

THE CHOICE IS YOURS

Today we're going to talk about Heaven and hell and the choice everyone must make.

We just went through all the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 and we saw and heard scriptures such as:

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:11 ¹¹ Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Scripture tells us to:....

Matthew 6:20-21 ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Jesus' uses parables to show us what Heaven is like: ... In **Matthew 13:24-29; 36-43**

1. A man who sowed good seed (vss. 37-42)
2. A grain of mustard seed (vss. 31-32)
3. Yeast mixed in approx. 60 lbs, of flour (vs. 33)
4. A hidden treasure in a field (vs. 44)
5. A pearl of great value (vss. 45-46)
6. A net let down to catch fish (47-48)

Many people today refuse to accept or believe in hell for **2 main reasons.**

1. "They cannot reconcile the very idea of hell with a loving God-even if He is Holy too"
2. "The problem of suffering and evil. Many today reject the idea of final judgement and hell."

What about other religions or a person who lives a good life, how could God send them to hell for just holding the wrong belief.

What about people that live a good life (charitable) should God now owe them a place in Heaven. That is quite contrary to what the scripture teaches. The gospel is: God develops a good record, gives it to us, then we owe Him!!!

Ephesians 2:8-10 ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

2 Corinthians 4:18 ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

ILLUSTRATION: First we need to recognize our blindness. If you tell a blind person that there are stars in the sky at night. If they depend on their ability to see, they will conclude there are no stars. We can’t see God, Heaven or hell how can they be real? Faith proves that even though we don’t see them, they are real!

In **Acts 7:55-56** When Stephen faced death because of his faith in Christ. He said “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

In **2 Kings 6:15-17** The prophet (Elijah) told his servant not to fear because those who are with us are more than those that are against us. Even though none could be seen. Then in verse 17 he asked the Lord to give his servant a glimpse of the invisible realm. His servant “saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. ”

The texts are clear in both cases, they saw actual objects as real as your house, car, or dog.

??? QUESTION: Is it reasonable to believe in hell?

“The current trend, even some evangelical churches is to answer this question with a **NO!** Surely a loving God could not, or would not, send people to hell.”

“ But if God is just, and human sinners are unjust, then the existence of hell makes perfect sense. A good God must punish evil. The only way we can have true and lasting justice is by administering eternal punishment. Hell does not punish innocent people.

Romans 3:23 ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
Romans 3:10 There is no one righteous, not even one;

We all have ways in which we commit sin.... prostitution. porn addicts, materialists, gossips, self-righteous, lying, violent tempers, and etc.

Ephesians 4:26 ²⁶ “In your anger do not sin”^[a]: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,

We are all sinners who deserve hell! Without hell, justice would never overtake the unrepentant tyrants in world history who have been responsible for murdering millions. Perpetrators of evil throughout the ages would get away with murder, rape, torture, and every kind of evil. “If there is no hell there is no justice.” To preach the good news we must preach the bad. “Hell must be preached as the only way to know how much Christ loved you.”

ILLUSTRATION: CHOICES & CONSEQUENCES “In 1980 amateur ornithologist Eugene Schieffelin decided to release 60 European Starlings into New York city’s Central Park. While this might have not been the only release, it was one of the first successful documented nesting. Now there are roughly 85 million of the birds flapping across the continent. Unfortunately, starlings are invasive, pushing out native bird populations, spreading disease to cattle, and causing an estimated \$800 million annually in damage. Schieffelin couldn’t have imagined the damage his choice would cause.”

For homework lookup the Killer Cain Toads. What a horror show, that caused in a town that imported them for a bug problem,

Though warned, Adam and Eve couldn’t have envisioned the disastrous ramifications of their choice on all of creation. They could eat from every tree except one. Their choice affected all humanity,

CHOICES CAN HAVE MASSIVE CONSEQUENCES!!!

We might think our choice is insignificant, and that it might only affect us. This might not be correct and could lead to a world of trouble!

ILLUSTRATION: REJECTION HURTS

1. Someone you don’t know rejects you...oh well it hurts a little bit.
Lady with a flat tire, called me a male chauvinist.
2. A good friend rejects you...it hurts far worst.
3. Spouse walks out and says they never want to see you again...that’s even more devastating (it can be extremely devastating, especially if you have been together a long time.

*****Consider Jesus relationship with God the Father it was from the beginning of time, and it was infinitely greater than the most intimate and passionate human relationship. When Jesus was cut off from God, it was much greater than what we

could think is humanly possible (beyond all imagination). And Jesus did it for us voluntarily. If we reject Christ's offer of salvation it could bring eternal consequences!

"W.C. Fields, following the 1933 earthquake that struck Southern California, said" We're crazy to live out here, but there sure are a lot of us." The same attitude is often displayed by non-Christians, who seem to think hell will be more tolerable because there will be a crowd down there."

How many people that you have talked to about hell make the comment, "that's where all my friends will be." If they truly believed in the consequences of hell, they wouldn't want themselves or their friends there.

1. [Luke 16:19-24](#) Rich man dressed in purple died and went to hell, he asked Abraham to send the beggar named Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool down his tongue.

2. [Luke 16:27-31](#) Rich man wanted Lazarus to come back from the dead to Tell his 5 brothers. (Tough luck, they have Moses & the Prophets)

3. [Romans 1:18-32](#) God's Wrath Against Sinful Humanity

¹⁸ The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Matthew 7:13 ¹³ "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

NAMES & DEFINITIONS:

HELL is the abode of the dead especially as a place of eternal punishment for unbelievers (torment).

SHEOL in the Old Testament

HELL or "**THE GRAVE**" in the New Testament

THE PIT

HADES (Greek) This was the name of the Greek God of the underworld and hell itself.

GEHENNA was a ravine on the south side of Jerusalem. 1. It was originally used for child sacrifices. 2. Then it became a garbage dump that burned continually and was used exclusively for burning the bodies of the criminals that were executed.

TARTAROO was a gloomy dark place, that was the abode of the wicked dead.

Hell in its simplest form is: Like a blazing furnace (Matthew 13:42 & 49)

THE DESCRIPTION OF WHAT HELL IS LIKE

- 1.** There will be eternal separation from God (Rev. 20:15; I Thess 1:9)
- 2.** There will be continual punishment (Matt. 25:46)
- 3.** There will be unending sorrow and anger (Matt. 13:42 & 49)
(weeping & gnashing= In pain or rage) (even defiance)
- 4.** There will be insatiable thirst (Luke 16:24)
- 5.** There will be unquenchable fire (Mark 9:43)
- 6.** There will be unrelenting pain and suffering (Rev. 14:10-11)
- 7.** Outer Darkness (Matt. 8:12) complete isolation
- 8.** God's wrath will be unleashed (Rev. 14:10)

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE GOING TO HELL

1. Those that reject God /Unbelievers (Rev. 21:8)
2. Cowards/Fearful (Rev. 21:8)
3. Those that are without faith (Rev. 21:8)
4. The Detestable/Abomitable (Rev. 21:8 & 27)
5. Murderers (Rev 21:8)
6. Sexually Immoral; (Rev. 21:8)
7. Sorcerers/Magic Arts (Rev. 21:8)
8. All Liars (Rev. 21:8)
9. Idolators (Rev. 21:8)
10. Detestable/False or Shameful/Deceitful (Rev. 21:27)

There is only one way to get to Heaven ... Jesus!

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus took on Himself the wrath of God, wrath that was deserved by us.

2 Cor. 5:21 ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin^[a] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jesus the Son of God, died and came back to life. It's not just a mental thought, it's a belief that leads us to a choice. We choose to follow Jesus, seeking to do what He tells us to do.

DEFINITION: "Heaven is the secure inheritance, of priceless value, awaiting the redeemed. There, faithful service will be rewarded and the redeemed will be given resurrection bodies for service in the heavenly realm."

IN REVELATION 21:3 & 4 WE GET A GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S NOT IN HEVEN

1. No tears
2. No death
3. No mourning
4. No crying
5. No more pain

WHAT IS HEAVEN GOING TO BE LIKE

1. The city is clear as crystal (Rev. 21:11)
2. An emerald rainbow encircles the throne (Rev.4:3)
3. The city is pure gold (Rev. 21:18)
4. The throne is ablaze with fire (Dan 7:9)
5. The sea is as clear as glass (Rev. 4:5-6)
6. The city's foundation is composed of various precious stones (Rev. 21:19-20)
7. The main street is made of transparent gold (Rev. 21:21)
8. There is a golden altar (Rev. 9:13)
9. The gates are made of pearls (Rev. 21:21) singular
10. The surrounding walls were made of Jasper (Rev. 21:18)
11. There will be a new heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1-2)
12. We will have close fellowship with God (Rev. 21:3)
13. No sun or moon, God's glory will be the light (Rev. 21:23)
14. No more night (Rev. 22:5)
15. We are going to have Jesus' likeness (1 Cor.15:51-52)
16. People from every tribe, language, people, and nation will be there (Rev. 5:9)
17. It's going to be a lot of fun...Joy & pleasure (Psalm 16:11)

Hebrews 9:27 ²⁷ Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,

“Unless we come to grips with this terrible doctrine [of hell], we will never understand the depths of what Jesus did for us on the cross. His body was being destroyed in the worst possible way, but that was a flea bite compared to what was happening to his soul. When He cried out that His God had forsaken Him, He was experiencing hell itself.” He went into the deepest pit and the most powerful furnace (Hell).

If we understand our nature and God's nature, we should not feel shocked that some people go to hell. Why should a fallen, sinful human being, who rejects God's gift spend an eternity with Him? That is what makes God's grace and heaven itself so amazing.

******* We were all made for a person and a place. Jesus is the person and heaven is the place.**

1 John 5:13 ¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Colossians 3:2 ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

2 Peter 3:13 ¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

*******Heaven is not some imaginary dream of the future, "but a place so real and so enticing that thoughts of it should occupy our minds until the day we experience it, and when that day comes, right when we think it can't get any better than this, IT WILL! We will live happily ever after.**

1 Corinthians 2:9 However, as it is written:

**"What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived"^[a]
the things God has prepared for those who love him**

C. S. Lewis Said: "If I find a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world."

Illustration: **William Dyke** was a young man who became blind at the young age of ten (10). Despite his handicap, he grew to be a very intelligent, witty and handsome young man. While attending graduate school in England, William met the daughter of an English admiral. The two soon became engaged. Though never having seen her. William loved her very much. Shortly before the wedding, at the insistence of the admiral, William submitted to special treatment for his loss of sight. Hoping against hope, William wanted the gauze from his eyes removed during the ceremony. He wanted the first thing he saw to be his wife's face. As the bride came down the aisle, William's father started unwinding the gauze from around his head and eyes-still not knowing if the operation would be a success. With the unwrapping of the last circumference, William looked into the face of his new bride for the first time. "You are more beautiful than I ever imagined, he said."

Like the young groom, though we have never seen Jesus, it will be worth the years of darkness to "see him as he is"

1 John 3:2

² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears,^[a] we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

John Newton the author of the Hymn "Amazing Grace," said, "When I get to heaven, I shall see three (3) wonders there."

- 1. "The first wonder will be to see many there whom I did not expect to see."**
- 2. "The second wonder will be to miss many people whom I did expect to see."**
- 3. "The third and greatest of all will be to find myself there"**

*******So, we have a choice to make, accept the consequences of Hell, or believe and accept the gift that Jesus provided.**

John 3:16-17 ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Jesus sent His Son for one reason....Us / We are His Joy (Hebrews 12:2)

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.