

2 Queries About Hell

by Christopher Love

The sermon argues that there is a hell and that it is necessary for the punishment of sin, based on the confessions of heathens and the testimony of Scripture.

Scripture: Psalm 9:17, Psalm 11:6, Matthew 23:33, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 2 Thessalonians 1:6, Hebrews 2:14, 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 1:6

Topics: "Eternal Punishment", "Hell And Judgment"

Description

Christopher Love preaches about the existence of hell, providing evidence from both the confessions of heathens and the testimony of Scripture. He emphasizes that the nature of sin, the justice of God, and the terrors of conscience all point towards the necessity of a place like hell for the wicked to receive eternal punishment. Love condemns those who deny the reality of hell and warns those who live in sin without regard for the consequences. However, he offers consolation to the elect, assuring them that through Jesus Christ, they are delivered from the wrath to come.

Transcript

QUERY 1. Is there a hell or not? To answer this, I shall make it appear, first, from the confession of heathens who had only the glimmerings of nature and never saw the Bible, and, second, from the testimony of Scripture.

First, from the confession of heathens. Though they could not tell distinctly (never being acquainted with the Word) yet, by the glimmering light of nature, they had some fancies and apprehensions of this place of the damned. They had one called Pluto who was the chief person in hell. He chiefly tormented those who were most wicked. They had their Charon's boats, a fancy that there was a man with a boat who ferried over wicked persons into hell. They had their Aetna, their burning mountains which they fancied to be hell. And they fancied hell to be a continual rolling of stones upon dead bodies, along with many other fancies. And so Pluto had many footsteps of hell. He said, "If a man has no punishment after he is dead, he shall have some guilt in him to torture and torment him." All these were merely apprehensions of hell, but these I pass.

Second, as you have a testimony from heathens, so you have this truth clearly from Scripture will but name two or three texts.

So Psalm 9:1, "be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God." So Psalm 11:6: "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest." So Matthew 23:33: "Ye serpents, and generations of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?" 2 Peter 2:4: "He cast them down to hell. They are locked up in chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment." So Jude 6: "They are reserved in everlasting chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day." All these plainly prove that there is a hell.

QUERY 2. Why there must be a hell? It appears by these demonstrations.

First, because of the filthy nature of sin. Sin is against an infinite God, and the offense being infinite, the punishment must be infinite also. But the punishment cannot be infinite upon earth because you stay here but a while and your bodies rot in the grave.

Therefore, of necessity, there must be a hell that must keep the bodies and souls of the wicked so that they may receive proportionable punishment to the sins they committed here upon the earth.

Second, because else the justice of God could never be satisfied for the sins of wicked men done here upon earth. And the reason is, first, because Christ would not satisfy and suffer God's wrath for wicked men; therefore, they must bear it themselves. Second, upon earth they cannot satisfy God's wrath. Why? Because sin, being an infinite offense, their punishment can be but finite, lasting for a time. Therefore, all their sufferings here cannot satisfy God's wrath due to them for their sins. Therefore, of necessity, there must be a hell to keep men to all eternity so that, by everlasting torments, Gods justice may be satisfied, which otherwise it could not be, 2 Thess. 1:6.

Third, it appears there must be a hell by those horrors and terrors of conscience that are in wicked men when they are dying. Many a man in his health will tush at hell; he will scorn the fire and scoff at the flames. Many a man, while he is in health, never thinks of hell; but he can drink one day, swear an other day, play the adulterer the third day, and sin every day, and the thoughts of hell never trouble him. But now bring this man to his sickbed and what horrors and fears seize upon his soul! Should a healthy drunkard appeal to himself when dying (as one said he would appeal from King Philip drunk to King Philip sober, who thereupon repealed his act and did the man justice), he would say this, "You who by your sinning have spent your strength and estate in drink, and do not think of hell when you are drunk, I would appeal to you, a dying man." Tell me, what would you say then? What would you then give for Christ? What would you then give for a pardon that you might not be damned? The very horrors and wounds of conscience at your dying day demonstrate that there is a time of torments to be endured by you. Else how should conscience be so terrible a vexation to the souls of men at that day were there not such a thing as hell provided for them? What made the Roman emperors to be afraid of death, and, when it thundered, to run under their beds for fear of death? Only this, that the very workings of conscience showed them something was to come after this life. The very terrors of conscience declare there is a hell, a place of torment provided for wicked men. And thus having finished these queries, the use I shall make shall be for condemnation and astonishment.

It shall be for condemnation, a condemnation to all those who hold there is no such thing as hell. The Phontinians hold there is no hell, but that which they call hell is the annihilation of the body, that man is brought to nothing. There are fifteen sorts of heretics an author writes of who deny hell. And among the rest, one called Empectae was held by Barba, the wife of Sigismundus the emperor, who gave her followers money to hold this opinion that she might have their consciences seared up in sensuality and

lustful pleasure. This truth condemns all those who have their consciences so seared as to deny there is a hell.

This is for astonishment. To whom? Why, to all you who so add sin to sin, and drunkenness to thirst, and one provocation to another, as if there were neither a heaven for the godly nor a hell for you; you who like Sardanapalus say, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for after death there is no pleasure, and consequently no pain; and therefore while men live, they may live as pleasurable and joyous as possible might be." O beloved, tremble! If all these places alleged prove such a place to be, how should this astonish your soul, that all the actions of your life have been but running a race to these chambers of death? All the actions of your life have been but a laying up of treasure in this place of torment. How should this astonish you, whose course only leads you to this doleful dungeon of hell!

But, though this is a terrible and dreadful doctrine, yet you may suck forth consolation hence who are the elect people of God. It is true indeed, there is a hell, and wicked men shall unavoidably come to hell. As John says, "You serpents and generation of vipers, how shall you escape the damnation of hell?" But all you who are elect of God are not only forewarned, but are fore-armed also. You need not fear this place of hell, for, first, you need not fear the devil, that is, the torments in hell, because "God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Though he now goes about like a roaring lion, "seeking his prey, whom he may devour;" yet then he shall be in chains and go about no more. And, second, you need not fear those torments in hell the damned undergo. Though there is a worm that shall never die, a fire that shall never go out, though there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, though they lie under the wrath of an incensed God, yet lift up your heads with joy, you elect of God, for Jesus Christ is your redemption and your life! "He hath destroyed him which had the power of death, the devil," Hebrews 2:14. Hereupon, I Thessalonians 1:10, you are by Jesus Christ "delivered from the wrath to come." Here, then, is matter of joy for you. Though there is a hell, and the wicked tormented night and day, yet by Jesus Christ you are delivered from this wrath to come.

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