

HEAVEN AND HELL ARE REAL PLACES

INTRODUCTION

In generations past, preaching was characterized with an emphasis on the reality of hell. Nowadays, public preaching (especially on television) is geared around the idea of entertainment, how to feel good, or where to send your money if you want the Lord to bless you materially. The word “hell” is used abundantly by many in the world, from the president on down, as a part of their cursing and profanity—by men and women, boys and girls. Their speech is corrupted with the vain use of the word “hell”. Now, the New Testament speaks of two (2) eternal destinies—Heaven and Hell. “Hell” is indeed a Bible word, so we need to use it in the way the New Testament uses it, and nothing more. Let’s see how the word is used, in contrast with the word “heaven.”

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, Jesus warned against going to hell.

A. In His very first sermon (the sermon on the mount, as recorded in Matthew 5-7), Jesus warned about it’s horribleness. Matt. 5:22, 29, 30

B. After this sermon, Jesus continued to warn about going there.

1. He described it as a place of “destruction.” Matt. 10:28

2. He also described it as a place of “fire.” Matt. 18:8-9

3. Mark records several terms to describe hell as used by Jesus. Mark 9:43-48 (Read and discuss as needed).

II. 2nd, Jesus clearly taught about 2 eternal destinies.

A. He taught such in the sermon on the mount. Matt. 7:13-14

1. 1st, let’s note that both destinies are “entered” by each individual, as he chooses which road to travel. v. 13

2. 2nd, let’s note that there is a difference in the gates that invite each one of us to the destiny of our choice.

a. One gate is “wide”, and it’s way is “broad”, that has room for the “many who choose this way.

1) This way is traveled by those who want to practice the lusts of the flesh, with no regard for it’s destruction by fire. Gal. 5:19-21

2) This way is traveled by those who are materially minded, and are more concerned about making a living and getting rich, than building for eternity. 1 Tim. 6:9-10

3) This way is traveled by the pleasure-minded folks, who spend their time playing and having a good time, rather than seriously considering the eternal pleasures of heaven. Luke 8:14; 1 Tim. 5:6; 2 Tim. 3:4

b. Another gate is “strait” (meaning “difficult”), and its way is “narrow”, and has room for the “few” (compared to the “many”) who travel the broad way.

3. 3rd, let’s note that there ARE 2 destinations.

a. The “wide” gate leads to eternal destruction. 2 Thess. 1:6-9

b. The “strait” gate opens the path to eternal life, or a home with God and all the redeemed in heaven. Cf Matt. 19:16-22; Tit. 1:2

B. Then, Jesus gives parabolic teaching about eternal destinies. Matt. 25:14-30

C. This parable is followed by a judgment scene, where we choose (through our actions) whether we wish to be punished eternally or to have eternal life. Matt. 25: 31-46 (Discuss as you choose, explaining the eternal destinies of all).

CONCLUSION

I. In one story, Jesus discussed how 2 men lived, and how they fared **after** their death. (Luke 16:19-31) (Discuss as desired)

II. Where will YOU spend eternity—heaven or hell?

A. Going to heaven is to avoid the place called hell.

B. We are encouraged to go to heaven, but we need to be warned against going to hell.