

Lifting Up Jesus

#14

THE TRUTH ABOUT HELL

From the beginning of sin, it has been the work of the devil to misrepresent the character of God. In heaven, he injected doubt into the minds of the angels as to the justice and love of God. In this work of deception, he finally succeeded so well that one third of the angels followed him into rebellion. (Rev. 12:3, 4, 7–9)

Since his expulsion from heaven, it has been the devil's studied purpose to bring havoc and confusion to the earth. He seeks to alienate the affections of God's children by misrepresenting the character of God. He has confused even those who profess to be Christians. They reason that if God is a God of love, how can he permit people to be tormented forever? We will explore the Bible's teachings on hell.

1. For whom was 'hell' prepared? Matt. 25:41

2. When does Christ reward each man according to what he has done? Matt. 16:27

3. How will Christ classify those at the time of His coming? Matt. 25:31–34

PLEASE READ Mathew 13:24–30; 36–43.

In this parable, Christ outlines the fate of the wicked and the reward of the righteous in detail.

4. In His parable, when did Jesus indicate that the harvest, or the separation of the evil from the good, would take place? Verse 39

5. In the parable, when will the wicked, or the tares, be destroyed? Verse 40

6. When will Christ send forth His angels to separate the good from the evil? Matt. 24:30, 31

7. What will not happen to those who believe in God? John 3:16

Note: This text does not say that the sinner will live forever in torment. Life and death are contrasted here, showing that the wicked will cease to live while those who have accepted the gift of God will continue to live forever.

8. What does God call the death that is the final punishment of the wicked? Rev. 20:6, 14

9. What is the wages (or consequences) of sin according to the Bible? Romans 6:23

*Note: The wages of sin is **death** not eternally burning hell. It is the opposite of eternal life.*

10. How complete will the destruction of the wicked be? Malachi 4:1

11. Do the following verses indicate that the wicked will be continually burning? Psalm 21:9; 37:10, 20, 36; 145:20

12. How does God describe the effect of the fire that will be used on the wicked? Matt. 25:41

13. What kind of fire did God use in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? Jude 7

14. How did God compare what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah with what happens to the ungodly? 2 Peter 2:6

*Note: Sodom and Gomorrah are not still burning today. They have been burnt to ashes long ago. It is **the effect or result of the fire that is everlasting or eternal not the punishment in itself.** Once you are destroyed by fire, it is final!*

15. What else will be destroyed or purified by this fire besides the wicked? 2 Peter 3:10

16. How does God feel about the death of those who refuse salvation? Ezekiel 33:11

Note: God must remove sin once and for all from the universe. If sin were allowed to continue, it would contaminate the entire universe. Moreover, that is what got us into this mess to begin with.

17. How many individuals does God want to see perish in hell? 2 Peter 3:9

18. What choice does God offer to every person on this earth? Deut. 30:19, 20

Conclusion: God is definitely not in the business of tormenting people. He does not enjoy destroying any of the children He created but unfortunately, those that reject Him do not give Him any choice. He cannot put the entire universe at risk ever again. He is a God of love.¹

¹ Lewis, K. A. (2010). *Lifting up Jesus: Bible Study Lessons*. Walla Walla, WA: Karen Ann Lewis.