

May 17, 2015
Scripture: Matthew 10:24-33
“Do Good People Go To Hell?”

Question Of The Day: Do good people go to hell if they are not Christians? What if there was someone who gave everything they had to people in need, someone who volunteered with children, widows, people in poverty, even animals?

Introduction

1. A most difficult and thorny topic.
2. “There is no doctrine which I would more willingly remove from Christianity than this, if it lay in my power.” (C.S. Lewis)

1. Hell Is Assumed

“Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell’ “ (verse 28).

“Hell” = “Gehenna” = the Valley of Hinnon (the place of garbage, outside the city, fire and child sacrifice).

Jesus refers to “Hell” / “Gehenna” in a number of places: *Matthew 5:22; 5:29; 5:30; 8:12; 10:28; 13:42; 13:50; 18:9; 22:13; 24:51; 23:15; 23:33; 25:30; Luke 16:19-31*

2. Gehenna Is God’s Domain

“The goodness of God requires the existence of hell. If God just blinked at sin he would not be perfectly just. Every sin will receive its just dessert...The existence of hell, in one sense, is our only hope because it shows us that we are do deal with a just God after all—a God of perfect goodness and justice but he is also a

good of perfect love who provides the means of reconciliation with him” (William Lane Craig).

“God’s wrath in the Bible is something which men choose for themselves. Before hell is an experience inflicted by God, it is a state for which man himself opts, by retreating from the light which God shines in his heart to lead him to himself...The unbeliever has preferred to be by himself, without God, defying God, having God against him, and he shall have his preference. Nobody stands under the wrath of God save those who have chosen to do so. *(JI Packer, Knowing God, quoted in Darrell W. Johnson, Discipleship on the Edge: An Expository Journey through the Book of Revelation)*

3. Gehenna Due To Lack Of Confession, Not Goodness

“Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge...But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown...” Matthew 10:32-33).

“There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God...there is no one who does good, not even one.” Romans 3:10-12)

“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...” (Romans 3:23).

Maybe a more difficult question: “How could an all-just God send people to heaven?” (William Lane Craig)

4. Hell Is Good News

“My God, my God why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46).

I came to realize in the garden of Gethsemane that if you get rid of the idea of hell and wrath, you have a less loving God. . . . If you don't believe in wrath and hell, it trivializes what He has done. If you get rid of a God who has wrath and hell, you have a god who loves us in general, but that's not as loving as the God of the Bible, the God of Jesus Christ, who loves us with a costly love (Tim Keller).

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