



"Recognizing Christ as the Ultimate Saviour of All!"

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Dear Mr. De Haan:

A friend passed along to me your November 2006 newsletter, featuring a discussion concerning "Hell." I wanted to offer a few comments.

You begin, "I wish I didn't have to believe in hell. While seeing the need for eternal justice, the thought of cruel and unusual punishment that lasts forever sounds morally wrong to me. Yet, the Bible describes God as a great King who creates a lake of everlasting fire for rebels who want no part of His kingdom."

I, too, was raised within the traditional church and for many years believed there was no alternative to believing in an eternal hell ... for that was what the Bible taught. Now 53 years old, my firm belief that the Bible is the Word of God has not wavered. But I have come to see that the teachings of the traditional church ... of most well-known authors and Bible teachers ... and even of many of the highly esteemed church leaders of the past ... are in error. And this error has left many earnest Believers with no alternative but to believe in an endless hell.

Yes, the thought of cruel and unusual punishment that lasts forever does sound morally wrong. It is morally wrong. And it is not what the Bible teaches at all. God is love. His Word tells us that love is the most important thing. He instructs us to forgive, again and again.

And He tells us throughout His Word that He will ultimately save ALL mankind, not just some. It is only our misunderstanding as to how the entire Word of God fits together that causes us to temper God's wonderful, ultimate purposes with man-made conditions imposed upon His grace.

"God loves you ... BUT He has no choice but to cast you into an endless burning torment if, in your short lifetime, you do not profess Jesus as Lord."

In this short letter there is not adequate room to present every passage in God's Word that indicates His plan to SAVE all. To see this truth one must be willing to set aside every bias that has accumulated through a lifetime of errant Bible teachings. As I have said, I was raised within the church. At the age of 40 I followed a calling to attend seminary and to enter the ordained ministry. I graduated from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky in 1996. I served as a bi-vocational pastor for 8-1/2 years, having been ordained both within the United Methodist and Free Methodist denominations. I taught that we must accept the hard teachings concerning hell, because

there was no alternative. The Bible told us about endless torment, so we had no alternative but to believe it.

But when I encountered some difficult to find Bible studies from the past, many of which are preserved by the Concordant Publishing Concern, I began to see there were some serious inconsistencies within traditional Bible teachings of our day. Once I recognized these truths, and not wanting to create disunity within the church, I stepped down and now lead a small “church” in our home, and devote my ministry to writing and speaking.

I believe that the Bible is God’s perfect word to mankind. And within His Word, if we study diligently and carefully, we see God’ wonderful, perfect plan to one day save ALL mankind and to reconcile ALL of creation to Himself.

Again ... I cannot point to one or two passages from the Bible to support what I am saying. It is ALL of God’s Word which reveals His unfolding plan, culminating with 1 Corinthians 15 where Paul reveals to us the consummation of God’s plan, at the conclusion of the ages.

When I stepped down as a pastor within the traditional church, I wanted to be able to respond to the question I know would be asked of me: “If you believe the Bible is God’s Word, how can you believe God will save EVERYONE?” I have enclosed a copy of the book I wrote in response to that question. I also invite you to look at my web site at www.GraceEvangel.org

You conclude your newsletter article, “For what we cannot understand, those of us who bear heartache for lost loved ones need to trust the One who loves them far more than we do. He has told us as much as He wants us to know. The rest we need to leave in His hands.”

But this is like saying, “God tells us your loved one who died without accepting Jesus as Saviour is now burning forever in hell. But we must trust God who loves your loved one more than we do.” This does not make sense ... and is able to provide no comfort whatsoever to the grieving and heart-broken family members left behind.

But God does not leave us in such a helpless, hopeless state as it concerns our unbelieving loved ones. Is God not stronger than Satan ... the deceiver of this age? Is God not able to bring even the most stubborn and rebellious of His creation back into the fold?

The Bible is not silent on this question. Much as the traditional church tries to teach us there are no alternatives to believing in an eternal hell, the Bible is clear. As bad as things seem today, and as rebellious and horrific the deeds of much of mankind ... God is in control, and is in the process of leading His entire creation to a total reconciliation.

Truly God is “the Saviour of all mankind, especially [but not exclusively] of believers.” (1 Timothy 4:10)

Your brother in Christ,

Bob Evely