

Evangelism Seminar 3

"Have It Your Way"

In the first two steps, we declared that

1. God is our Creator, who is sovereign. He is King. He makes the rules, and yet He is utterly GOOD in all that He does
2. But we have all told Him to shove off. We've all desired and acted in order to have all His goodness without Him. This is rebellion against the King, the Bible calls this sin.

And now in the third step, God gives us rebels what we asked for - life without Him. Which is actually death, since only in God is there life.

And there is death, because God calls us to account for our actions. In every other reign or kingdom on earth, rebellion is *always* punishable by death - this is not barbaric - even the most "civilized" societies follow this.

But with God, again, sin brings its own judgment. He cannot abide by sin - nor would you want to abide rebels, if you were king. So God withdraws, and allows us to taste of what that life is like apart from Him. His withdrawal means death.

To be apart from Him means death and hell. It is everlasting life, apart from Him - hell.

This future judgment Paul describes this way:

2 Thessalonians 1:5–10 (ESV): This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— 6 since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, 10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

Hebrews 9:27 puts it this way:

Hebrews 9:27–28 (ESV): 27 And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, 28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Verse 28 gives us a hint of where we are going, but v. 27 makes clear where we are going without him.

We must be clear: we are all destined to this hell, apart from miraculous, outside help.

Now, we should consider for a moment what the Bible teaches about hell. American Christians are reticent to talk about it, but this puts us above Jesus. For of all the biblical writers, it's Jesus that talks *most* about hell.

The Christian doctrine of hell is that it is

- eternal, and
- conscious

We know this; this is why we preach, that those around us may escape that faith.

- So first, have faith in hell. Believe that it is real.

But then we must consider what the Bible doesn't say, or is not that clear on. C.S. Lewis wondered aloud what is left of a person, that makes them "them" - those characteristics that make them "them" as we know "them" - when they experience all the grace of God removed, and the inner man comes forward.

You get a taste of this on social media - how vile the hatred can be towards people. We catch a glimpse of who people really are. That becomes COMPLETE and FULL in hell. We become what we are, in full. And THAT, well, we may not recognize each other in that respect . . .

This is not annihilationism, the doctrine that people are annihilated in the judgment, and are no more. God is just, and He will not allow rebellion to go against Himself forever.

Questions, concerns about where we have come so far?

Where we are going . . .

Bad version video

Good version video