Tenets of the Faith: Week 4

Origin of Sin

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1. What is it? (definition; summary of the doctrine)

Although Christians define original sin differently, historically for Protestants original sin has two commonly held components: humankind is guilty enjoined in the sin of their first parents and humankind inherited a corrupted nature, since they are ... reproductions of their first parents.[[1]](#endnote-1)

**Again, the Question: *Can it really be that God has said...* (Gen 3.1 [Amp])**

It is no surprise that in a 2002 survey **approximately three-quarters of Americans** rejected the teaching of original sin.[[2]](#endnote-2) Human reasoning, emotions, opinions and feelings are replacing the truth of the Bible, God’s chosen instrument to reveal Himself to us. ***Today our need for the Bible, God’s Word, is more important than ever.* You need to establish the veracity and sufficiency of the Bible so you can trust that it is God’s Word and is perfect and trustworthy.**[[3]](#endnote-3)

*Our world is bombarded with ideas however well-intentioned, that challenge the time-honored concepts of the God of the Bible. Ideas such as ‘All roads lead to Rome’ and ‘There is no One Way’ come from every corner of the globe. Relativism and skepticism have taken over, disavowing all possibility of one truth source; postmodernism has arrived, bringing its elastic [ideas]; securlarism joins in exalting existential experience.[[4]](#endnote-4)*

**Self-Esteem and *Enlightenment* Exalted Over Word of God**

After all, Americans want to feel good about themselves. A man known as the father of the self-esteem movement said, “The idea of Original Sin…is anti-self-esteem by its very nature. The very notion of guilt without volition or responsibility is an assault on reason as well as on morality.”[[5]](#endnote-5) Philosopher and historian Ernst Cassirer noted, *The concept of original sin is the most common opponent against which the different trends of the philosophy of Enlightenment join forces.*[[6]](#endnote-6) Sadly, the survey revealed that evangelicals are swaying from the **overriding** Scriptures that hold to the doctrine of *original sin*. Original sin is comprehensive. It denounces every aspect of our nature–will, desires, emotions, and intellect, sufficient for us to *earn* eternity with Christ. **Therefore, men can never satisfy God’s righteous requirements by human effort. He must live by grace.**

**Danger of Discounting *Parts* of Scripture**

**Any denial or misstatement of any Christian doctrine not only distorts our understanding of reality, but has grave implications for other Christian doctrines because of the truth that is woven throughout, and this certainly is true for the doctrine of the origin of sin.** For example, if there were no “first Adam” who actually was a man who sinned, the parallel to Jesus being the “last Adam” is lost. Also, if nothing happened to human nature when Adam sinned, then it becomes theologically inexplicable why Scripture constantly portrays all of humankind as sinful and thus deserving punishment. If humankind does not deserve judgment, God is unjust. On the contrary, a Scriptural view of human sinfulness justifies God’s judgment, demonstrates God’s patience, and demonstrates the significance of Christ’s sacrifice.

**Augustine vs Pelagius: Why It Matters Today**

Augustine and Pelagius were both both in 354. When their conflict began, they were in their twilight years, mid-fifties. Pelagius came from the British Isles, but Augustine came from North Africa. Both first visited Rome in their early thirties. Pelagius took up the ascetic life of a monk, ministering to poor dock-workers and laborers. He lived in Rome for many years, until, as we have seen, its sacking made him flee to North Africa. By the standards of the time, both men were well educated. Both were convinced their positions were scriptural. Both were lovers of peace. Neither enjoyed conflict.

However, Augustine and Pelagius differed at critical and crucial junctures.[[7]](#endnote-7)

Augustine:

* Augustine was raised a Christian but abandoned Christianity and took a mistress. He professed he was *controlled by lust.*
* When he moved to Italy, he was influenced by a Bishop there and began to feel great conviction. But chastity and sexual purity seemed utterly unrealistic and he felt hopeless.
* At the depth of his despair he was sitting in a garden when he heard a strange voice over the garden wall, “Pick up and read. Pick up and read.” A scroll containing Paul’s letter to the Romans was nearby, so he picked it up. His eyes randomly fell on Romans 13:13-14. *“Not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality...But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.”*
* **Instantly great faith–confidence that God would give him power to change–overcame his despair. Freed from unbelief and self-reliance he turned to Christ.**
* **For the rest of his life Augustine was a convert to the grace of God. His struggle with indwelling sin, and the power of grace to shatter its chains, affected him permanently.**

Pelagius:

* Pelagius is an example of the apostle Paul’s principle that Satan sometimes comes as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:13-15). People liked him; *he was a nice guy.*
* *He was self-disciplined and moral. He “was a man of clear intellect, mild disposition, learned culture, and spotless character,” observes Phillip Schaff. (“Even Augustine, with all his abhorrence of [Pelagius’] doctrines, repeatedly speaks respectfully of the man.”)*
* *Pelagius had one great liability: he was not clear on sin. He was not fully submitted to God’s word.*
* *In addition, he was hampered because he did not experience Augustine’s personal struggle with sin. His unwillingness to submit his reason to God’s word would prove decisive.*
* He**emphasized the primacy of human effort in spiritual salvation (which became known as *Pelagianism*).** When Pelagius came to Rome sometime in the first decade of the fifth century, he was appalled by the *moral laxity and indifference* he observed among professing Christians and even among the clergy. **He attributed this malaise to the implications of the teachings of Paul and Saint Augustine on grace**, **namely that righteousness could only be achieved by Christians with the special help of divine grace**. He believed that man did not need grace from God in order to be obedient.
* Since *error begets error,* Pelagius’s beliefs broadened into further debates concerning the nature of Adam’s fall, the extent of corruption in our humanity that we describe by *original sin*, and the doctrine of baptism.[[8]](#endnote-8)
* **Dependence upon grace was not important to Pelagius. Rather, his Christianity depended upon an external legalism**. It was a “pull yourself up by the bootstraps” spirituality. He was the spiritual John Wayne of the fifth century.
* He rightly believed that God expected perfection (Matt. 5:48), but wrongly believed that every human had the ability to be perfect. He reasoned that God gives all men power to obey what He commands or else God would be unjust.
* Pelagius’ “message was simple and terrifying,” notes Peter Brown, Augustine’s biographer, **“Since perfection is possible for man, it is obligatory. That was his non-biblical logic.**
* **Pelagius completely rejected the biblical teaching that came to be called Original Sin.** He rejected Paul’s teaching that all men inherit Adam’s sin and guilt at conception.
* **Pelagius’ assumptions logically turned him to asceticism** (extreme self-denial and rigidness releases the soul from bondage to the body, permitting union with the divine) .
* He gave his life to fasting, sleeplessness, self-punishment, and outward morality. He thought every Christian should do likewise because **only an ascetic lifestyle could guarantee one’s salvation.**
* In short, Pelagius’ concern was **ethics not doctrine**. Erasmus would take the same position during the 16th century Reformation. This was his Achilles heel.
* He wanted a moral reformation of the church, and he was convinced that a misunderstanding of grace was the problem. He reasoned, “*Why would someone, saved by grace alone, want to change and become more Christ-like?*”

It was the position of Pelagius that:

* Adam’s sin affected Adam and only Adam.
* Man was born righteous, and that it is possible for every human being to live a life of perfect righteousness.
* Some men had achieved such status.

**You can start to recognize why this matters today, as Pelagianism is so obviously seen in the beliefs of humanism vs. Christianity**.

Summed up the question is this. Did Jesus go to the cross to help us help ourselves? Or, did he die because men were utterly bound by sin, unable to help themselves, and in desperate need of a divinely wrought salvation?

What about grace? What does it accomplish? How much grace do men need? How dependent is man upon the grace of God? Does God give grace to make men holy, or does man’s holiness qualify him to receive divine grace?

What about works? If faith saves us, do works *not matter?* Or do we understand what James says when he says, *Faith without works is dead...* (James 2.17, James 2.20) He says, *...shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* (James 2.18) Do you know what that means that *faith saves you* and then *what you do (your works)* ***show and demonstrate*** what you **actually *believe to be true****?*

**The answers to these questions are important. They affect our understanding of man’s freedom. They affect our understanding of Adam’s condition before the Fall, of how Adam’s Fall affects us, of how God’s grace works, the nature of regeneration, the doctrines of predestination and election, whether man’s will is free or bound, the judgments of God, how to conduct evangelism, and most importantly the nature and degree of man’s dependence upon God.**

This controversy yielded several church verdicts to answer the controversy and protect the doctrine of the Church:

* The judgment of the church in a synod (council) in the year 418, where the Council of Carthage condemned the teachings of Pelagius.
* Pelagius was named a heretic and was exiled to Constantinople in 429.
* Once again, Pelagianism was condemned by the church at the Council of Ephesus in 431.
* Throughout church history, again and again, unvarnished Pelagianism has been repudiated by Christian orthodoxy.
* A century later, the Council of Orange (AD 529) reaffirmed this decision. Since the sixth century, almost universally, Christians have considered Pelagianism a heresy and Augustinianism anthropology to be orthodoxy.
* The Council of Trent, which arguably teaches a form of semi-Pelagianism, in its first three canons repeats the church’s ancient **condemnation of the teaching of Pelagius that men can be righteous apart from grace**. Even as recently as the modern Roman Catholic catechism, that condemnation as a heresy of Pelagianism continued because of its denial of original sin and Christian grace.[[9]](#endnote-9)

**In our own day, the debate between Pelagianism and Augustinianism may be seen as the debate between humanism and Christianity.** **Humanism is a warmed-over variety of Pelagianism**. However, the struggle within the church now is between the Augustinian view and various forms of semi-Pelagianism, which seeks a middle ground between the views of Pelagius and Augustine.[[10]](#endnote-10) It is our task, however, if we are to be faithful first to Scripture and then to the church’s ancient councils, to discern the truth in the Word and stand for it and defend it rightly as Augustine did.

**Every generation must re-fight Augustine’s battle. The conflict did not end in the fifth century. Pelagianism proliferates in the contemporary church. In a recent survey, 77% of professing evangelicals said that they believe that human beings are basically good and 84% believe that in salvation ‘God helps those who help themselves.’ It would be a mistake to assume that this is not the case in our churches.**

Pelagianism, like many zealous movements of moral and spiritual reform, writes a recipe for profound anxiety. Its original word of encouragement (*You can do it!*) immediately yields to the self-doubting question: ‘But am I doing it?'

By contrast, Augustine’s emphasis on the universal depravity of human nature – seen by so many then but now seen as an insult to human dignity – is curiously **liberating**, **as well as being Scripturally taught from beginning to end in the Word of God**.[[11]](#endnote-11)

**The history of Pelagianism teaches us that unless we aggressively and regularly teach our congregations about sin, and its manifold affects, Pelagianism will proliferate. Fallen man is by nature proud, and pride leads us to the feet of Pelagius. Pelagianism is the default religion of humanity. *Convinced of its power, wise Christians resist it persistently and intentionally.***

**Is the Cross a Gift of New Life or a Call to Make Good People Better?**

The origin of sin *explains the need for Christ’s death.* Following Christ deepens our understanding of our humanity. We become more human as we grow in sanctification because Christ is the True Human – the greatest reflection of all God intends for humanity.

The problem with those who do not want to acknowledge original sin is that **it neutralizes the power of the cross.** It makes the cross a call to new life, but not something that actually accomplishes anything**. It becomes a call to a better life, rather than a gift of new life.** The cross then says, *Be better*. For those who deny original sin, the cross is about making (kinda) good people better vs. **in the teachings of Scripture, the cross is about making dead people live.**

We need God to swoop in and change us and save us Himself. We can’t save ourselves. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?* (Jer 17.9) We know our hearts. We know our thoughts. The last thing we need is a checklist. We need to be revived first and then set about to new tasks. So we should take great comfort in original sin. It rings true with the Biblical testimony and with human experience.

We are rebellious sinners, but God loves us anyway. It cannot be the Scripturally UNSUPPORTED posture that *We aren’t really as bad as we think we are, and God still loves us*. God’s love for me is greater and more impressive because I know how bad I am rather than by my making myself seem better.[[12]](#endnote-12)

**Taking Away Man’s Sin Makes God Unjust: We Cannot Allow Opinions of Man to Replace God’s Word**

As you can see, this important doctrine is attacked by the opinion of *men* and by the twisting and disregarding of the Word of God. It is so important that we learn to distinguish the two. Man lifting up *his* ideas against God’s Word is the battle that began with Satan himself and will continue until Jesus comes again. **It is only the Word of God and the life of Christ that can give you the Truth that will set you free from the world systems.** **Be sure to examine the *root,* the *fruit* and the *motives* of those you follow, and be sure their opinions are substantiated by the Word of God throughout and not pulled from the air, from visions alone that are not backed up by the Word of God, or by cherry-picked verses of Scripture pulled out to enforce their own ideas.**

**History of Mankind Does Not Demonstrate Intrinsic *Goodness***

The doctrine of original sin accounts for much of human evil. Indeed, it is empirically verified every day. **As one Christian apologist put it, *Certain new theologians dispute original sin, which is the only part of Christian theology which can really be proved***.[[13]](#endnote-13) Even non-Christian Darwinist Michael Ruse thinks so: *I think Christianity is spot on about original sin—how could one think otherwise, when the world’s most civilized and advanced people (the people of Beethoven, Goethe, Kant) embraced that slime-ball Hitler and participated in the Holocaust? I think Saint Paul and the great Christian philosophers had real insights into sin and freedom and responsibility, and I want to build on this rather than turn from it.[[14]](#endnote-14)*

And it’s not just Ruse. In the many books on genocide, every genocide researcher and genocide survivor concludes that it is the average member of a population that commits these horrors.[[15]](#endnote-15) [[16]](#endnote-16)

If these researchers and victims are correct, then all humans are born Auschwitz-enabled and the doctrine of original sin best explains that fact. Sometimes people ask, if Adam and Eve sinned, why didn’t God just *start over* with someone else? But that is what God did. God sent His son Jesus into the world as the *last Adam* (1 Corinthians 15.45) who endured temptations without sinning to redeem those who come to Jesus. Adam may have made a choice that corrupted his family, but his descendants can choose to escape that corruption through Jesus. When they do, they are born again into God’s family and are imbued with God’s nature.[[17]](#endnote-17)

**The Real Battle is Against the Word of God’s Theological Construct**

**The ultimate reason for us to believe in this and all other doctrines/teachings from God is because the Scriptures teach it**. **Exegetically speaking [*a critical explanation or analysis*], I don’t think you can properly interpret Romans 5 without seeing original sin. Paul does not explicitly explain how Adam’s sin and humanity’s sins are connected, but you cannot understand Romans 5 without seeing that Paul is presupposing a link.**

**The doctrine referred to as *original sin*, as other doctrines like the Trinity, is a theological construct: You need to put the Word of God together as a whole and through several important passages you can best understand what it means.**

But the fact that we have this **theological construct** does not mean it’s unbiblical. **Instead, the doctrine provides a synthesis [*the combining of separate elements or substances to form a coherent whole*] to best explain what the Bible says. There are many Scriptures to support this.[[18]](#endnote-18)**

Here are a few examples:

**Romans 5.8** But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

**Romans 5.12-19** 12Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 15But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

**1 John 1.8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

**Romans 3.23** ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

1. Taught in the Old Testament

**A deeper look: The “abomination that causes desolation” has begun in the Church.**

I believe the “abomination that causes desolation” has begun in the Church. It began by the “daily sacrifice” being taken away because of “transgression” [national, moral, religious sin].[[19]](#endnote-19) What is the “daily sacrifice”? The daily sacrifice was the means by which we are constantly reminded that sin has to be dealt with and burnt on the altar of sacrifice before we can stand in the presence of a Holy God.

**The Pattern of the Tabernacle**

This is clearly seen though the pattern of the tabernacle, which presents a clear word picture that Christ came to fulfill. Through the tabernacle God revealed to His people a pattern of worship consistent with His holy presence and *that made it possible for sinful man to have an intimate relationship with Him.[[20]](#endnote-20)* It was the pattern of tabernacle worship that God used to reveal what the **blood sacrifice, atonement, the veil of separation, the mercy seat and access into it, the Holy of Holies and priesthood** means.

1. Even approaching the tabernacle began with the awareness of sin in a person’s life. When the Israelites recognized that they had sinned and that the sin separated him from God, if he wanted forgiveness, he made his way to God’s appointed place: the tabernacle.

2. The Outer Court (where we *begin* – the praise that is part of our worship – in close proximity to the marketplace and the hustle and bustle of the streets with the passions and affairs of the world). Note that although you have come nearer to the Holy of Holies by entering in at the “gate,” there are things that must be satisfied before you can bring the “outer court” experience to the “Holy of Holies” experience.Any common Israelite could enter the courts, but only the priests into the tabernacle, and only the *high priest* could enter the Holy of Holies (and that only once a year, on the Day of Atonement).

3. The altar of sacrifice (bronze altar) was within the court, facing the entrance. **Suffice it to say that the entire sacrificial system was placed at the very center and heart of national life**. Studying the Old Testament sacrifices, what they meant to them and the pattern and what they mean to us, is amazing. **The unceasing sacrifice of animals and the never-ending fire at the altar of sacrifice shows that God was burning into the hearts of His people the awareness of their sin and how it separated them from Him.** **Now it also burns into our awareness that the sacrifice was paid by Christ and the *only* way to come to the Father is through the blood of Christ.**

4. The Tabernacle itself was divided by a veil into two chambers: Only priests were allowed into these chambers. The first chamber was the Holy Place. It contained the Table, Lampstand and Altar of Incense.

5. The second chamber was the Holy of Holies. It contained the Ark of the Covenant and the mercy seat. Blood was sprinkled between the angels who were looking down to testify that by the blood the wrath of God against sin was satisfied. **A clear word picture that by His mercy a**nd through the sacrifice Jesus paid for our sins, God’s justice and judgment toward sin is satisfied. It is referred to almost 200 times in the Old Testament. The high priest could enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. It is a small room (15’ x 15’), housing only the Ark and the Mercy Seat. **No created nor artificial light, but God’s own “shekinah” glory lit up the holiest place. No human voice is to be heard here, only the voice of God.**

**Prophecy of Daniel About the *Daily Sacrifice***

In Daniel 8.11, when the daily sacrifice is done away with, the place of His sanctuary was cast down, and **by reason of transgression it cast down the truth** to the ground.

**Outer Court or Holy of Holies?**

I believe that Christians are substituting the Outer Court experience for entry into the Holy of Holies, which Jesus died to give us. The veil of the temple has been rent, we are a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2.9), His desire is to put His laws into our hearts and write them in our minds (Heb 10.16).

Hebrews 10.19-20:  Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;…

**We Are His Sanctuary**

Matt 5.13 – WE are the sanctuary (the temple of His Holy Spirit) and the “place of His sanctuary” is cast down….

(Where is His sanctuary – the place of which is “cast down”? **The Holy of Holies, where only God’s voice is heard and man is silent before Him, where sin has been dealt with on the altar of sacrifice, and the veil rent that separated God and man is open by which we have intimate access to God through Christ and stand in His righteousness.) When we excuse sin, when we substitute vain repetitious emotional praise that focuses on US as the subject, when our praise and our worship is all focused on our needs and our position and does not lead us to focus on God’s work in the world to others, we have substituted the outer court experience for true intimacy with God.** “God for Me” never advances to the maturity of “Me for God.” Jn 4.34

If we want a true intimate experience of Who God is we need to live out the intimacy of being in the Holy of Holies by being His *chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, [God’s] own purchased, special people, that you may set forth the wonderful deeds and display the virtues and perfections of Him Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*. (1 Peter 2.9) How? ...*if you will indeed obey My Voice and keep My Covenant...you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*. (Exodus 19.5,6) True holiness is true obedience *of His Word, His Voice*. I think as He thinks (Phil 2.5), love as He loves (1 John 4.11-12), I do as He does (John 13.14-15), live as He lives (1 Peter 1.15-17 [be holy]).

**Famine of Hearing the Words of the Lord**

Amos 8.11-12:  Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send **a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD**: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find *it*. Michael Card song *So Many Books...[[21]](#endnote-21)*

We need to recognize God disciplines us, even as our earthly fathers thought best, but God disciplines us for our good (why?) *so that* we may share (partake) in or be partakers of *his holiness*.

If we are not receiving correction from the Lord by His Word (His vehicle to do so), that brings doctrine, reproof (knowing what is "missing the mark") - for correction (making it RIGHT again!), for instruction in righteousness SO THAT the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim 3.16)…  we are *illegitimate* -- and not sons at all!

1. Taught in the New Testament

**Woven Throughout Scripture**

Although the words “original sin” aren’t found together in Scripture, the doctrine is taught in many passages: *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned*[[22]](#endnote-22) (Rom. 5.12); *one trespass led to condemnation for all me* (Rom. 5.18); and *in Adam all die* (1 Cor. 15.22). So it is no wonder that David wrote in Psalm 51.5, *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*.

That humans are born corrupted makes sense of Jesus’ proclamation in John 6.63: *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* He later told the Jews in John 8.44 *Ye are of your father the devil*. The *natural man*, wrote Paul, *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*. (1 Corinthians 2.14). Then in Ephesians 2:2–3 we read that Satan is *now work[ing] in the children of disobedience:* who *were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* It is no wonder, then, that Paul tells us in Romans 3.10–12 that *There is none righteous, no, not one: 11There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

1. Historical Progression
2. Heretical Counterfeits (impact of false doctrine, what truths it changes; how it affects

the Gospel, sources of the counterfeits)

**False Doctrine Again Comes Against the Veracity of Scripture and the Gospel Message;**

**Chipping Away at Our Foundations**

Many faith teachers preach the viewpoint that Jesus went to *hell* or the suffering side of sheol [hades] in order to further be punished for our sins. This idea is completely unbiblical. **It was the death of Jesus on the cross that sufficiently provided for our redemption. It was His shed blood that effected our own cleansing from sin (1 John 1.7–9). As He hung there on the cross, He took the sin burden of the whole human race upon Himself.** He became sin for us: *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God* (2 Corinthians 5.21). This imputation of sin helps us understand Christ’s struggle in the Garden of Gethsemane with the cup of sin that He asked to pass from Him (Matthew 26.39).

**The people that take verses out of context are trying to disprove that Jesus is our Savior, and rather seek to prove that Jesus lived a sinless life as a man only in order to show us how we can live.** Since error begets error, *this crazy doctrine believes Jesus had to be born again and descended into hell itself to take our place.* Further teachings from these movements preach that we can now live without sin as Jesus did, being “sons” of the Most High being taken out of context to mean that we were not *adopted* into sonship, but rather intrinsically take on the very nature of God. This results in the deification of man and the demotion of Christ. Be sure your theology is not coming from teachers but from the Word of God.

1. Application Today (why it matters so much where it puts Jesus, the body of believers, Israel, truth, etc.)

**Do Not Let ANY of Man’s Teachings and Cherry Picking of Scripture Come Against the Gospel or the Veracity of the Word of God**

* Man’s righteousness cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Our own righteousness is as *filthy rags* (Isaiah 64.6).
* *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* (Isaiah 53.6) prophesies God sending us a Savior to become our *righteousness* (see 1 Corinthians 1.30; 2 Corinthians 5.21; Jeremiah 33.15-16; Jeremiah 23.6; Matthew 6.33).
* Only by knowing our need for a Savior because of *the origin of sin* can we understand the meaning of the Christ’s crucifixion and atonement rightly.
* By casting aside the Biblical teachings of *the condition of sin we are born into,* we discount Jesus as our Savior. All the patterns in the Old Testament tabernacle that point to Jesus, the prophecies, and virtually the entire construct of the Bible (which is *the story of human history and God’s work*)would fall like that Jenga tower if pieces are continually chipped away by those coming against it.

**The most significant event in human history is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The story of this event permeates the text of Scripture. The creation account shows us God’s sovereignty over His creation. The fall shows us why we need a savior. The history of Israel shows two significant things: 1) the historical context of the coming of the Son of God incarnate, and 2) humanity’s inability to save itself through works, thus, its need for a savior.**

The gospels tell the story of Jesus the Savior on earth, and much of the rest of the New Testament teaches how to live in this age in light of Jesus’ work on our behalf. The prophecies of the Bible, particularly in Daniel and Revelation but also elsewhere, show what Jesus as Savior is saving us to (eternal paradise) and from (eternal damnation in hell).

**The story of Jesus saturates the metanarrative of the Bible, and prophecies of His first coming are found throughout the Old Testament.** Allusions to Him also come up in micro-ways, as many people and events hint at the work He would accomplish. One scholar, J. Barton Payne, has found as many as 574 verses in the Old Testament that somehow point to or describe or reference the coming Messiah. Alfred Edersheim found 456 Old Testament verses referring to the Messiah or His times. Conservatively, Jesus fulfilled at least 300 prophecies in His earthly ministry.[[23]](#endnote-23)

Gary is going to get into how the Holy Spirit’s role confirms the origin of sin.

**Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment and the Role of the Holy Spirit (Gary)**

In John 16.8, Jesus explains the importance of Him leaving in order to send the Holy Spirit. He details at *length* the role of the Holy Spirit:

**John 16:7** However, I am telling you nothing but the truth when I say it is profitable (good, expedient, advantageous) for you that I go away. Because if I do not go away, the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengthener, Standby) will not come to you [into close fellowship with you]; but if I go away, I will send Him to you [to be in close fellowship with you]. **8** And when He comes, He will convict and convince the world and bring demonstration to it about sin and about righteousness (uprightness of heart and right standing with God) and about judgment: **9** About sin, because they do not believe in Me [trust in, rely on, and adhere to Me]; **10** About righteousness (uprightness of heart and right standing with God), because I go to My Father, and you will see Me no longer; **11** About judgment, because the ruler (evil genius, prince) of this world [Satan] is judged and condemned and sentence already is passed upon him. **12** I have still many things to say to you, but you are not able to bear them or to take them upon you or to grasp them now. **13** But when He, the Spirit of Truth (the Truth-giving Spirit) comes, He will guide you into all the Truth (the whole, full Truth). For He will not speak His own message [on His own authority]; but He will tell whatever He hears [from the Father; He will give the message that has been given to Him], and He will announce and declare to you the things that are to come [that will happen in the future]. **14** He will honor and glorify Me, because He will take of (receive, draw upon) what is Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you. **15** Everything that the Father has is Mine. That is what I meant when I said that He [the Spirit] will take the things that are Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you. **16** In a little while you will no longer see Me, and again after a short while you will see Me.

When the doctrine of *sin, our righteousness in Christ, or the judgment of this world* is glossed over or omitted in preaching or teaching, it is to abolish the Holy Spirit’s work in the world.[[24]](#endnote-24) This work is to demonstrate that all men are sinners, are in need of the righteous standard only seen through Christ by our Creator, and that there will be judgment where the righteous God will mete out justice and rid the world of sin. This is the Gospel which is still being chipped away by Satan and his followers that chose to elevate themselves and their ideas over the Word of God.

Take away sin: *The devil made me do it; man is good; man can live exactly as Jesus modeled for him.*

Take away righteousness: *Our righteousness is sufficient/we need no Savior; Jesus’ vicarious atonement for our sin was not necessary for God to see us through His righteousness.*

Take away judgment: *There is no judgment; there is no hell; there is no eternity.*

**What are We Saved FROM? What is the Gospel Message?**

Hell was not made for man. Matthew 25.41 says, hell was, *. . . prepared for the devil and his angels:*

Because God is holy — sin must be condemned**.** Joshua 24.19 says, *. . he is a holy God;. . . he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.*

Friend, God loved you so much, He sent His Son, Jesus, to this earth to die on a cross to pay for your sins.

Rom. 5.8 says, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

God does not send people to hell.You choose hell when you reject Jesus Christ. When you refuse God's love gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ — YOU CHOOSE HELL.

**If There is No Judgment, We Do Not Need A Savior**

Barna Associates showed that only 32 percent of adults see hell as *an actual place of torment and suffering where people's souls go after death.* Fire, brimstone or hell. Call it what you want, but no one wants to preach or talk about this taboo subject of hell, which is a big part of the Bible. No wonder those surveyed by Barna don't want to believe that hell exists. We didn't say it was a pleasant conversation to have. But the fact is hell is talked about in Revelations. In fact, we are told that *The smoke of the fire that torments them will rise forever and ever, and there will be no relief day or night for those who worship the beast or its image or accept the mark of its name.*[[25]](#endnote-25)

More people believe in heaven than believe in hell which is a great mystery to me since Jesus spoke more about the judgment of hell than He ever did about the kingdom of heaven, so if someone believes in heaven but not hell, they are essentially calling Jesus a liar! That’s tragic too because God cannot lie but every person in history is or has been a liar (Numbers 23.19; Hebrews 6.18). It’s like saying I believe in heaven but I don’t believe what Jesus taught about hell but hell is real so there is no excuse since Jesus is God and we know that God cannot possibly lie and He said that there is in fact a hell.[[26]](#endnote-26)

**Why Don’t We Talk About Hell Anymore?**

* It is not popular;
* We have no fear of our Maker;
* We don’t want to believe it. See **Luke 12:4-5** *I tell you, My friends, do not dread and be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have nothing more that they can do.* ***5*** *But I will warn you whom you should fear: fear Him Who, after killing, has power to hurl into hell (Gehenna); yes, I say to you, fear Him!*
* Motives are wrong. The Apostle Paul was never once concerned about the church surviving, author Jack Wellman shared. Paul cared more about if Jesus Christ was the head of the church. "There is nothing in the Bible that indicates that the church is a business, but for many who teach the health, wealth and prosperity gospel, that’s all they are concerned about. He went on to instruct that the church's only business is reaching the lost, not becoming a successful business. We can gather if this is the motivation of any church that preaching on hell will be off limits.
* It means being accountable. As a society, we don't like to be accountable for our sins, resources or our talents. "The Lord expects us to use these talents for His glory. If we do not use what we have been given, then what we do have will be taken from us, but if we have used what God has given us for His glory then more will be given to us at His return," said Wellman.

**The Reality of Hell: A Person’s Choice**

* Created for Satan and his demons. Hell was actually created for Satan and his demons, just as Jesus said in Matthew 25.41: *Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels*.
* A Person’s Choice. Who are those who go to hell? It is everyone who rejects repentance and faith in Christ. God never sends anyone to hell or heaven. They have a choice. A person must repent and believe, which is what Jesus said the gospel was all about (Mark 1.15), or they can reject Christ and have the wrath of God abiding on them (John 3.36b) for all time.
* God’s Desire to Save. God doesn’t desire that at anyone die apart from saving faith in Christ (2 Peter 3.9) and he certainly doesn’t take pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18.32), but by willfully rejecting Jesus Christ, He tells everyone *unless you repent, you will all likewise perish* (Luke 13.3) so *Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out*(Acts 3.19). The Apostle Peter adds*, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit* (Acts 2.38).

 (See: https://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2016/03/18/where-does-the-bible- say-hell-is/)

**YES! THERE IS A HELL![[27]](#endnote-27)**

**The Doctrine of Hell**

The Bible is very clear on this next doctrine and tenet. As we have showed you the Bible tells us that there really is a hell and that it will be forever and ever for all of those who will be cast down into it.

Many in the liberal part of the Body are trying to do away with this doctrine, as their human minds cannot believe that God could possibly create such a horrible place of eternal torment and agony.

As a result, some of them have fallen for a lie straight from the pit of hell called Universalism. This is a belief that no one goes to hell. They believe that everyone will get to go straight to heaven once they die and cross over, no matter what they have ever done in this life, and whether or not they have ever made Jesus Christ their personal Lord and Savior.

The Bible shows you that there really is a hell, along with giving you the appropriate explanations as to why God would create such a horrible place of torment and agony with how He has all of the big pictures set up.

Once again, here are some of the main verses in our Bible showing us that not only is there really a hell down in the center of our earth, but that all of those who are thrown down in there will be down in there for all of eternity.

2 Peter 2:4 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.

John 15:6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

Luke 12:5 But I will show you who you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!

Matthew 10:28 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.

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Matthew 13:41-43 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to here, let him hear!

Matthew 13:49-50 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:41 Then He will also say to those on the left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Mark 9:43-44 And if your hand makes you sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, 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.

Matthew 7:13 Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

Luke 13:3 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

Luke 3:17 His winnowing fan is His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.

Isaiah 66:24 And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

Matthew 23:33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?

2 Thessalonians 1:9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.

Matthew 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (Hell) shall not prevail against it.

Proverbs 9:18 But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of hell.

Psalm 55:15 Let death seize them; let them go down alive into hell, for wickedness is in their dwellings and among them.

Proverbs 7:27 Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death.

Psalm 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Ezekiel 26:20-21 Then I will bring you down with those who descend into the Pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lowest part of the earth, in places desolate from antiquity, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you may never be inhabited; and I shall establish glory in the land of the living. I will make you a terror, and you shall be no more; though you are sought for, you will never be found again, says the Lord God.

Isaiah 38:18 For Shaol cannot thank You, death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth.

Ezekiel 32:23 Her graves are set in the recesses of the Pit, and her company is all around her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who caused terror in the land of the living.

Numbers 16:30-33 But if the Lord creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive in to the pit, then you will understand that these men rejected the Lord. Then it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up. So, they and all those with them went down alive in the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the congregation.

Job 33:24,28 Deliver him from going down to the Pit. He will redeem his soul from going down to the Pit, and his life shall see the light.

Revelation 9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth and to him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

Psalm 63:9 But those who seek my life, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

Psalm 140:9-10 As for the head of those who surround me, let the evil of their lips cover them;

let burning coals fall upon them; let them be cast into the fire, into deep pits, that they not rise up again.

Luke 3:9 And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

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

Matthew 22:13 Then the king said to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Revelation 14:9-11 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 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. 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 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.

Luke 16:19-31 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 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 (Hell), 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 them, If they did not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.

Revelation 21:8 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.

Jude 7 As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Psalm 73:18-19 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

Psalm 49:17 For when he dies, he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him. Though while he lives, he blesses himself (for men will praise you when you do well for yourself).

When you read all these verses one right after the other, there can be no doubt in anyone’s rational mind that a place called hell really does exist, and that God is not using any type of metaphorical or symbolic type language in the above verses. All these verses are meant to be taken very, very literally.

7. Supporting Scripture and references

1. Eastern Orthodox Christians prefer “ancestral sin” to “original sin” and believe that Adam’s descendants inherited Adam’s corrupted nature, which inclines them to sin, but they are not guilty for Adam’s sin. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Barna Group, “Americans Draw Theological Beliefs from Diverse Points of View,” October 8, 2002, http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/82-americans-drawtheological-beliefs-from-diverse-points-of-view. Accessed June 29, 2011. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.celticorthodoxy.com/wpcontent/uploads/2022/01/Defending\_the\_King\_James\_Bible\_Waite\_ebook.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. *Know What You Believe, Connecting Faith and Truth,* Paul E. Little [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Nathaniel Brandon, *The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*(New York: Bantam, 1994), 148. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), 141. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Taken in part from *Augustine Vs. Pelagius, and What it Matters Today!* By Bill Farley, September 18, 219, https://williampfarley.com/augustines-vs-pelagius-and-why-it-matters-today/ [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Pelagius was not opposed to grace, only to the idea that grace was necessary for obedience. He maintained that grace facilitates obedience but is not a necessary prerequisite for obedience. There is no transfer of guilt from Adam to his progeny nor any change in human nature as a subsequence of the fall. The only negative impact Adam had on his progeny was that of setting a bad example, and if those who follow in the pathway of Adam imitate his disobedience, they will share in his guilt, Pelagius asserted, but *only by being actually guilty themselves*. There can be no transfer or imputation of guilt from one man to another according to the teaching of Pelagius. On the other side, Augustine argued that the fall seriously impaired the moral ability of the human race. Indeed, the fall of Adam plunged all of humanity into the ruinous state of original sin. Original sin does not refer to the first sin of Adam and Eve, but refers to the consequences for the human race of that first sin. It refers to God’s judgment upon the whole human race by which He visits upon us the effects of Adam’s sin by the thoroughgoing corruption of all of his descendents. Paul develops this theme in the fifth chapter of his epistle to the Romans.

 The key issue for Augustine in this controversy was the issue of fallen man’s moral ability — or lack thereof. Augustine argued that prior to the fall, Adam and Eve enjoyed a free will as well as moral liberty. The will is the faculty by which choices are made. Liberty refers to the ability to use that faculty to embrace the things of God. After the fall, Augustine said the will, or the faculty, of choosing remained intact; that is, human beings are still free in the sense that they can choose what they want to choose. However, their choices are deeply influenced by the bondage of sin that holds them in a corrupt state. And as a result of that bondage to sin, the original liberty that Adam and Eve enjoyed before the fall was lost. The only way that moral liberty could be restored would be through God’s supernatural work of grace in the soul. This renewal of liberty is what the Bible calls a “royal” liberty (James 2.8).

 [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/pelagius-and-pelagianism [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Semi-Pelagianism teaches that grace is necessary to achieve righteousness, but that this grace is not imparted to the sinner unilaterally or sovereignly as is maintained by Reformed theology. *Rather, the semi-Pelagian argues that the individual makes the initial step of faith before that saving grace is given. Thus, God imparts the grace of faith in conjunction with the sinner’s work in seeking God. It seems a little mixing of grace and works doesn’t worry the semi-Pelagian*. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Pelagianism may seem a creed for lifting up man, but Augustine’s emphasis on original sin and the consequent absolute dependence of every one of us on the grace of God gives hope to the waverer, the backslider, the slacker, the putz, the schlemiel. We’re all in the same boat as Mister Holier-than-Thou over there, saved only by ... grace... (Alan Jacobs’ book, *Original Sin: A Cultural History* as quoted in https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-biblical-evidence-for-original-sin.)

**The Message of Repentance is For ALL**

During his preaching ministry, evangelist George Whitefield became friends with Selina, the Countess of Huntingdon. But his preaching on sin – precisely the truth that we are all affected by original sin – repulsed her. She wrote him:

*It is monstrous to be told you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting; and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiment so much at variance with high rank and good breeding.*

This kind of egalitarianism is what is so beautiful about original sin. The common people who heard Whitefield’s preaching wept at his teaching about sin. Why? Because Whitefield told them that, though they were sinners, God loved them. He called them to repentance, just as he calls everyone else to repentance, even the king and queen. **The message of repentance is for *all****.*

So, in the end, it’s not *original goodness* that makes us value other human beings, but *original sin*, because it levels us and puts us all on the same playing field. We’re all cut down to size, from the prince to the pauper, the rich to the poor, the educated to the illiterate.

**The Tool to Respect Humanity**

The doctrine of original sin (together with knowing we are made in the image of God) gives us the tools with which to respect people.

Because we believe that the image of God is in every human being, we know that they are better than their wrong beliefs. And because everyone is a sinner, we know that we Christians are worse than our right beliefs. People who are wrong about Jesus are not as bad as they could be. And we who are right about Jesus are not as good as we could be.

Original sin does not deny that we were created with the image of God. It only says that the image is tainted or shattered. Original sin does not deny the value of humanity. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-biblical-evidence-for-original-sin [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*(Chicago: Moody, 2009), 28. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Michael Ruse, “Darwinism and Christianity Redux: A Response to My Critics,” *Philosophia Christi*NS 4, 1 (2002): 192. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. For more documentation on the pervasiveness of evil, see the paper, “Human Evil and Suffering,” at the 2009 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, available at clayjones.net/resources. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. In her report on the trial of Auschwitz administrator Adolf Eichmann, Hannah Arendt found it particularly troubling that “there were so many like him, neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal.” Auschwitz survivor Elie Wiesel wrote, “Deep down…man is not only an executioner, not only a victim, not only a spectator: he is all three at once.” Likewise, Auschwitz survivor Primo Levi wrote, “We must remember that these faithful followers, among them the diligent executors of human orders, were not born torturers, were not (with few exceptions) monsters: they were ordinary men.”17 Consider the conclusion of two Holocaust researchers: **What remains is a central, deadening sense of despair over the human species. Where can one find an affirmative meaning in life if human beings can do such things? Along with this despair there may also come a desperate new feeling of vulnerability attached to the fact that one is human. If one keeps at the Holocaust long enough, then sooner or later the ultimate truth begins to reveal itself: one knows, finally, that one might either do it, or be done to. If it could happen on such a massive scale elsewhere, then it can happen anywhere; it is all within the range of human possibility, and like it or not, Auschwitz expands the universe of consciousness no less than landings on the moon.** [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. https://www.equip.org/articles/original-sin-its-importance-and-fairness/ [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Psalm 51.5; Romans 3.10-18; Isaiah 59.2; Psalm 14.2-3; Ephesians 2.1-3; Romans 7.9-11; Jeremiah 17.9; James 1.13; Genesis 3.1-19; Romans 6.12; Romans 6.23; Job 15.14; Romans 2.14-15; Genesis 8.21; Psalms 22.15, John 3.16-18; John 14.6; John 1.12; Romans 5.8 [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. **Dan. 8:11-12** **11** *Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.***Dan. 8:12** *And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered.* [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. **Flow of Worship in the Tabernacle** (https://www.jesuswalk.com/moses/7\_tabernacle.htm)

As I've thought about the order of objects as one enters the tabernacle complex from its entrance on the east, I see a progression as one approaches the very presence of God, a progression that is typical of Christian worship as well as Old Testament worship. Since the High Priest was the only person who could enter the Holy Place, we'll use him as our example of worship.

|  |
| --- |
| Tabernacle flow of worship, from the gate to the ark |

**Entering**. We enter into prayer to begin to seek God and draw near to him.

**Sacrifice and confession of sin** are represented by the bronze altar where sacrifices for sin were made. Christ is our sacrifice since our sin has caused an estrangement from God. As we confess our sins in humility and look with faith to his sacrifice for us on the cross, we connect with his grace and atonement.

**Cleansing and forgiveness** are represented by the bronze laver or basin. We receive his forgiveness and cleansing by faith with thankfulness.

**Worship** is the next step. As the priests tended the lamps, the table, and the altar of incense, we offer regular thanksgiving and praise to God in the Holy Place, as a sweet fragrance before him.

**Encounter with God** in the Holy of Holies is the ultimate goal. We hear this in Moses' plea, "Show me your glory" (Exodus 33:18) and in Paul's cry, "that I may know him" (Philippians 3:10). Before him in the Holy of Holies, our words are no longer necessary as we bask in his presence and look forward to the day in the City of God when we shall "see his face" (Revelation 22:4)! Come soon, Lord Jesus! [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. There is a hunger, a longing for bread
And so comes the call for the poor to be fed
More hungry by far are a billion and more
Who wait for the Bread of the Word of the Lord

So many books, so little time, so many hunger, so many blind
Starving for words, they must wait in the night
To open a Bible and move towards the Light

There'll come a time, the prophets would say
When the joy of mankind will be withered away
A want not for water, but a hunger for more
A famine for hearing the Word of the Lord

So many books, so little time, so many hunger, so many blind
Starving for words, they must wait in the night
To open a Bible and move towards the Light
Open a Bible and move towards the Light

The Word won't go out, except it return
Full, over flowing and so we must learn
So many books, so little time, so many hunger, so many blind
Starving for words, they must wait in the night
To open a Bible and move towards the Light
Open a Bible and move towards the Light
Open a Bible and move towards the Light

Michael J. Card, *So Many Books*  [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Douglas Moo writes: “The point is that the sin here attributed to the ‘all’ is to be understood, in the light of vv. 12…and [Rom. 5:] 15–19, as a sin that in some manner is identical to the sin committed by Adam….All people, therefore, stand condemned ‘in Adam,’ guilty by reason of the sin all committed ‘in him.’” Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 326. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. https://www.gotquestions.org/prophecies-of-Jesus.html [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. John 3.13; 1 Timothy 2.5; John 8.28; Colossians 2.9; John 12.31; Hebrews 2.14; John 16.14; Ephesians 6.17; Romans 10.17; Isaiah 58.1; Ezekiel 13.1-‘10; Ezekiel 6.11; Psalm 40.9-10; Jeremiah 1.17-19; Micah 3.8; Ezekiel 20.4; 2 Timothy 4.1-4; Jeremiah 1.7-10; Matthew 23.2-4; Galatians 6.13; Romans 2.17-24; Acts 20.32 [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. https://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/christianity/why-the-church-doesnt-preach-on-hell.aspx [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. https://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2016/03/18/where-does-the-bible-say-hell-is/ [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word used to describe the realm of the dead is *sheol*. It simply means “the place of the dead” or “the place of departed souls/spirits.” The New Testament Greek equivalent of *sheol* is *hades*, which also refers to “the place of the dead.” The New Testament indicates that sheol [hades] is a temporary place, where souls are kept as they await the final resurrection and judgment. Revelation 20.11–15 makes a clear distinction between hades and the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the permanent and final place of judgment for the lost. Hades, then, is a temporary place. Many people refer to both hades and the lake of fire as *hell*, and this causes confusion. Jesus did not go to a place of torment after His death, but He did go to hades. (https://bereanbiblesociety.org/hell-sheol-hades-paradise-and-the-grave)

Sheol [hades] is a realm with two divisions—a place of blessing and a place of judgment (Matthew 11.23; 16.18; Luke 10.15; 16.23; Acts 2.27–31). The abodes of the saved and the lost are both generally called *hades* in the Bible. The abode of the saved is also called *Abraham’s bosom* (KJV) in Luke 16.22 and *paradise* in Luke 23.43. The abodes of the saved and the lost are separated by a *great chasm* (Luke 16.26). When Jesus died, He went to the blessed side of sheol, or paradise. (Some believe, based on a particular interpretation of Ephesians 4.8–10, that Jesus took believers with Him from sheol to another place that we call heaven. More likely, Ephesians 4 refers to the ascension of Christ.) All the unbelieving dead go to the cursed side of hades to await the final judgment. All the believing dead go to the blessed side of hades to await the resurrection. Did Jesus go to sheol/hades? Yes, according to Jesus’ own words, He went to the blessed region of sheol.

Some of the confusion has arisen from such passages as Psalm 16.10–11: *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. . . . Thou wilt show me the path of life*. *Hell* is not a correct translation in this verse; a correct reading would be *the grave* or *sheol*. Jesus said to the thief beside Him, *Today you will be with me in paradise* (Luke 23.43); He did not say, *I will see you in hell*. Jesus’ body was in the tomb; His soul/spirit went to be with the blessed in sheol [hades]. Unfortunately, in many versions of the Bible, translators are not consistent, or correct, in how they translate the Hebrew and Greek words for *sheol*, *hades*, and *hell*, so it helps to go back to the original languages to see the exact word used in order to determine consistency.

As Jesus neared death, He said, *It is finished* (John 19.30). His suffering in our place was completed. His soul/spirit went to hades (the place of the dead). Jesus did not go to *hell* or the suffering side of hades; He went to *Abraham’s side* or the blessed side of hades. Jesus’ suffering ended the moment He died. The payment for sin was paid. He then awaited the resurrection of His body and His return to glory in His ascension. Did Jesus go to hell? No. Did Jesus go to sheol [hades]? Yes. (https://www.gotquestions.org/did-Jesus-go-to-hell.html,

https://paulechapman.com/2021/02/20/preaching-against-sin-why-we-must-never-quit/)

It is humanly impossible to comprehend the Bible description of hell. ***Nothing on earth can compare with it.*** No nightmare could produce its terror. **It is beyond anything humanly imaginable.**

The Bible describes the torments as *weeping* (Matt 8.12), *wailing* (Matt 13.42), *gnashing of teeth* (Matt 13.50), *darkness* (Matt 25.30), *flames* (Luke 16.24), *everlasting burnings* (Isaiah 33.14), *torments* (Luke 16.23), *everlasting punishment!*

**HELL IS FOREVER! All who enter hell — abandon all hope! *The horror of hell — for even one second is unbearable* — *but FOREVER!***

Look how the Bible warns of the permanence of hell:

everlasting fire Matthew 18.8, 25.41

everlasting punishment / Matthew 25.46

everlasting chains Jude 1.6

eternal damnation Mark 3.29

eternal judgment Hebrews 6.2

eternal fire Jude 1.7

unquenchable fire Matthew 3.12

the fire that never shall be quenched Mark 9.43

fire unquenchable Luke 3.17

mist of darkness is reserved for ever 2 Peter 2.17

the blackness of darkness forever Jude 1.13

**Jesus Christ took hell very seriously!**

Jesus Christ says in Mark 9.43-47:

*43 And if thy hand offend thee,* ***cut it off:*** *it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:...*

*45 And if thy foot offend thee,* ***cut it off****: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:...*

*47 And if thine eye offend thee,* ***pluck it out****: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:...*

**How did Jesus describe hell?**

Jesus Christ spoke more on hell than any other subject. Just look at how Jesus described hell:

*“fire”* Matthew 7.19, 13.40, 25.41

*“everlasting fire”* Matthew 18.8, 25.41

*“eternal damnation”* Mark 3.29

*“hell fire”* Matthew 5.22, 18.9, Mark 9.47

*“damnation”* Matt 23.14, Mark 12.40, Luke 20.47

*“shall be damned”* Mark 16.16

*“damnation of hell”* Matt 23.33

*“resurrection of damnation”* John 5.29

*“furnace of fire”* Matt 13.42, 13.50

*“the fire that never shall be quenched”* Mark 9.43, 9.45

*“the fire is not quenched”* Mark 9.44, 9.46, 9.48

*“Where their worm dieth not”* Mark 9.44, 9.46, 9.48

*“wailing and gnashing of teeth”* Matthew 13.42, 13.50

*“weeping and gnashing of teeth”* Matthew 8.12, 22.13, 25.30

*“torments”* Luke 16.23

*“tormented in this flame”* Luke 16.24

*“place of torment”* Luke 16.28

*“outer darkness”* Matthew 8.12, 22.13

*“everlasting punishment”* Matt 25.46

Ephesians 4.9, says of Jesus: *Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the* ***LOWER PARTS OF THE EARTH.***

On page 85 of *Beyond Death’s Door*, Dr. Rawlings wrote that patients described hell as, *“. . . this place seems to be UNDERGROUND or* ***WITHIN THE EARTH*** *in some way.”*

Scientist and Bible teacher, Henry Morris confirms the location and scientific accuracy of hell:

So far as we can tell from Scripture, the present hell, is somewhere in the heart of the earth itself. To say this is not scientific is to assume science knows much more about the earth’s interior than is actually the case...The great pit [hell] would only need to be about 100 miles or less in diameter to contain, with much room to spare, all the forty billion or so people who have ever lived,. . ." (Henry M. Morris, The Bible Has the Answer, p. 220)

The *Birmingham News*, April 10, 1987, had an article titled, *Earth’s Center Hotter Than Sun’s Surface, Scientists Say.* The article stated, scientists have recently discovered, ***The EARTH’S INNER CORE has a temperature of over 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit!***

Have you seen pictures of a volcano erupting, spewing a *lake of fire* from inside the earth? When Mount St. Helens erupted on May 18, 1980, it was described by reporters, ***when HELL surfaced upon the earth***. In Numbers 16, the Bible gives the *actual* account of people falling into hell alive! Num. 16.32-33: *And* ***THE EARTH OPENED HER MOUTH****, and swallowed them up,. . . and all that appertained to them, went down alive* ***INTO THE PIT****, and the* ***EARTH CLOSED UPON THEM****:...*

*Thousands of years ago, the Bible described a place inside the earth that matches what science has recently discovered!*

Caspar Peucer, a famous 14th century scientist, who studied volcanoe eruptions at Heklafell, recorded some very frightening information in his research findings:

*Out of the bottomless abyss of Heklafell, or rather out of Hell itself,* ***rise melancholy cries and loud wailings, so that these can be heard for many miles around. . . there may be heard in the mountain fearful howlings, weeping and gnashing of teeth*.**(Haraldur Sigurdsson, *Melting the Earth, The History of Ideas on Volcanic Eruptions*, p. 73)

**And Caspar Peucer is not alone. . .**

*The fearsome noises that issued from some of their volcanoes were certainly thought to be the screams of tormented souls in the fires of hell below*. (Ibid., p. 73)

Others also believe they've heard *cries and screams* coming from volcanoes. They try to desperately ignore the horrifying *sounds of hell*. **But they are there. Everything we know, everything we discover, proves the fact of a place called hell.**

**FIRE AND BRIMSTONE**

Revelation 14.10 says,  *. . . and he shall be tormented with fire and* ***BRIMSTONE*** *. . .* Eleven times the Bible describes Hell as *fire and brimstone*. Do you know what brimstone is? It’s sulfur. And do you know where sulfur or brimstone is found? INSIDE THIS EARTH! *Nature* magazine just learned what the Bible knew over 3,000 years ago. Inside this earth is *fire and brimstone*:

***Volcanoes may be more like hell than anyone realized****. Eruptions disgorge streams of molten sulphur,* ***the brimstone of evangelical preachers****, which burns up before it can be preserved for posterity, new research in the journal Geology shows.* (*Nature*, July 22, 2002)

The cover of *Discover magazine*, August 2002, asks the question — *What’s Really at the Center of the Earth?*

I know what’s *REALLY in the center of this earth*. Jesus told us. **There is a fire – with millions of people burning, weeping, screaming, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.**

The Bible warns in Psalm 9.17, you will not only be in hell — you will be TURNED BACK INTO HELL!

*The wicked shall be turned back into hell...* Psalm 9.17

*YOU will see HELL, YOU will smell HELL, YOU will breathe HELL, YOU will hear HEL,L YOU will feel HELL, YOU WILL BE TURNED BACK INTO HELL!*

Jesus Christ took hell so seriously — He could say without the slightest hesitation — to remove your eye, cut off your hand or foot, if that would keep you out of hell.

*If hell is not real — Jesus Christ was the most deceived man that ever lived! I challenge you to read the words of Jesus Christ and tell me they are the words of a deceived man.*

**HELL IS A PLACE OF TORMENT**

Jesus says of the man in Luke 16:

23 ...*in hell he lifts up his eyes, being in TORMENTS.*

*24 ... for I am TORMENTED in this flame.*

28 ...*PLACE OF TORMENT.*

No friend. Jesus Christ knew EXACTLY what He was talking about. And He continually warned and pleaded and preached about the place of hell. No sane man could describe the place of hell as Jesus Christ described it — ***UNLESS IT IS TRUE!***

My friend, you can search your Bible, from cover to cover. You can study every occurrence of hell in the Bible — and I cannot find one verse, not one word of HOPE for someone in hell! NOT ONE WORD! The rich man in hell in Luke 16 never even asks to get out — He knew there was no way out!

*What could possibly be worth eternity in hell?* No wonder Jesus Christ warned so much about hell! No wonder Jesus said in Mark 8.36, *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL?*

**WHAT IF JESUS IS RIGHT?**

Hebrews 9.27 says,*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:...*

It is appointed unto man once to die . . .

*Three people die every second, 180 every minute, since you started this tract, 2000 people have gone into eternity.*

and one day — IT WILL BE YOU!

*As you leave your body — you realize something is happening. You hear a sound. . . getting louder and louder. . . screaming . . .weeping. . . wailing. Terror and fear beyond anything you could imagine overtakes you. “This can’t be happening!” you scream. Your nostrils are filling with the awful stench of burning souls. Your face ignites from the heat. Flames are now blazing from your eyes, nostrils, ears, mouth — every opening in your body, flames are roaring out. Your body is sizzling and crackling from the flames.*

*Your body is now madly thrashing and convulsing from the horrible pain. Why don’t I just die? You begin weeping and gnashing your teeth with the millions. When will this pain stop?* But you know it will NEVER stop. . .

*You curse the day you were born. Oh God, why didn’t you warn me?— and you remember the preacher pleading with you to receive Jesus Christ. You remember reading this gospel tract. God don’t you care? — and you remember John 3.16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,. . . God is a God of love — He won't allow this, — but you remember John 3.36, . . . he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

 ***AND YOU ARE FOREVER IN THE WRATH OF GOD!***

*And you realize, that Jesus Christ was right — there is a place called hell. . .*

**AND YOU ARE THERE — FOREVER! God does NOT want you in hell.**

Millionaire Ted Turner, said in an interview, *I’m looking forward to dying and being cast into Hell. That's where I belong.* You say — he’s a fool. But friend, when you say *No* to Jesus Christ and His payment for your sin — *you are saying the same thing. You’re telling God — I don’t need Jesus Christ — I’ll pay for my sins in hell.*

If you reject Jesus Christ one day YOU will be in hell.

*I assure you — if you die without Jesus Christ— it’ll be the worst mistake you could possibly make!*

**DO NOT DIE WITHOUT JESUS!**

Tomorrow may be too late! Proverbs 27.1 says, *Boast not thyself of tomorrow: for thou KNOWEST NOT what a day may bring forth.*

What could be worth eternity in hell?

Jesus Christ asked in Mark 8.36-37:

*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Yes. There is a place called hell! If you continue to refuse the Lord Jesus Christ and His payment on Calvary for your sins — *just as sure as you live and breathe —*

. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)