

Hell

The Doctrine of Eternal Judgment

Return Church

Sunday

March 22, 2026









The Doctrine of Eternal Judgment

- The doctrine of hell or eternal judgment is probably the most unpopular doctrine in all of Christianity.
- But if you don't understand the doctrine of eternal judgment, you cannot possibly understand the love of God.
- Let me emphasize this today, that God loves you. He loves you on your best day and on your worst day. He loves you whether you have been good or rebellious. God loves you no matter what. **Understood!**
- Jesus the one that loves us so much, speaks more about hell than all of the other writers of the books of the Bible.
- Many people have a difficult time reconciling how can a loving God allow somebody to suffer forever.
- **Yes, I believe the Biblical imagery of Hell fire is metaphorical**, but it is probably in one sense worse than fire.
- Do you think that you are more compassionate than Jesus, because you don't believe in eternal torment?

The Doctrine of Eternal Judgment

- If you get rid of the idea of eternal judgment, hell and the lake of fire, you will find that you have gutted one of the core doctrines of the Bible.
- To say that God would never eternally torment someone is to say that He is not just or fair.
- To say that it would not be fair of God to allow someone to go to hell, is to say that you don't really see how sinful, horrible or wicked your sins were before you got saved.
- The Bible says a lot about your value to God, and how much God loves you, and what a tremendous price Jesus paid for your sins. Here is a great truth.
- **You are more sinful, wicked and flawed in yourself than you ever dared believe, yet at the very same time you are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than you ever dared hope.**
- There are two popular but incorrect views circulating around the world today: annihilationism and universalism.

Annihilationism

- A teaching that after the wicked have suffered the wrath and judgment of God for a time, then God will annihilate them, so they no longer exist.
- They say that since God is a God of love that He could not possibly punish someone forever.
- The 7th Day Adventist Church and The Jehovah Witnesses teach this doctrine.
- Many cults believe in either, annihilationism or universalism.

Charles Taze Russell

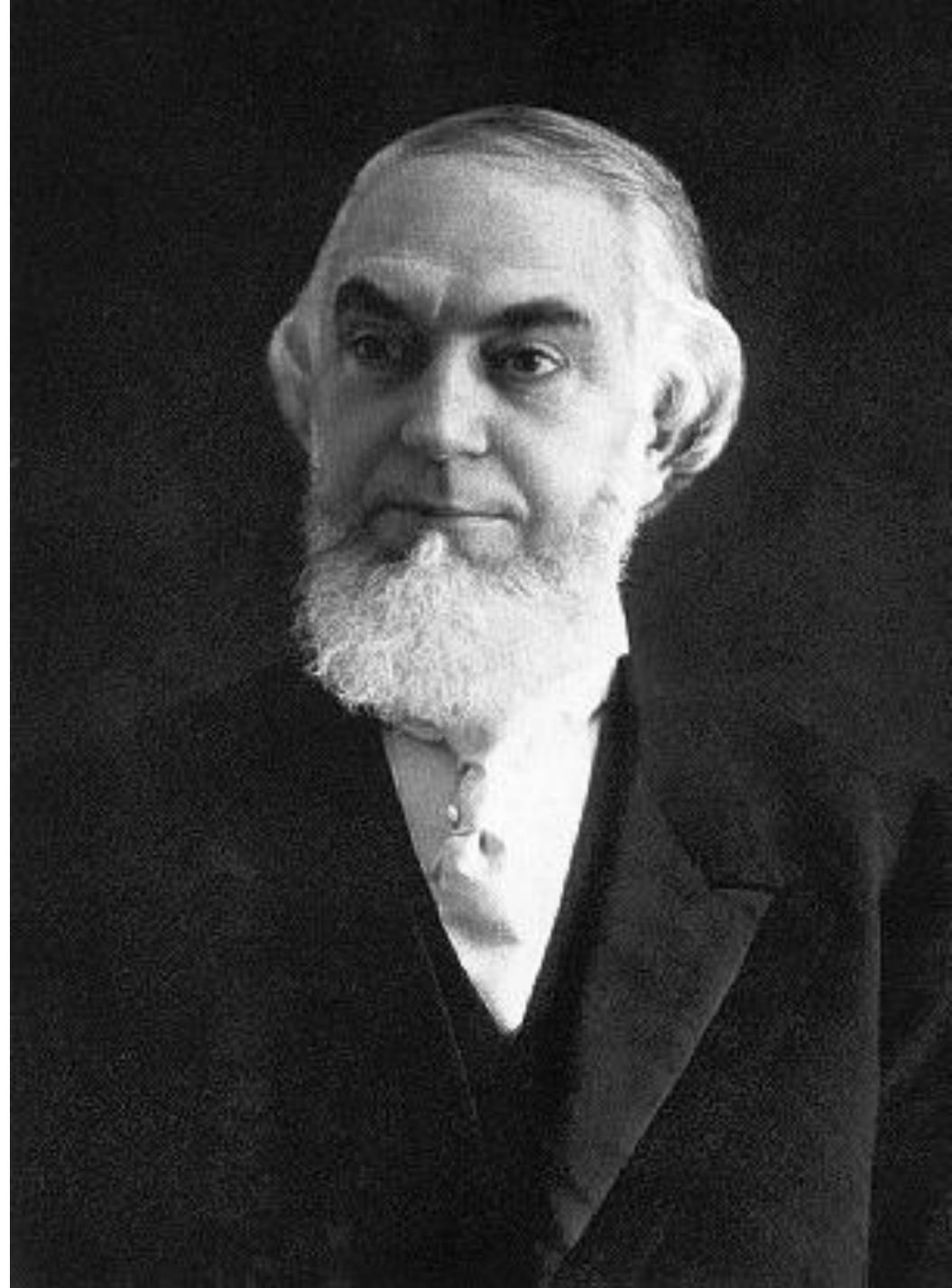
Founder of what became

The Jehovah Witnesses

We find [in the Bible] no such place of everlasting torture as the creeds and hymn-books, and many pulpits, erroneously teach.

Hell could not be a place of torment because such an idea never came into the mind or heart of God.

Hell, or the second death, is extinction of being.



Ellen G. White

Co-founder of:

The 7th Day Adventist Church

The idea of eternal torment is a dogma produced by Satan to make God appear as a tyrant.

It is repugnant to every emotion of love and mercy that a person should suffer endless torture for sins committed during a brief earthly life.



Kirk Cameron

**A God of love and justice
would not subject a finite
human to infinite,
everlasting torture.**

**Teaching conscious eternal
torment severely
misrepresents the
character of God.**



Eitan Bar

**If the doctrine of
Eternal Conscious
Torment is true. Then
God is an evil twisted
monster, that makes
Hitler look kind and
compassionate in
comparison!**



Universalism

- All souls will eventually be reconciled to God and attain salvation.
- The unbelievers will go to hell for a time, but in hell they will bow their knees and confess that Jesus is Lord and get saved.
- So, everybody that goes to hell, eventually gets saved, even Hitler the Anti-Christ, the false prophet and even Satan.
- Forever and ever is just another term for a span of time.
- **In my view, there is no need to evangelize the lost if you believe this way. They can just get saved in hell.**

Carlton Pearson

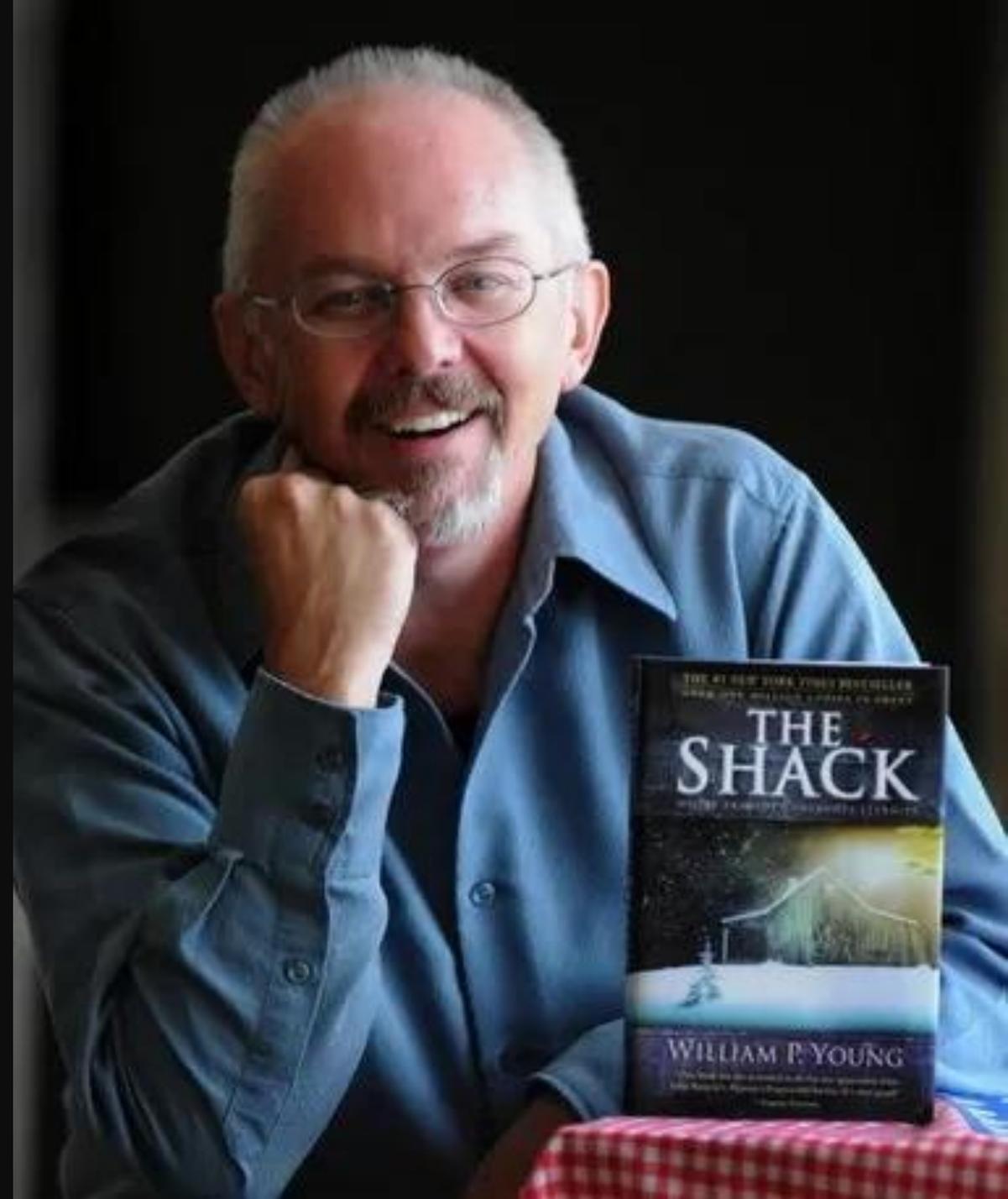
When people stop believing in a customized torture chamber, it takes a huge psychological weight off. That idea of an angry God has created a lot of mental illness on Earth.



William Paul Young

Hell is not a "torture dungeon" or a place of final destruction, but a temporary state of purification or "age-long chastisement."

God is never truly separate from any human being, that everyone is already "in Christ," regardless of their current faith.



Mary Baker Eddy

Christian Science

Hell is not a literal fiery pit or a place of eternal punishment, but a temporary, self-imposed state of mind characterized by fear, sin, sickness, and separation from God.

Christian Science rejects the idea of a vengeful God subjecting individuals to everlasting torture.



Annihilationism & Universalism

- Many of these people write books about how they are so much more compassionate and loving than the people that believe in eternal conscious torment.
- Which is saying they think they are more loving than Jesus Christ.
- They try to redefine words like eternal and forever. Making them sound as if they are just a space of time.
- This is what the cults are all about, everybody is saved in the end.
- This is what New Age thinking and humanism is all about.
- You don't need to deal with or repent of your sins, you don't need to change your ungodly behavior, because God is so loving, in the end, everybody will be saved.
- So, go on sinning and rebelling against God. Whatever feels good do it.
- That kind of thinking is hog-wash.
- **I have tried to show you what the false teachers are saying, now let's look at the truth.**

God has 2 equal sides

but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17

Love

- Grace
- Mercy
- Longsuffering
- Forgiveness
- The Lamb
- Giving
- God loves the sinner
- Saved people go to heaven

Judgment

- Truth
- Justice
- Holiness
- Wrath
- The Lion
- Restraint
- God hates the sin
- Lost people go to hell

What if God wasn't just or holy?

- What if when you got to the judgment seat that you found out that God let Hitler or even Satan into heaven; but did not let in Christian ladies that spent their life-time humbling themselves, fasting and praying and giving alms and helping people.
- How could you ever trust a God that was not just or fair?
- We know that the Lord is holy, just, righteous and fair. We sing songs saying, Holy, holy, holy.
- Our entire faith is built upon the fact that God is just and holy. God must punish the sinner and reward the Saint.
- Because we know that, we can trust Him, we can give our entire life to Him.
- The only way to know that God is a God of love is to understand first that God is holy and just, He is also a God of judgment.

Different Biblical words for hell

- **Sheole** – a Hebrew word describing the underworld, the grave, a pit, the abode of the dead, or hell.
- **Hades** – a Greek word, the realm of the dead, the grave, death, hell, the place of departed souls.
- **Gehenna** - a valley just outside of Jerusalem, in which piles of garbage were burned daily as well as the corpses of dead bodies.
- **Tartarus** – used by Peter to describe a deep abyss, a gloomy dark place where rebellious angels were held.
- **Outer darkness** – another term describing eternal punishment.

Hell – everlasting fire & punishment

Jesus had a lot to say about hell.

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels: And these will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life. *Matthew 25:41, 46 NKJV*

Jesus told His disciples who were going to die martyr's deaths.

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in **hell**.

Matthew 10:28 NKJV

Jesus's words

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!..... Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of **hell**? *Matthew 23:29, 33 NKJV*

And cast the unprofitable servant into the **outer darkness**. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. *Matthew 25:30 NKJV*

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to **hell**, into the **fire** that shall never be quenched—where their worm does not die and the **fire** is not quenched. *Mark 9:43-44 NKJV*

Paul taught everlasting punishment

In **flaming fire** taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with **everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ***II Thessalonians 1:8-9***
NKJV

- Punished with everlasting destruction.
- From the presence of the Lord. (Separated from God.)

The Doctrine of Eternal Judgment

Paul taught that eternal judgment was a basic teaching.

So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding. Surely we don't need to start again with the fundamental importance of repenting from evil deeds and placing our faith in God. You don't need further instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and **eternal judgment**. **Hebrews 6:1-2 NLT**

These are basic doctrines of Christianity.

Peter taught hell and judgment

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to **hell** and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

II Peter 2:4 NKJV

Eternal punishment of unbelievers

If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. 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 ascends **forever and ever**; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. ***Revelation 14:9-11 NKJV***

Forever and ever.

The Lake of Fire

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in **the lake which burns** with **fire and brimstone**, which is the second death. ***Revelation 21:8 NKJV***

At the Great White Throne Judgment

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of **fire and brimstone** where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night **forever and ever**.....Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of **fire**. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the **lake of fire**. ***Revelation 20:10, 14-15 NKJV***

Rich man and Lazarus

There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us. Then he said, I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment. Abraham said to him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent. But he said to him, If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead. **Luke 16:19-31 NKJV**

We learn 4 things about Hell from this story

- 1. The rich man had no name.**
- 2. Hell is a place of separation from God.**
- 3. Hell is a place of disintegration.**
- 4. Hell is a place of justice.**

Rich man and Lazarus

- This is a story of 2 men, Lazarus and the rich man. There is a contrast here. But not about rich and poor. He is not teaching that the poor go to heaven and the rich to hell.
- Jesus contrast people in several of his parables, like the Pharisee and the Publican, the prodigal son and the elder brother, or the sheep and the goats.
- The contrast here is that one has a name, and the other one doesn't.
- This is the only parable of Jesus where a character is given a name.
- The name Lazarus means “**God is my help**”. Why did the rich man go to hell?
- What sends you to hell is to make anything but God your help, your savior. All the rich man was, was a rich man. He made riches his help, his identity, his salvation, his god.
- The rich man's lack of concern for Lazarus or the poor shows the fruit of his unbelief, and lack of love in his heart.
- Abraham said son, you received your good things in your life. What is the thing you really live for? What is it that gives you a sense of who you are, that gives you an identity. To him, it was wealth, status and comfort.
- Now where are his riches? They are gone. He couldn't take them with him.

Good things

- This rich man chose his good things, it was his riches. When you take a good thing and make it an ultimate thing, it becomes an idol, or a god.
- People live for their careers, money, children, their beauty, even their ministry. What is your help, your treasure, your identity, your god?
- If you make anything but God your help, if you base your identity on anything else other than God, you become nameless, hollow, empty.
- All he was, was a rich man. Status, wealth and comfort were his identity, but now in hell those are gone. He now has nothing, he is nothing.
- Lazarus had nothing while he was alive on the earth, he was poor, he had no money and no friends. But he let his suffering drive him to God. He had a name, God is my help. He had an identity in God.
- What is your help? What is your salvation, your identity, your purpose.
- Can you say to God, I don't want anything but you to be my help, my savior, or my God. I choose to get my true identity in you Jesus. You are the very purpose of my life.

Søren Kierkegaard

**Sin is building
your identity on
anything but
God.**



4 things about hell

1. Why did the rich man go to hell?

2. Hell is a place of separation from God.

3. Hell is a place of disintegration.

4. Hell is a place of justice.

A great gulf

*between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us. **Luke 16:26 NKJV***

- Hell is a place of total separation from God.
- Some people teach that hell is the breath of God, therefore you are in the very presence of God in hell. So, you get saved in hell. I beg to differ.
- Hell is the opposite of that; Hell is complete separation from God.
- Being separated from the presence of God is the worst thing that can happen to us, because we were created to walk with God, to fellowship God, or to be in His presence.
- People that run from God all of their life, get what they asked for when they go to hell.
- People that want their independence say, nobody is going to tell me what to do, they go their own way and do their own thing, they finally get what they wanted all of their life, they are away from God, separated from His presence.

Separated from His presence

- Fire and darkness are metaphors representing eternal, spiritual disintegration. They represent eternal separation from God and His love, favor and blessings.
- Sin is saying to God, leave me alone. Man is continually trying to get away from God. Hell is nothing but God speaking to the deepest place in your heart, go ahead and have your own way.
- It is dangerous to live for yourself, to be self-centered, self-absorbed, self-serving, self righteous, and full of self-pity.
- The worst (and fairest) punishment God can give a person is to actively give them their sinful hearts' deepest desire. What is that? The desire of the sinful human heart is for independence from God. I did it my way.
- We want to go our own way, to do our own thing. We want to run away from God and His rules and laws.
- What is hell, then? It is God banishing us to regions we have desperately tried to get into all our lives.

God gave them over to a debased mind

For this reason **God gave them up to vile passions.God gave them over to a debased mind, (King James - reprobate mind)** to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, ***Romans 1:26-29 NKJV***

God gave them what they wanted.

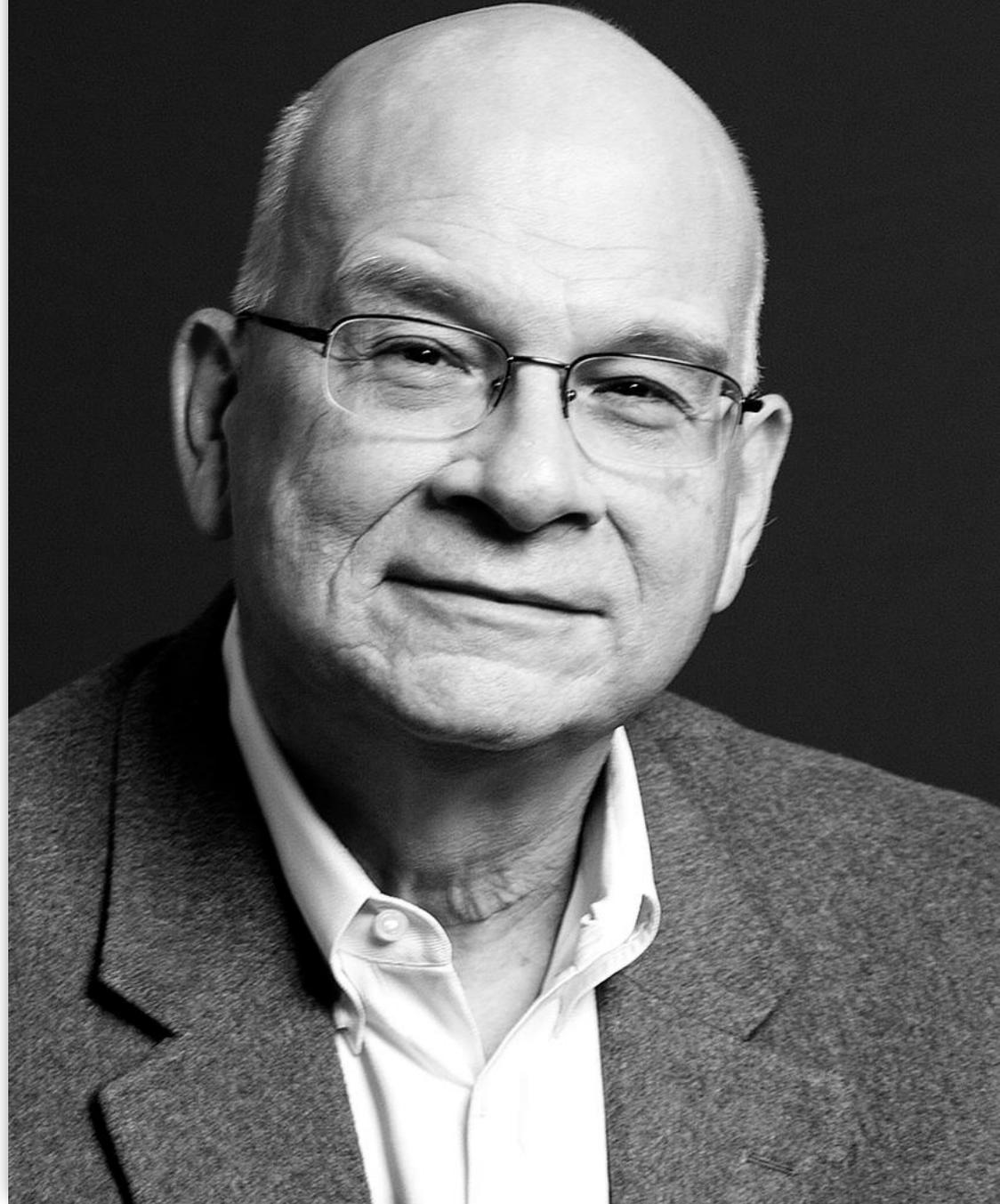
J.I. Packer

Scripture sees hell as self-chosen...Hell appears as a God's gesture of respect for human choice. All receive what they actually chose, either to be with God forever, worshiping him, or without God forever, worshiping themselves.



Tim Keller

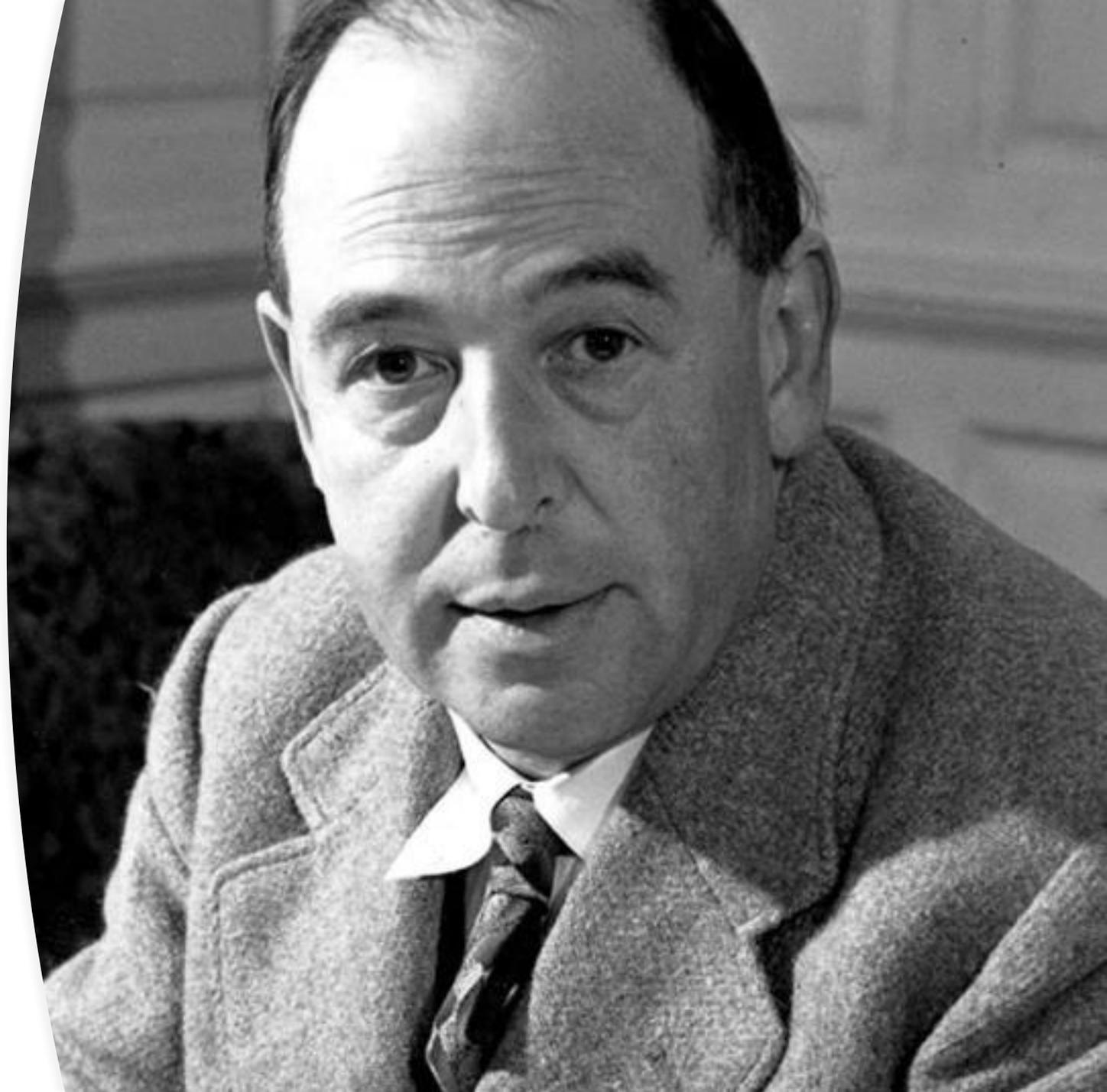
Even in this world it is clear that self-centeredness rather than God-centeredness makes you miserable and blind. The more self-absorbed, self-pitying, and self-justifying people are, the more breakdowns occur, relationally, psychologically, and even physically...But if, as the Bible teaches, our souls live on, then hell is simply one's freely chosen path going on forever and ever. We wanted to get away from God, and God, in his justice, sends us where we wanted to go.



C.S. Lewis

**The doors of hell are
locked from the
inside.**

**Hell is the greatest
monument in the
history of the world to
human freedom.**



4 things about hell

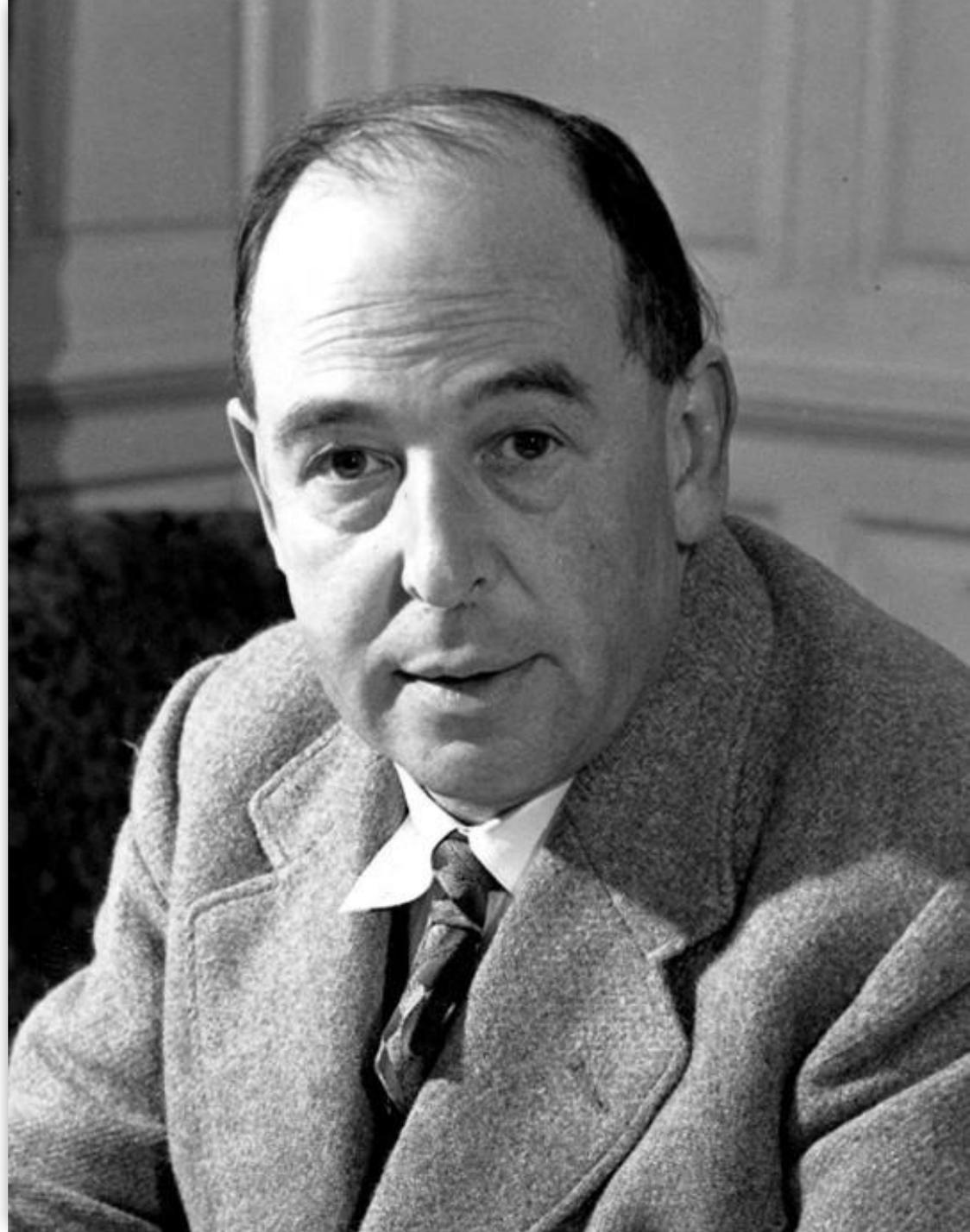
- 1. Why did the rich man go to hell?**
- 2. Hell is a place of separation from God.**
- 3. Hell is a place of disintegration.**
- 4. Hell is a place of justice.**

Hell is a place of disintegration

- The Bible never says God is throwing people into a fiery hell and His foot is on a lid keeping everyone from getting out. It is not like that at all.
- Fire is disintegration. Fire is a metaphor for hell, for something probably much worse. When you put something in fire it disintegrates, or it comes to pieces, it vaporizes.
- When something is in fire, things break down, or things lose their coherence.
- When you get away from God this is what happens to you.
- When your heart is filled with love, faith and hope, what do you feel? Wholeness, completeness, satisfaction or coherence.
- Give in to bitterness, lust, worry, fear, or anger, let it burn or give it fuel, and your soul will break down, even your body will break down.
- The fire of hell begins with something in you that grows and continues on-and-on forever.

C.S. Lewis

Hell begins with a grumbling mood, always complaining, always blaming others...You may even criticize it in yourself and wish you could stop it. But there may come a day when you can no longer. Then there will be no you left to criticize the mood or even to enjoy it, but just the grumble itself, going on forever like a machine. It is not a question of God 'sending us' to hell. In each of us there is something growing, which will BE Hell unless it is nipped in the bud.



Disintegration

- People in addiction are living in hell. Addicts are disintegrating. They need more-and-more of the addictive substance to get less-and-less of the satisfaction.
- You are also isolated, so you lie, you defend yourself, you blame everyone else, nobody understands you, then there is denial, you become out of touch with reality.
- You must see the seriousness of being an addict.
- Souls don't die. We are going to live forever. We shouldn't trifle with sin.
- My pride or self-centeredness or my anger might be a little thing today, but in a million years what will it look like?
- The rich man is in denial, and filled with blame shifting. He is still ordering Lazarus around, he wants him to be his servant.
- **He doesn't ask to get out of Hell, nor does he ask for forgiveness.** He is saying that God didn't give him enough information. It was not fair that he was in Hell. He was there only because God was not fair.

Disintegration

- Hell is your sinful nature, going on forever. Disintegrating, refusing to admit what it is. All that are in hell choose it.
- In God all things consist. He is the creator. God's face, His presence, His heart is the only source and exclusive source of coherence in life. The absence of God is a raging fire. As you move away from his presence you break down, you disintegrate.
- As long as you are on this earth, no matter how much you try to run from God, you can never really get away from him. As a result you are always in-tact. Your body and soul are in-tact. Your humanity is in-tact, you can talk, love, forgive, communicate, but someday if you continue to run from God you may succeed.
- Hell is the place where you finally get away from God, break down and disintegrate. Sin results in disintegration. This is what Hell is.
- When you buy a car, you get an owner's manual that has directions, to violate the design, to violate the directions will cause a break down. You want to read the owners manual.

Disintegration

- Directions say don't do this or it will break down. Do you say, who does Ford think they are telling me how to run my life? No, you want the car to stay in good shape.
- When you violate the directions of your life, is to violate the design and it will lead to a break down and disintegration.
- God's Word says, come into my presence, obey me, don't lie, don't steal, don't have sex outside of marriage, be radically generous with your money. When you violate His directions, you disintegrate yourself.
- The more self-centered, the more proud you are, the more your life breaks down. The more you center everything on yourself, it gets harder to love, harder to forgive, you break down, its hell.
- The more bitter or angry you are, the more self-pity you have, it breaks you down.
- When humans are disintegrated in hell, they don't stop existing, but they are incapable of doing the things that make them human. They can no longer love or hope or forgive.

4 things about hell

- 1. Why did the rich man go to hell?**
- 2. Hell is a place of separation from God.**
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- 4. Hell is a place of justice.**

Hell is a place of justice

- You do not know how much God loves you, if you don't understand the doctrine of eternal judgment.
- Hell is the place for the dead, the underworld. It can't be a literal fire, but as we have seen, it is probably a lot worse than fire.
- You have to forget about the idea that Hell is a pit of fire, and everyone is trying to climb out of it, and God is up above with His foot on the lid.
- **The rich man does not ask for forgiveness, nor does he ask to get out of hell.**
- All of your life, God says, give your self to me, come to me, surrender your life to me.
- And instead, we fight this. We say, let me go, free me, I want control of my own life, I want my independence, I want to go my own way and do my own thing.
- Hell is simply God letting you go. Hell is what the world says is freedom. Hell is everything revolves around you. Hell is God giving you your way.
- When the rich man talks, he is still trying to boss Lazarus, he thinks he is still his servant.

Hell is a place of justice

- What looks like compassion isn't. He is blame shifting by saying send Lazarus to tell my brothers. He is saying, I didn't get a fair shake, I really didn't get enough information. **I don't deserve to be here.**
- **He will not ask for forgiveness, nor does he ask to get out**, because he has disintegrated, he is out of touch with reality.
- When in the end, you finally get what you have asked for all along, that is hell. **Is there anything unjust or unfair about that?**
- Our debt is so great to God that hell never pays it off, this is why it must be eternal.
- Most people do not see how wicked, evil, sinful they really are. Most people think they are basically pretty good people. That is why they really don't think they deserve to go to hell.
- This is why people think hell is unfair or unjust punishment.
- The rich man ask Abraham, send Lazarus back to my 5 brothers. That will never work, fear of hell will never change the heart. Fear of hell can't keep you out of it.

Hell is a place of justice

- What will change the heart is radical love. This is the only thing that will change us. We must see how much Jesus loves us.
- On the cross Jesus experienced a disintegration, because He loves us.
- If you get rid of the doctrine of hell, instead of making God more loving it makes Him less loving.
- If God says He loves you, and it didn't cost Him anything, how would you know that He loves you. How could you trust His love?
- Jesus took our hell on the cross, then His soul went to hell for 3 days, so we won't have to.
- What does he get in the deal? He gets us. Now you know how much you cost, and how valuable you are to Him.
- On the cross, all of the wrath and judgment of God was poured out upon Jesus, as He paid the debt we owed, that was hell.

Summary

- God has two equal sides: Love and Judgment.
- I have labored to explain the doctrine of eternal judgment.
- I don't profess to understand all the complexities of this subject.
- All I know to do is to simply take God at His Word.
- But what I am sure of is that as much as God is a God of love, He is also a God of justice, and judgment. He is fair, holy and righteous.
- So, we can trust him to punish the ungodly and reward His Saints.
- I know it might be a lot more popular for us to teach that God is too loving to send anyone to eternal torment, but that simply would not be the truth.
- We are a church that believes in teaching the truth of God's Word, good sound Biblical doctrine. This is what will mature you and make you a strong overcoming Christian in these last days in which we live.