

Heaven: An introduction
Part 3

Is Heaven our default
destination...or is Hell?
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When a person dies they will go to either Heaven or Hell.
“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the
judgment...” Hebrew 9:27

“Earth is an in-between world touched by both Heaven and Hell.
Earth leads directly into Heaven or directly into Hell. The best of
life on Earth is a glimpse of Heaven; the worst of life is a glimpse
of Hell. For Christians, this present life is the closest we will come
to Hell. For unbelievers, it is the closest they will come to Heaven.”
Randy Alcorn

According to a recent Gallup poll, for every American who believes
he’s going to Hell, there are 120 who believe they’re going to
Heaven.

This optimism stands in stark contrast to Christ’s words in Matthew
7:13-14:

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is
the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But
small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a
few find it.”

I. What keeps us out of Heaven?

Sin

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is
perfect.” Matthew 5:48

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life
through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23

II. Why can’t God allow sin into Heaven?

God is holy and sin cannot enter into his presence.

“Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong”
Habakkuk 1:13

Apart from Christ, our default destination is Hell.

Universalism is the belief that everyone goes to Heaven but the
Gospel truth is that no one goes to Heaven automatically.

In the Bible, Jesus says more than anyone else about Hell.
Matt 10:28, 13:40-42, Mark 9:43-44

III. What is Hell like?

Jesus shared with us the clearest picture of what Hell is like in Luke
16:19-31:

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen
and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named
Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the
rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. "The
time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to
Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.”

Hell is a place of...

1. Suffering

“In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham
far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father
Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his

finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.” V.23-24

“They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.” 2 Thess.1:9

2. Where people are fully conscious

“But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember...’ V. 25a

3. Where people retain their desires, memories and reasoning

“But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.’” V 25

4. Where people long for relief

“So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’” V.24

5. Where people cannot be comforted

“But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot,” V. 25-26

6. Where people cannot leave their torment

“...nor can anyone cross over from there to us.” V.26c

7. Where people are without hope

“He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’” V 27-28

Hell is a real and eternal place that awaits everyone who has rejected Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

If we understood Hell even the slightest bit, none of us would ever say, “Go to Hell.” It’s far too easy to go to Hell. It requires no change of course, no navigational adjustments. We were born with our autopilot set toward Hell. It is nothing to take lightly. When we speak of Hell it ought to be with a broken heart.

IV. Reasons Satan has for fueling our denial of eternal punishment:

1. He wants unbelievers to reject Christ without fear

2. He wants Christians to be unmotivated to share Christ

3. He wants God to receive less glory for the radical nature of Christ’s redemptive work.

“Resolved, ...to act as...if, I had already seen the happiness of heaven, and the torments of hell.” Jonathan Edwards