of God shall experience no more love.
 - 4. Those rejecting their infinite and eternal God receive eternal judgment.
 - 5. No more communion with God through his blessings.
 - 6. To the ones wanting no eternal Savior shall never again know salvation of any time.

III. Conclusion.

- A. "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)
- B. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, (Romans 1:18)
- C. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. (Romans 5:9)