

May 26, 2019

GOD NEVER SAID THAT - Part 4

“We All Go to the Same Place When We Die”

J.I. Packer: “Universalism is the ... belief that every human being whom God has created or will create will finally come to enjoy the everlasting salvation into which Christians enter here and now.”

Why Do Many People Believe In Multiple Paths To God?

- 1. There are so many religions**
- 2. The belief that all religions are basically the same**
- 3. The idea that sincerity is what matters**
- 4. The belief that there’s no absolute truth**
- 5. The belief that the God of love can’t also be a God of judgment**

Psalms 145:17,20 (NIV): “¹⁷The LORD is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made.... ²⁰The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.”

- 6. The belief that a loving God would not allow Hell**

A common image of hell in the Bible is fire, and fire disintegrates.

Timothy Keller: “What if when we die we don’t end, but spiritually our life extends on into eternity? Hell, then, is the trajectory of a soul, living a self-absorbed, self-centered life, going on and on forever.”

Luke 16:24-31 (ESV): “²⁴And [the rich man] 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.” ²⁵But Abraham said, “Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.” ²⁷And he said, “Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house – ²⁸for I have five brothers – so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.” ²⁹But Abraham said, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.” ³⁰And he said, “No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.” ³¹He said to

him, "If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.""

Nowhere in this parable does the rich man ask to get out of hell.

Timothy Keller: "In short, hell is simply one's freely chosen identity apart from God on a trajectory into infinity."

Anytime we build our lives on anything besides God, that thing, even a good thing, becomes an enslaving addiction that we have to have to be happy, and we just continue to disintegrate as we spiral down in this vicious circle.

In *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis shows us the people in hell are miserable because their pride, paranoia, self-pity, their certainty that everyone else is wrong and an idiot, rages unchecked.

The folks on Lewis' bus from hell would rather have their freedom, as they define it, than salvation, where they submit to God through His Son Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:24 (NIV): "Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts...."

C.S. Lewis: "There are only two kinds of people – those who say, 'Thy will be done' to God or those to whom God in the end says, 'Thy will be done.' All that are in Hell choose it. Without that self-choice it wouldn't be Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it." (p. 79)

D.A. Carson: "They're consigned there, first and foremost, because they defy their maker and want to be at the center of the universe. Hell is not filled with people who have already repented, only God isn't gentle enough or good enough to let them out. It's filled with people who, for all eternity, *still* want to be the center of the universe.... What is God to do? If he says it doesn't matter to him, then God is no longer a God to be admired.... For him to act in any other way in the face of such blatant defiance would be to reduce God himself."

Hell isn't God's *desire* for any individual - it's a tragedy for God above all!

Abraham affectionately calls the rich man *child* because He loves this man, and it grieves his heart to see him make the choice he's made.

Jesus: "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.'" (Matthew 25:41 ESV)

Jesus said "the eternal fire" of Hell was created for "the devil and his angels."

It's never been God's intention that people should go to hell, but if they continue to fail to choose Him, they are, in effect choosing the devil.

2 Peter 3:4 (NLT): "They will say, 'What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created.'"

2 Peter 3:9 (NLT): "The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent."

Robert Frost: "Two roads diverged in a wood and I - I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

Next Week: Christianity Is A Crutch

Get the *Life Journal* Bible Reading Plan at gateway-community.org/Find-it

Follow Randy on Twitter @HagemanRandy