

Eschatology

The Study of End Times



LBC Statement of Faith

We believe in the coming of Christ: that His return will be personal, visible, pretribulational, premillennial, and glorious – a blessed hope, the time being presently unrevealed, yet always imminent; that when He comes, He will first remove His church from the earth by resurrection and translation, then pour out God's righteous judgments on the unbelieving world during the tribulation period, afterward descend with His church and establish His glorious Kingdom over all nations for a thousand years, at the close of which He will raise the unrighteous for their final judgment.

Eternal Judgment

Belief in hell, where people who have led bad lives and die without repenting are eternally punished, is less common than is belief in life after death or heaven, with about six-in-ten Americans (59%) expressing belief in hell. In every religious tradition, including all the Christian traditions, belief in hell is at least slightly less prevalent than belief in heaven. Belief in hell tends to be most common among members of the various Christian traditions, with relatively few Hindus (35%), Buddhists (26%), unaffiliated (30%) and Jews (22%) saying they believe in hell.

Pew Foundation

Theologians

I was led to question the traditional belief in everlasting conscious torment because of moral revulsion and broader theological considerations, not first of all on scriptural grounds. It just does not make any sense to say that a God of love will torture people forever for sins done in the context of a finite life. - Clark Pinnock

Emotionally, I find the concept of eternal conscious torment intolerable and do not understand how people can live with it without either cauterizing their feelings or cracking under the strain. - John Stott

What is the Nature of Eternal Judgment?

1. It is eternal separation from God. - 2 Thess 1:9

Hell is not filled with people with people who want to get out. It is filled with people who are so self-focused and rebellious. The rich man was still demeaning to Lazarus and trying to correct Abraham. Men are crying out to God in the Revelation to battle with God. Men's rebellion to God never stops.



What is the Nature of Eternal Judgment?

1. It is eternal separation from God. - 2 Thess 1:9
2. It is real and literal. – Revelation 20
 - It is a place envelops the individual (“*into* the lake”).
 - It is a place from which one cannot escape.
 - It is a place of extreme pain and torment. -
The imagery of fire and sulfur is intended to show extreme pain and suffering that extends to all the senses (even smell).

It is a place of extreme pain and torment.

1. Brimstone is sulfur: Sulfur burns with a blue flame that emits sulfur dioxide , notable for its peculiar suffocating odor
2. Tormented with fire and brimstone – Rev. 14:10
3. Outer darkness - Matthew 25:30
4. The worms die not – Mark 9:44, 46, 48 - Isaiah 66:24
5. Furnace of fire – Matthew 13:42
6. Gnashing of teeth – Matthew 13:50
7. No rest day or night – Rev 14:11

It is a place of eternity.

The punishment is evidently eternal, continual, and conscious (“tormented day and night for ever and ever”).⁷⁴ times this word is used to refer to that which is unending.

1. Everlasting punishment: Matthew 25:46
2. Eternal condemnation: Mark 3:29
3. Eternal judgment: Hebrews 6:2
4. Everlasting destruction: II Thessalonians 1:9
5. Eternal fire: Matthew 18:8-9; Matthew 25:41
6. Unquenchable fire: Mark 9:43-38 (cf. Isaiah 66:24)
7. Eternal torment: Revelation 19:20; 20:10

If there is not a literal hell, then what orthodox doctrines are impacted?

1. The Character of God – Holiness, Justice, Love
2. The Person of Jesus – Liar, Lunatic, or Lord
3. The Work of Jesus – His death is rendered vain.
4. The Nature of Man – His freewill is inoperative.
5. The Stain of Sin – Sin is no longer eternally offensive.
6. The Veracity of Scripture – The Bible is no longer trustworthy.

It is a place in which human beings will exist
for all eternity. – Rev 20:15

1. Prophecy Comforts Saints
2. Prophecy Calms as the World Spins
3. Prophecy Converts the Lost
4. Prophecy Cleanses the Saints
5. Prophecy Compels toward Christian Service
6. Prophecy Confirms the Word and Person of God
7. Prophecy Centers on Jesus Christ

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the **dead. (hell)**

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Did Jesus descend into “hell” after death?

1. Define terms:

- Sheol – The state or realm of the dead
- Gehenna – Hebrew term for the abode of the unrighteous dead
- Hades – Greek term for Sheol, or the abode of the unrighteous dead
- Hell – NT term for the abode of the unrighteous dead
- Lake of Fire – Final destination of all unrighteous



Did Jesus descend into “hell” after death?

2. Evaluating the Scripture

- Acts 2:27 (cf. Psalm 16:10)
- Romans 10:6-7
- Ephesians 4:8-9 (cf. Psalm 68:18)
- I Peter 3:18-20



Conclusion

Jesus Christ was resurrected from the grave, entered into his heavenly abode, and returned to raise his body on Sunday morning as a firstfruit for all future believers.



