

March 4th, 2018
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: There's No Place Like Hell
Sermon #1 Title: What is Hell?
Sermon #1 Text: (Revelation 14:9-11)

A few months ago, some friends of ours came to us and said, "we're taking you to Disney World; we have the tickets, we have the rooms, and there is an all-inclusive meal plan available to you as well; all you have to do is drive down and spend a few days with us." Well it has been an exciting thing for Adrienne and Sarah, getting ready for a trip. One of the things that has happened over the last few months, has been the anticipation and excitement building in Adrienne.

- Knowing where she is going, she has been;
 - Reading up on everything she can find –
 - Looking at brochures, and the internet –
 - Marking her calendar as the days pass –
 - all the things someone does when they are going somewhere they've never been before, trying to get ready for a new destination.
- That's been a pleasure, watching the anticipation build in her as she gets ready to go . . .

(What's amazing and convicting though – is that while she is excitedly learning all she can about a destination she's never been . . . The predominant spirit among the general population has no interest in studying, learning, or finding out all they can . . . about their ultimate destination.)

I would think, that any clear thinking, man or woman, interested in learning all they can about a Vacation destination, would be infinitely more studious about their final destination.

I remind you this morning, and the Sunday mornings to come, that your final condition, and your ultimate destination is the reason there was a cross. It is the reason there is a Savior. It is the reason there is both a Christmas, and an Easter!

The reason there is Resurrection Sunday, is because there is Damnation Eternity . . . Before we go to the Empty Tomb of Easter, we are going to look at the Black Darkness of Hell so that we can have a better understanding of how critical it is to actually be saved! – Not verbally, or socially, but actually!

Many people today have sold a soft, social, and psychological motive for salvation.

Some people's idea of salvation is:

- "Jesus came to save you from your loneliness"
- "Jesus came to save you from a life of emptiness"
- "Jesus came to save you from the dysfunction, and turmoil of this world."

*Note – Listen very carefully – Matthew 1:21 – ***"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."***

- Christ came to save men from their sin – Why? Why did He die for sin? What is the big deal about "Sin?"

Romans 6:23 – "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

- Now that's the big deal! – That is the issue.

But I want to tell you today, that death is not merely physical death – but it is eternal, unending conscious death.

Let me give you some verses:

John 5:28-29 – “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

Daniel 12:2 – “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

Now that being said, this morning I want you to get Biblical dose of exactly what this thing is that we call “hell.” – What is Hell?

The word is found 54 times in the King James Bible – and it is one word that has a spider web of dimensions. We have so watered down the word that it no longer strikes fear into the heart of men. We have become callous to it.

Let me give you the Biblical language definitions of the words the Bible uses that we translate as hell.

1.) Sheol – “hades or the world of the dead (as if a subterranean retreat), including its accessories and inmates:- grave – 31 times; hell – 31 times; pit – 3 times.

- In its purest form, it is the cemetery for the soul.

- The body goes to the dirt, - and before the cross – all went into the soulful underworld. – Now some went to the lowest parts that

burneth with fire, as in Deuteronomy 32:22 – some went to what the New Testament called Abraham’s bosom. – It was a place with a great gulf fixed between the lower parts, and Abraham’s bosom.

*Note – Now that being said, “the word sheol” is not synonymous with eternal damnation – it is only synonymous with “the place that the dead went” before the cross.

2.) Hades – Greek word that is used 11 times in the New Testament

- unseen, i.e. “Hades” or the place (state) of departed souls :- grave, hell. – The New Testament equivalent to Sheol

3.) Gehenna – Used 12 times in the New Testament, and it was often the chosen word of Jesus to describe the conditions of everlasting punishment. – “Hinnom; gehenna (or Ge-Hinnom), a valley of Jerusalem, used (figurative) as a name for the place (or state) of everlasting punishment

- Jesus used this word as a living illustration to describe the judgment to come –

~It was the site where the pagans sacrificed their children in the fire, by burning them alive to their false gods. – (That pictures the pure evil, and sheer horror of the place we ultimately call hell.)

~It was the place of permanent refuse – in NT times, the fires burning the garbage of Jerusalem never went out. – There they burned their trash; sometimes their unwanted dead, and emptied their open sewage into the valley...

~ Because of this, from that place – putrid smoke and smell, always ascended from the valley; because of this, the valley was filled with maggots, and worms, and scavenger insects and bacteria

- It was the ever present picture of living death. – It was this word that Jesus often used when teaching about the future state of the lost.

#4. Tartaroo – It is used one time in the New Testament, and it is found in 2 Peter 2:4 – “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell.” – This word means, “to incarcerate in the lowest abyss.”

- Now those are the words from one of the Bible to the other that tell us about this place in the English we call hell.

- Like The Majesty of Heaven, the pictures of hell seem to be bigger than any one passage on hell in the Bible.

- Throughout the scriptures we are given glimpses, small descriptions, basic information, and clear and stern warnings about this thing we call Hell in the English language.

Among the passages of scripture, I find none that gives a greater summary of what's to come than the one we are given in our passage today.

- this picture is given to us – at the end – it's what's to come.

- The Lord is showing John what is to come near the end of the Great Tribulation that is to come on the earth, and in it, he shows us the final destination of those who reject Jesus, and embrace the Antichrist

- While the context deals with those people at that time, their destination is the ultimate destination of all people who will not be saved.

From this, we learn four things about what Hell ultimately is:

I. It is the Place of Conscious Death

Vs 10 – *“The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture.”*

A. There is a Conscious Experience

1.) “shall drink” is the Biblical metaphor for “a conscious experience.”

- specifically – to taste, which speaks of taking into oneself, knowing its flavor, knowing its feelings, and all that goes with it.

*Note – Biblically speaking, the Bible makes it clear that men are forever conscious in the place of eternal judgment.

- There is tasting – “drink”

- There is seeing – “the rich man lifted his eyes being in torments”

(Though there is nothing to see – “outer darkness” – “mist of darkness”)

- There is sight, but no light

- There is smelling – “brimstone”

- There is hearing – “wailing and gnashing of teeth”

- There is sensation – “tormented in this flame”

- There is hatred – “gnashing of teeth” speaks of fomenting bitter vitriol

- There is thinking – “The rich man formulated his own plan to spare his brethren.

- There is alertness – “Daniel 12:2 – They shall **awake** to shame and everlasting contempt.”

*Note – All of that is said to say, that men will be as conscious in hell, as they are in heaven, as they are on earth, and more so than they are on earth. – It is a Conscious Experience

B. It is a Dying Occurrence - “the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture.”

1.) What is the “wrath of God” – It is the direct opposite of “life from God” – it is Death from God.

John 3:36 – “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; **but the wrath of God abideth on him.**”

The phrase “wrath of God” is used 10 times in the New Testament, and each and every time it is coming upon those who reject the life God gives through Jesus.

a.) it is the idea of they will forever be being destroyed . . .

2 Peter 2:12 – Speaking of false teachers, and apostates leaders – “But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;”

- Some people read that and think that “perish” and “destroyed” means that they will cease to exist at some point.
- When all the scriptures are placed together, we find that they will Consciously being, being destroyed, forever. They will consciously be being perished, forever!

- this is that “everlasting contempt”
- this is that “resurrection of damnation”
- this is that “awakened” to everlasting shame

Ultimately hell is the place of Conscious Death!

II. It is the Practice of Continuing Judgment

“the wrath of God is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for every and ever; and they have no rest day nor night.”

A. It is an Undiluted Sentence – “without mixture”

- Biblically speaking wine was often mixed with water to dilute it, and reduce its strength – The Bible says here that this “wrath” to come is not mixed, and is not diluted or reduced in any way – it is the fullest measured dose that the Omnipotent, Omniscient, God can deliver.

B. It is an Unrelenting Punishment – “he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone”

- Being tortured, experiencing anguish, agony, and suffering . . .

What is the punishment in the place that is causing so much pain?

The Punishment and Wrath of the Sinner is to ever reside in the fire of proving Justice

- The fire eternally demonstrates the justice against Sin!

- a.) The Fire of Judgment
- b.) The Aroma of Brimstone
- c.) The Presence of Heaven’s Angels
- d.) The Presence of the Lord Jesus

*Note – Fire both “purifies” and “nullifies”

*Note – Sulfur, or Brimstone – when it burns it has a suffocating effect, and is an irritant

*Note – I do not know why those in hell will have an awareness of the Holy Angels; the Bible doesn’t say why, it just says that they are there.

- One of the things we know about them, is these are the angels that never rebelled; these are angels that did not follow Lucifer; these angels are ever present testimonies of “choice.”

*Note – The Presence of the Lord Jesus – their Judge – the Man they rejected – The Lord they refused to submit to. The One that Loved them, that they would not bow to

Now some people today may try and say, "What about the punishment fitting the crime?"

- It will!

- The problem is that men have no idea about how to measure the magnitude of sin.

- When any man thinks that God is "overreacting" to Adam simply eating something God said not to, that man shows he is UNDER reacting to the true magnitude of sin!

- Sin is so normal, so common, so natural to man, he has no means to measure the magnitude of his crimes against a Holy God.

- Hell is the glimpse we get into the measurement of justice and punishment against sin in mortal man.

C. Unending Misery

- 1.) "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night."

*Note – There those today who will try and tell you that lost men may go to hell, but when their justice is fulfilled they will be annihilated; John said not so.

- a.) It is ever, and ever

- b.) It is day, and/or night

- c.) There is no rest... no respite... not one millisecond of relief... or sleep....

*Note – do you know why?

- Because their rebellion never ceases . . .

- Never get the idea that when men go to hell they are all of a sudden going to become repentant . . . they are not.

- Their attitudes will not get better, they will grow more and more bitter....

- gnashing of teeth – grating, or gritting of the teeth, in both pain and anger...

- Do you remember the Rich man's response to being in hell? – He cried out to Abraham, rather than God – He argued with Abraham, rather than God – He asked for another plan of salvation rather than the one God had given –

Once in hell – men will never cease from sinning against God

Conclusion:

- This is the final destiny of every human being that is not under the blood of Jesus Christ.

- This is the final arrival of sin . . . (not sins) sin.

- This is what it means to "Perish" in John 3:16

- This is what it means to be "condemned already."

- This is what it means to "die without Christ."

- This is WHY we preach Jesus, and Him crucified

1st Timothy 1:15 – "This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."