



THE DOWNRIVER DISCIPLES PROJECT

explores what the Bible says about

HELL



Without reservation, [followers](#) (1) of [Jesus Christ](#) (2) acknowledge the existence of an eternal Hell, as the [Holy Bible](#) (3) discloses to us that Jesus Himself often spoke of such a place. One example is below.

"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in Hell." ([Matthew 10:28](#); also ref [Luke 12:5](#)).

Accordingly, we cannot say with credibility, "I believe in Jesus Christ" if we do not first believe in what He said or proclaimed. Unfortunately, Hell is rarely mentioned in some present day churches. A message of repentance and salvation is advertised but the preaching and teaching of the WHOLE gospel is not delivered. It was written 2000 years ago that many would prefer to have their ears tickled ([2 Timothy 4:3-4](#)) rather than hear the saving grace of Jesus Christ. It is happening present day. The timeless, everlasting [Gospel of the Kingdom](#) (4) calls us to the crossroads of Truth and Untruth- and it tells us where both lead us.

When Hell is mentioned in and around Christian denominations discerning the venues of eternity, there is no definitive, resounding consensus. Various Bible translations utilized by competing denominations offer differing words to describe this place of eternal punishment. They include, but are certainly not limited to, [Hell](#) (5); the Greek translation [Hades](#) (6); and the Hebrew translation [Sheol](#) (7). Some Christian denominations regard them as references to a place opposite from God's Kingdom, while others do not. We choose to leave that discussion for the religious theologians to bat around until Jesus comes back.

The purpose of this narrative is to 1) acknowledge the existence of Hell based upon what is recorded in the Holy Bible and 2) offer that God and Jesus are not in the business of "sending" anyone to Hell. They're trying to save people from going there.

The [Word of God](#) (8) speaks of the [Four Last Things](#) (9): Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell.

From the [Old Testament](#) (10), [Psalm 9:17](#) tells us, "The wicked go down to the realm of the dead, all the nations that forget God." [Daniel 12:2](#) foretells, "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the Earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt" (see also [Jeremiah 23:40](#)).

In the [New Testament](#) (11), [Matthew 3:12](#) records [John the Baptist](#) (12) using the imagery of harvesting wheat to describe God's judgment, as he preaches, "His winnowing fork is in His Hand, and He will clear His threshing floor, gathering His wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Hell is alluded to by Jesus in the [Parable](#) (13) of the Wedding Banquet ([Matthew 22:1-14](#)), where an unprepared man was present. "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

In [Matthew 25:41](#), Jesus speaks of the cursed who will be thrown "into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." In [Matthew 25:46](#), Jesus exhorts "the wicked are forever subject to the fury and the wrath of God. Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

Both [Matthew 5:29-30](#) and [Mark 9:44-49](#) warns us that suffering from severe and lifelong physical impairment pales in comparison to being thrown into Hell where "the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched.' Everyone will be salted with fire" (ref [Isaiah 66:24](#)).

The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is recorded in [Luke 16:19-31](#). It tells of a wealthy man who died and is suffering in eternal anguish. "In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw [Abraham](#) (14) far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' This account not only reinforces the reality of Hell but also discloses that there is no respite or escape from the relentless suffering.

In an exhortation ([2 Thessalonians 1:8-9](#)) to the church at Thessalonica, the great [Apostle Paul](#) (15) warned, "He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might."

[James 3:6](#) tells us the source of any unsavory talk we may use, saying, "The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by Hell."

In the final book of the Bible, [Revelation 14:9-12](#) warns those who worship the beast "will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name."

SPOIL ALERT [Revelation 20:7-10](#) tells us the final judgment and fate of [Satan](#) (16) as he is "thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

In a nutshell, [Romans 3:23](#) tells us we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God. [Romans 6:23](#) says that the wages for those sins is death. To avoid that death, we need a Savior, Jesus Christ, to intercede for us and get us to Heaven.

The synoptic [Gospels](#) (17) of [Matthew](#) (18), [Mark](#) (19), and [Luke](#) (20) all record Jesus speaking of Hell.

It is important to reconcile that Jesus did not tell us about Hell to "scare us" into believing in Him. To the contrary, He was educating us with truth. After all, He identified Himself in [John 14:6](#) by proclaiming, "'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

God doesn't "send" anyone to Hell. Jesus doesn't "send" anyone to Hell. His teachings and preachings make crystal clear that He wants all of us to spend eternity with Him in God's Mansion of Many Rooms ([John 14:2](#)). They also disclose that Jesus doesn't decide where we spend eternity. Our choices do. Free will wins the day but using it recklessly could lose eternity for us.

Jesus described the realities of Hell. He also described the alternative for us (God's Kingdom). That's why He [Resurrected](#) (21)- to save us from the former so we could spend forever with Him in the latter. He spared no words in giving us a road map to both. The route we take is up to us. Jesus encourages us to avoid the path to destruction by entering through "the narrow gate" of life ([Matthew 7:13-14](#)). Through Jesus, we can escape the eternal anguish of Hell and, instead, spend forever and ever with Him in Paradise ([John 3:16, 18, 36](#)).

Footnotes appear on page 3. Modifications are welcome at goodnews@downriverdisciples.com

FOOTNOTES:

- (1) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/discipleship>
- (2) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/jesus-christ>
- (3) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-good-news>
- (4) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/gospel-of-the-kingdom>
- (5) https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?quicksearch=Hell&qv_version=NIV
- (6) https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?quicksearch=hades&qv_version=NIV
- (7) https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?quicksearch=sheol&qv_version=NKJV
- (8) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-word-of-the-lord>
- (9) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/four-last-things>
- (10) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/old-testament>
- (11) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/new-testament>
- (12) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-benchmark-of-greatness>
- (13) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/parables-of-jesus-christ>
- (14) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/father-of-many-nations>
- (15) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/ambassador-in-chains>
- (16) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/satan>
- (17) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-four-gospels>
- (18) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/matthew>
- (19) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/mark>
- (20) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/luke>
- (21) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/resurrection-of-jesus>