

8. How does belief in hell help us live at peace in the world? Do you think belief in hell has actually helped us live at peace? Why or why not? Give examples.

C.S. Lewis wrote, ““There are a good many things which would not be worth bothering about if I were going to live only seventy years, but which I had better bother about very seriously if I am going to live forever. Perhaps my bad temper or my jealousy are gradually getting worse—so gradually that the increase in seventy years will not be very noticeable. But it might be absolute hell in a millions years: in fact, if Christianity is true, Hell is the precisely correct technical term for what it would be.”

9. Do you think Lewis’ description could be an accurate description of hell? Do you think it can be squared with the Bible’s description of judgment?
10. Do you think such a description is more or less severe than literal fire?
11. Should we seek to (or hope) hell will be less severe than the image of burning in fire would imply?
12. Can a God who sends people to hell for eternity, be a loving God? Why or why not?
13. Does the description of people “choosing” hell make hell more reasonable? Does it make it less biblical? Why or why not?
14. Speaking about the cross of Christ, Tim Keller said, “People try to get rid of hell to make God more loving, but instead make Him less.” Do you agree?
15. In what way does belief in hell show us how much God loves us?



“The Necessity of Hell”

Sermon Notes and Takehome

May 22nd, 2011

“Each of us bears his own Hell.” –Virgil

“The safest road to hell is the gradual one - the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.” –C.S. Lewis in The Screwtape Letters

“Every man is his own hell.” –H.L. Menchen

“I don't believe in an afterlife, so I don't have to spend my whole life fearing hell, or fearing heaven even more. For whatever the tortures of hell, I think the boredom of heaven would be even worse.” –Isaac Asimov

“Maybe there is no actual place called hell. Maybe hell is just having to listen to our grandparents breathe through their noses when they're eating sandwiches. –Jim Carey

Sermon Notes:

Our society loves a God of _____.

We intuitively have a problem with a God who would _____ people for eternity.

Most people wouldn't want to see _____ in heaven.

The Bible agrees the _____ should fit the _____.

What I believe about hell:

1. Hell is _____.
2. Descriptions of hell are _____.
3. Hell is _____ business.
4. Trying to figure out the exact _____ of hell can _____ us.
5. Hell is _____...

...for living at _____ in the world.

- If we believe God will bring _____, it can free us from the desire to inflict _____. (Romans 12:17-21)
- Our justice is always _____.

...for understanding our own _____. (Luke 16:19-31)

- Lazarus is the only character in Jesus' parables that has a _____.
- Sin is building our _____ on something other than _____.

- Sin _____ our view of the world.

- Sin _____ a _____ in our heart.

...to understand how much God _____ us.

- The Apostle's Creed says Jesus "descended into _____."
- "My God, my God, why have you _____ me."
- Getting rid of hell actually makes God _____ loving.

Questions for Reflection and Application:

1. As you were growing up, what was your image of hell? Has your image changed over the years? As a result of this message?
2. Have you ever had a problem believing in hell? Why?
3. What do you think are the main difficulties with belief in hell?
4. In a few places (Mt. 18:8-9, 25:41, Mk 9:43, James 3:6, Jude 1:7, Rev 20:14-15) in the NT, fire is used in reference to hell. Do you believe the fire is a literal description of the punishment of hell? Why or why not?
5. If not, why does the Bible use the image of fire when referring to hell?
6. Kory said in his message hell is necessary for three things. Name or describe the three things. Do you agree?
7. Which do you find most compelling?