



TODD LEVIN MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

A monthly teaching publication to our partners and friends

THE SHOW WILL NOT GO ON FOREVER

Dear Partners and Friends,

As a traveling minister, I spend a lot of weekends in hotels. I'm overwhelmed as I walk through the lobbies on Sunday morning or sit eating my continental breakfast. I am surrounded by a multitude of people who have decided to exclude God from their day and more than likely out of life all together! It's as though the realization hasn't dawned on them that they're only one heartbeat away from slipping into an eternity of everlasting pain. Did you know that everyone is moving towards eternity – one of perfect peace or unmistakable pain?

It's mind boggling to observe the casual manner that unbelievers sometimes display. As they sit drinking their coffees and espressos, reading the morning paper, or discussing the menial things in life, it's as though they're persuaded in their minds that their whole life is still in front of them, never pausing for a moment to think that today could be their day when they slip away into an eternal darkness without God.

I've often wondered what their childhood must have been like. Are these offspring now following in the footsteps of their parents? Could it be that their mom's and dad's never instilled into the hearts and lives of their children the fear of God? In any case, here we are – it's Sunday morning, the churches are empty and the majority of people are occupied with themselves or hobbies like running around playing golf. They have no concern as to where they will spend their eternity. Perhaps some are thinking, *“At the end of the day, when it all comes down to it, who really knows if heaven and hell actually exist. So today I'll eat, drink and party and let tomorrow fall where it may.”*

I want to take a look with you at the kind of people who end up in hell. Whether people believe or not in Jesus, they cannot escape the fact that one day, we all will stand before God and give an account. **The show will not go on forever.** Where will you be going when it's over? The scripture is very clear on the fact that should the Lord tarry his coming, no one can escape their appointment with death. Death still is in fact the last enemy that must be put under foot (I Cor 15:26).

“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”

Hebrews 9:27 (NKJV)

As for the righteous, they know that heaven awaits them. Heavenly bliss and eternal life! ***“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”*** (Matthew 25:34) But for the wicked, their fate is sealed. ***“These shall go away into everlasting punishment.”*** (Matthew 25:46) ***“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”*** (Rev 20:15)

Why does hell exist?

Let’s begin by asking ourselves why is there a hell? If it’s such a terrible place of torment, why did God create it in the first place? To answer this, we need to turn in God’s Word to Matthew 25:41. It tells us exactly why hell exists and who it was originally intended for. ***“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”*** Notice, hell fire was created for the devil and his angels. It was never in God’s program for man. In fact, the Holy Spirit said through the Apostle Peter that, ***“The Lord is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*** (2 Peter 3:9)

Here’s the real truth of the matter: when a sinner rejects Christ and God’s plan of redemption, then at death, there is no other place for him or her to go except hell. Purgatory does not exist. It was man’s imagination running wild and inspired by the devil as a buffer zone to escape a righteous and holy God.

Some believe in the idea of soul sleep. You know, when we go to our graves and remain for an appointed time until the Lord awakens us. My goodness, people who believe this must have watched too many vampire movies growing up as a kid. The apostle Paul stated something worth mentioning over in 2 Corinthians chapter 5.

“Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷We live by faith, not by sight. ⁸We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”

2 Corinthians 5:6-8 (NIV)

Did you notice that to be absent from the body, i.e., at death is to be present with the Lord? He did not say, we lay asleep in the grave until He calls for us.

Who is going?

If there truly is such a place called hell, and I believe there is, then how does a person end up there? Let’s take a look at some very specific scripture passages and find out. We want to be sure that we’re heading down the road, which leads to life.

“Then he told them this story: “The farm of a certain rich man produced a terrific crop. ¹⁷He talked to himself: ‘What can I do? My barn isn’t big enough for this harvest.’ ¹⁸Then he said, ‘Here’s what I’ll do: I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I’ll gather in all my grain and goods, ¹⁹and I’ll say to myself, “Self, you’ve done well! You’ve got it made and can now retire. Take it easy and have the time of your life!” ²⁰”Just then God showed up

and said, 'Fool! Tonight you die. And your barnful of goods— who gets it?' ²¹ "That's what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."

Luke 12:16-21 (Message)

Here is a foolish man who has spent his entire life enjoying today with no thought for tomorrow. He had no eternal values. The only thing that consumed him was self. Jesus said this is how it will be for anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God. (vs. 21) You cannot leave God out of your life and expect to end up in heaven – the place that Jesus has prepared for those who love him. It doesn't work that way.

Did you know that there will be good people who lived morally upright yet will find themselves in hell one day for the simple reason that they too never included God in their life spent here on earth. The gift, which God offered – Jesus –, was never received. **(Rom 6:23)**

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish and five were wise. ³ The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. ⁴ The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. ⁵ The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. ⁶ "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' ⁷ "Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' ⁹ "No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. ¹¹ "Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!' ¹² "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' ¹³ "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour."

Matthew 25:1-13 (NIV)

Five virgins did not make it in. The fact that Jesus used virgins to illustrate this story implies that morally they lived upright, nevertheless, their character did not save them. ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*** (Eph 2:8,9) He also referred to these five as foolish because they were unprepared and not ready to go. They never did accept Jesus into their hearts and surrender their lives to Him. It's like some folks who imagine that one day when they are gray and old, then they'll consider the God factor in their life, but not a day earlier. Until then, they continue to pursue "their" ambitions and live "their own lives" as best as they see fit. After all, in their darkened minds, they are just as good as anyone else. Isn't that what's important? Conforming to the world's standard of living instead of God's?

Of course we cannot leave out the **mental assenters**. These are ones who agree that Jesus is Lord, rose from the dead and has ascended on high where now He sits at the right hand of God. However their one mistake is this: **Jesus is not their Lord**. Lord meaning, ruler of life, i.e., "God is in control." Though mentally they agree and verbally they'll confess, but when it comes right down to it, they are still in charge. They are running the show instead of God. There has been no genuine heart repentance. For if there was a change of heart, then it would affect their

conduct, behavior and lifestyle. Here lies a fool who is deceived in thinking that one day he or she will find themselves in heaven. Jesus was very clear on this when He said,

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

Matthew 7:21-23 (NIV)

I don't think it can get much clearer than this. ***"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" Luke 6:46 (NKJV)***

Then we have the obvious – i.e., those who have lived a life of sin and wickedness, excluding God completely from their lives and in some cases from their nation. They are hell bound and going fast!

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Psalms 9:17 (NKJV)

"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Galatians 5:19-21 (NIV)

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

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV)

Notice Jesus stated that the "unbelieving" would have their part in the lake of fire. Psalms 14:1 states, ***"The fool has said in his heart there is no God."*** These are the unbelieving. They have no fear of God in their lives because they don't believe that God exists.

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 (KJV)

Remember, people decide for themselves and seal their own destiny. They would not receive the truth in order to be saved. They rejected God's plan of salvation for mankind. For this reason, they will be damned – for not believing the truth. It was their choice. God had already provided a way out – ***"I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me."*** (John 14:6) (c.p. Romans 10:9,10)

When we come to understand the righteousness of God, we find out that God did everything possible from his end that all may be saved. The only thing He left for us to do is to receive.

“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.”

John 1:12,13 (NIV)

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

Titus 2:11-14 (KJV)

“Since earliest times men have seen the earth and sky and all God made, and have known of his existence and great eternal power. So they will have no excuse when they stand before God at Judgment Day.”

Romans 1:20 (TLB)

What about the so-called Christians who continually practice sin? You know, those who call themselves Christians in name but not in action. Perhaps these are friends or family members who went up to the altar and asked Jesus to come into their hearts. As for any notice-able difference, there was little or none at all. Yet these same folks still show up every now and then in church, if not to sooth their own convicted conscience then perhaps to stop by and say hello to their friends. When Jesus was on the earth, not only did He talk about His commitment *to* us, but also what He expected *from* us. Do you recall reading these passages?

“Be sure of this--that I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

Matthew 28:20 (TLB)

“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

Hebrews 13:5 (KJV)

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”

John 14:18 (NIV)

“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

John 14:2,3 (KJV)

I'm sure if you've been saved for any length of time that you have come across the scriptures we've just looked at, but what about the following passages? These have to do with our love and commitment to Him and the consequences that follow if we willingly and knowingly refuse.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

John 14:15 (KJV)

“Do we love God? Do we keep his commands? ³ The proof that we love God comes when we keep his commandments.”

1 John 5:2,3 (Message)

“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.”

John 8:31 (KJV)

“Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.”

Philippians 2:12 (NIV)

“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ “But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”

Matthew 24:12,13 (NKJV)

“If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.”

Hebrews 10:26,27 (NIV)

Just because an individual starts out right is no guarantee that he will finish right. You have to purpose in your heart to continue with the Lord. You must remain faithful until the end. Remember that song you used to sing as a child, “I have decided to follow Jesus.” The truth is that **we have to decide each day** to follow Jesus. For in failing to allow the leadership of the Holy Spirit in our lives on a daily basis, only gives place for the enemy to slip in, take over and steer us right off the road.

Look at it from a relationship standpoint. When you’re in love with someone, you want to live right and make the other person happy. You would not want your fellowship to be disrupted. You would endeavor to keep the communication line open and the relationship moving forward. Resistance from either side would bring disharmony and upset. But when a heart is filled with love and surrender towards one another it is as an unquenchable fire that never fades away. What I’m saying is that a person’s love for God is demonstrated by their obedience to God’s Word. Remember what Jesus said, *“if you love me, keep my commandments.”*

I want to encourage you today to keep moving forward. Continue looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. He is able to keep you safe until the end. Remember, He is coming back soon! *“All of us who look forward to his Coming stay ready, with the glistening purity of Jesus’ life as a model for our own.”* 1 John 3:3 (Message) Make the decision today if you haven’t already that, *“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”* Also, stay open and ready to give an account of your faith in God to others. Be instant in season and out of season. People need the Lord. The show will not go on forever. Time is running out! Your witness could make a world of difference for others. Give them a chance to come face-to-face, eye-to-eye with the Jesus who lives in you. Let them experience first hand God’s love. *“Ye are the*

light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matt 5:14-16 You are a living epistle – seen and read by all men. Your love for God is as an open book for all to come and behold!

Your Friends and Partners

Todd & Eva