

What Happens When I Die?

Tough Questions Message Series Week 4

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Three basic truths on life after death taught by Jesus:

1. There is an afterlife. (Mark 12:26-27; John 14:1-3)

2. When a person dies, there are only two possible destinations to which he or she may go: heaven or hell. (Luke 16:19-31; Matthew 25:46; John 5:24-29)

A. Common question: How can a loving God send people to hell?

B. Three questions about the premise of this question:

- What makes one think God is loving?

“However, my explorations in other faiths proved me wrong on this particular point about the centrality of a loving God.

I found no other religious text outside of the Bible that said God created the world out of love and delight. Most ancient pagan religions believed the world was created through struggles and violent battles between opposing gods and supernatural forces.”

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*, Dutton, New York, NY, 2008, pp. 81-82.

- **What makes one think God can't be both loving and just at the same time?**

“Think how we feel when we see someone we love ravaged by unwise actions or relationships. Do we respond with benign tolerance as we might toward strangers? Far from it.... Anger isn't the opposite of love. Hate is, and the final form of hate is indifference.... God's wrath is not a cranky explosion, but his settled opposition to the cancer...which is eating out the insides of the human race he loves with his whole being.”

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*, Dutton, New York, NY, 2008, p. 73.

- **What makes one think that it is God who does the sending?**

“The Christian should long to be like Jesus, yet remember that God will never force a person to be like Jesus if he doesn't want to. And that is what hell is for: people who don't want to be like Jesus. The sobering, eternal truth is this: God gives man what he really wants. If you really want to be like Jesus, it will show in your life now, and it will be a fact in eternity. If you don't really want to be like Jesus, it will also show in your life now, and it will also be a fact in eternity.”

Enduring Word Commentary App on 1 John 3:2

“In short, hell is simply one's freely chosen identity apart from God on a trajectory into infinity... All God does in the end with people is give them what they most want, including freedom from himself. What could be more fair than that?”

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*, Dutton, New York, NY, 2008, pp. 78-79.

“It’s not a question of God ‘sending’ us to hell. In each of us there is something growing up which will of itself be Hell unless it is nipped in the bud.”

-C.S. Lewis, *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology (Making of Modern Theology)*

“There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. Those who knock it is opened.”

-C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*

3. There is one way to ensure a positive experience after death. (John 3:15-18, 14:1-4; Matthew 7:13-14)

Recommended Resources:

- *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel (available in the Lobby)
- *More Than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell & Sean McDowell (available in the Lobby)
- *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell
- *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis
- *The Reason for God* by Timothy Keller