

Exactly What Is Hell?

During the American Civil War General William T. Sherman was marching through the south and, as he and his army did so, there was great destruction. Approaching Atlanta, Georgia, General Sherman ordered evacuation of the entire city because he was going to burn it. The mayor and councilmen of Atlanta wrote to General Sherman and asked him not to follow through with his order; in their letter, they explained the reasons for their request. In response, General Sherman explained himself to the mayor and councilmen. It was during this explanation that General Sherman uttered the famous phrase; "War is hell." As ugly and horrible as war may be, it pales in comparison to **exactly what is hell** because, in time, war does come to an end but hell does not, for it is eternal.

In a pamphlet this small it is difficult to explain **exactly what is hell**. Therefore, I shall select verses from God's Word, the Bible, that help people understand better **exactly what is hell**.

The grave is a common place for people regardless of their religious background or affiliation. The physical body may be cremated, buried, ingested by some large animal or even a shark, etc. Though the physical body may be gone, the soul of that person still lives on because it is eternal. However, where does it live?

When the physical body of a person dies, the body goes to the grave but the soul lives on because it is eternal. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." {Genesis 2:7} Now the question is where it lives, and the answer is in God's Word, the Bible.

Only two permanent places are spoken of in the Bible; the place called Heaven and the place called hell. Heaven is the dwelling place of God and where Jesus Christ went back to after He was crucified, buried, and bodily raised. There is no other place in between. People who repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as personal Saviour are the only ones who go to Heaven. God said it and that settles it; people just need to believe it. {John 3:16; John 5:24; Romans 10:13; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 John 1:9} On the other hand, people who do not repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as Saviour, **ALL** of those will go to the place called hell.

Exactly what is hell? Here is what God says about it.

It is a place of torment. "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments..." {Luke 16:23} It is a place where there is fire. "... for I am tormented in this flame." {Luke 16:24} It is a place of outer darkness. "... and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." {Matthew 22:13} {A finite mind cannot comprehend this.} It is a place of pain and suffering. "... suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." {Jude 1:7} A furnace of fire where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. "... a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." {Matthew 13:42} It's a place of everlasting fire. "...cast into everlasting fire" {Matthew 18:8} It's a lake of fire and brimstone where there is tormenting day and night for ever and ever. "...cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." {Revelation 20:10}.

Exactly what is hell? Of all the wars this world has known, of all the plagues that ravished entire nations, of all the earthquakes and other disasters that have happened, none of them compare to exactly what hell is truly like. God's Word tells the world about it as He warns about it but few are willing to give heed. This is so sad because God has done all He can to help people avoid it.

What has He done? "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." {John 3:16} "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." {Romans 5:8-9} "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." {Romans 10:12-13} The word "whosoever" literally means anyone and it does not matter what they have done because Jesus Christ accepts people the way they are when they truly repent of sin and trust Him as personal Saviour. Jesus loves you so much that He shed His innocent blood and died for your sin debt because He does not want to see you go to that awful place called hell. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." {2 Peter 3:9}

And now my friend, you know "Exactly What Is Hell," and how to avoid it; you are without excuse. How will you respond; will you repent and trust Jesus Christ as Saviour or will you reject Him?