

## The Appropriate Response to the Reality of Hell

### Common, Flawed Responses

*Using hell to scare or control people*

*Arguing about hell correctly but dispassionately*

### Tears for Your Enemies

*Paul’s heart for his enemies is for their salvation, not for justice and retribution.*

C.S. Lewis “[We must] remember that the dullest most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all of our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal.”

*What if I feel unqualified to talk to someone about heaven and hell?*

1. Talk about what you do know with sincerity.
2. Try to find answers to their questions.
3. Do your best to make your life reflect Jesus so there can be no charge of hypocrisy.

## A Different Description of Those Bound for Hell (vs. 19)

### Their god is their belly

This was written in a time where, if you had too much food, somebody else was going hungry.

Billy Graham: the fire of hell not physical torture but instead a thirst that could never be satisfied.

Jeremiah 2:13 “For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”

### They glory in their shame

Minds set on earthly things

What about objections to hell?

**A Better Destiny than Hell** (vss. 20-21)

Citizenship in heaven

A Roman citizen had certain privileges – right to own property, to vote, to pass on an inheritance, to run for public office, to get married legally, to be tried in court, etc.

Being a citizen of heaven has privileges. The Greek word comes from the word “polis” which means city, and the idea is that we belong to the heavenly city with its privileges and benefits.

Awaiting a savior

*The Garden* “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not my will, but your will be done.” Matthew 26:39,

*The Cup* “Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. They shall drink and stagger and be crazed because of the sword I am sending among them.” Jeremiah 25:15

*The Gospel* “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

Transformed to glory

*Resurrection* “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.” 1 Corinthians 15:20-21

**Discussion Questions**

1. Do you think about hell as often as you should? Why or why not?
2. What emotions or thoughts arise when you think of what Christ did to save you from hell?
3. What does it look like for you to “await from heaven a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ?”
4. Are there any ways that your life should change when you reflect on the truths of this passage?