

# Do You Believe In Hell?

*By Ron Boatwright*

According to the U. S. News & World Report, January 31, 2000, 36% of people do not believe in Hell. But Hell is a real place. To say there is no Hell is to make God a liar. "Let God be true and every man a liar" (Romans 3:4). Satan does not want you to believe in Hell. Satan is accomplishing his purpose since there is very seldom any teaching on Hell today. It is not a "politically correct" subject. A person who does not believe Hell is real will most likely go there. Ignoring or scoffing at Hell will not do away with it.

Jesus spoke as much about the eternal punishment of Hell as He did any other subject. He took our punishment and gave His life to keep us out of Hell. In His attempt to persuade us not to go there, He has given us numerous warnings in His word.

Jesus tells us if there is anything in our life that is going to cause us to be lost, to get rid of it rather than "to be cast into Hell fire, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:47-48). Notice Jesus says a person is cast or thrown into Hell. The worm is a flesh-eating maggot that does not die, but will continuously feed forever and ever on the lost in Hell. In Hell, one is burning over every square inch of his body and even all on the inside but is never consumed. The continuous fire and the worms will never accomplish the annihilation of any of the lost. The lost in Hell will prefer to cease their existence, but they cannot. Their perpetual nightmare of torment will continue forever and ever. It will never cease. The lost "shall be tormented with fire and brimstone...and the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night" (Revelation 14:10-11). The occupants of Hell will never know relief or rest from their torment. Hell is such a horrible place.

One of the many warnings Jesus gives us is the true account of the rich man and Lazarus. "There was **a certain rich man**" and "there was **a certain beggar named Lazarus**". "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, son remember...and besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us" (Luke 16:19-20, 23-26). Notice it says there was a **certain** rich man and a **certain** beggar named

Lazarus. This is not a fictitious fairy tale. In Hell people will be in continual unceasing torment in which all will be constantly pleading for mercy. With their unquenchable thirst they will beg for even one drop of water, but will not receive it. Their desperate and hopeless state is permanent where they will remain eternally. They are condemned there forever. In Hell people are conscious and will see, feel, wail, and remember as they endure the intense pain. An unconscious, nonexistent person cannot be eternally tormented.

On the Day of Judgment, Jesus will say to the lost, "Depart from Me, you cursed; into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). "The Devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:10, 15). This will not be very good company, because the Devil and his angels will be thrown there. Also the vast majority of people will be lost in Hell (Matthew 7:13).

Some members of the Lord's church will be lost in Hell. Jesus says, "But the sons of the kingdom will be cast into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:12), and "wailing" (Matthew 13:42). Notice there will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth with people constantly screaming because of the intense pain of Hell. They will be cast into outer darkness, away from the presence of the Lord, who is the source of all light and love. "God is light and in Him is no darkness" (1 John 1:5). Those lost in Hell will be those "whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (2 Peter 2:17). Those in Hell will attempt to find God, "Then they will call on Me, but I will not answer; they will seek Me diligently, but they will not find Me" (Proverbs 1:28). They will not be able to forget their rejection of God. There will be no atheists in Hell.

At the end of time there will be a resurrection of all the dead, "those who have done evil to the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29), "to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). Hell is for those who "do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil" (Romans 2:8-9). Disgrace, shame, and contempt can only come on those who are conscious. Those who are lost have "a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation" (Hebrews 10:27), because "the face of the Lord is against those who do evil" (1 Peter 3:12). At the end of time, "the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness" (Romans 1:18). "The Lord knows how to...reserve the unjust under punishment for the Day of Judgment" (2 Peter 2:9). Hell must be avoided at all costs. No one can exaggerate how horrible

Hell is going to be. Its misery and anguish is beyond description. It will never, never, never end.

We are being warned, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31) and "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11). We must make sure we don't end up in Hell, and we must warn other people who will listen. We "must be even more diligent make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10). Jesus has promised, "Be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). Anyone who ends up in Hell will only have himself to blame.