

The Problem With Jesus

What the text says:

Hebrews 10:26-31, John 14:6, Mark 2:5-7, John 10:33

Jesus is the only **hope** and **answer** any of us will get.

If we reject Jesus:

We reject the **forgiveness** that only Jesus can bring.

We choose to be our own **god** and **defend** ourselves.

We will face the **dreadful judgment** that our sin brings.

The problem we have with the text:

A religion with a hell is incredibly **unfair** and **unjust**.

A religion with a hell can't possibly have a **loving God**.

Everything about hell **feels wrong** to us.

The truth about the text:

2 Peter 3:8-10, Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16-21,

Jesus on hell: Luke 16:19-31, Matthew 5:22-30, 8:5-13, 10:27-28, 13:36-50, 22:1-14, 25:41-46

A God without **justice** and **judgment** is not a **loving** God.

Jesus spoke more about **hell** than any other Biblical person.

If there is no **judgment** from God...why did **Jesus die**?

Two things to consider:

1. Our view of hell will either be based on **faith** or **feelings**.
2. If there is a hell, then our friends and family don't need **good people** in their lives, they need **God's people** in their lives.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of April 22, 2018

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1

Talking about hell can be quite an interesting conversation. Growing up, what has been your experience around the topic and teachings of hell and the afterlife?

2

A natural response to this weekend's message is to think about those who don't know Jesus. The story of your own spiritual journey is one of the most powerful tools you have to share your faith. If someone were to ask you what difference being a follower of Jesus has made in your life, what would you say?

3

Often what gets in the way of us speaking up about our faith in Jesus, is fear. This can result in the false belief that we have to know everything and if we don't explain everything clearly someone will be lost forever. Which of these common fears do you relate to most when thinking about sharing your faith? Circle all that apply.

Fear of rejection
Losing a friendship
Fear of offending
Feeling inadequate
Embarrassment over
unanswerable questions
Being caught without answers

Fear of what others will think of you
Rudely interrupting somebody's life
Being seen as arrogant
Your own weakness, hypocrisies
and inadequacies
Personal doubt
Other

DIGGING DEEPER

1. This week we talked about the reality of eternal separation from God for eternity. In light of the urgency created by this truth, read through the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 and 1 Corinthians 3:7. Discuss God's role and our responsibility when it comes to the salvation of others.

Matthew 13:1-9 New International Version (NIV)

The Parable of the Sower

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. ² Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. ³ Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ Whoever has ears, let them hear."

Matthew 13:18-23 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁸ "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰ The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

1 Corinthians 3:7 New International Version (NIV)

⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

How might we navigate the balance of living with a sense of urgency about eternity and separation without becoming a street corner sign-holder or apathetic believer?

2. Chris spoke about being God's people in the lives of our friends and family. This involves influencing them with both our actions and our words. How do Matthew 5:16 and 1 Peter 3:15-16 help us understand what this looks like in our own lives?

Matthew 5:16 New International Version (NIV)

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

1 Peter 3:15-16 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁵But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

3. For most of us, learning about hell increases our desire to have a spiritual impact on our family and friends. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 gives us a great picture of what a spiritually influential relationship can look like. Read the passage and answer the following questions.

1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 New International Version (NIV)

Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica

²You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results. ²We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition. ³For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. ⁴On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. ⁵You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. ⁶We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. ⁷Instead, we were like young children among you.

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, ⁸so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. ⁹Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. ¹¹For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹²encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

¹³And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.

What do you think Paul meant by sharing the gospel? What do you think he meant by sharing his life?

Why does it work best to share the gospel AND your life?

What are some of the dangers of thinking there is only one way to influence others?

TAKING IT HOME

1

Often after hearing a message like this, we can feel a need to go and save the world, thankfully Jesus has already done that! He's also given us the opportunity to reach people. Are there one or two people in your circle of influence that you would like to have a more significant impact on?

Spend some time praying for these specific people and God's work in their life.

Praise/Prayer Requests:

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