

Warnings About Hell

By David Feddes

A while back, a national survey in the United States found that 38% of adults worry a lot about not having enough money and health insurance. Only about 8% worry that they will go to hell. Now, why do you think that is? Do you think that they are all saved and born again and delighting in the Lord and so confident of their salvation? No. In many cases, it is simply that they do not believe hell is real and they do not take it seriously, and the only thing they really worry about are the problems of this life.

But what did Jesus say? Jesus said, "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). Really, there is nothing that needs to be worried about as much as one's eternal destiny if we are not right with God. The Bible is filled with stern warnings about hell, and we need to take those to heart.

Facts to Face

Here are three facts to face. First, God's wrath is real. Although God is love, he will punish unrepentant unbelievers. If you will not believe in Jesus and you will not repent, then you cannot expect God's love to be the thing that saves you because you have sins that have not been dealt with. God's wrath is real.

A second fact very closely connected with that is that Scripture often warns of hellfire. God gives us plenty of fair warning that hell is real, and we cannot ever object that God did not give fair warning.

A third key fact is that these warnings must be heeded. God does not speak of hell just for the sake of saying it but for the sake of letting us know while there is still time to avoid that terrible destination.

Will a loving God really punish sinners?

First, then, will a loving God really punish sinners? Is God maybe too nice to punish people who do what is wrong? Not according to Hebrews 10. "We know him who said, 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge his people.' It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:30–31). I read a book by a popular author, and at one point in that book he wrote, "It is not a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, no matter what Jonathan Edwards said." But it is not Jonathan Edwards who said that originally. It is the Bible. It is the voice of God himself that says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." If you are an unrepentant sinner and you fall into God's hands, it is a dread, dread thing to happen.

Will God punish? Well, read your Scriptures. Here are some of the Old Testament judgments. God sent a flood that wiped out the world and spared only Noah and his family.

God sent fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, and the New Testament says that the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah is a picture of the eternal fire that will consume those who live in wickedness.

God sent ten plagues that crushed Pharaoh's Egypt, destroyed their prosperity, wiped out their firstborn sons because they would not respond to God. Their hearts were hardened and they would not let God's people go.

The Canaanites lived in wickedness, rampant sexual immorality, sacrificing babies and butchering babies to please their gods, and God wiped them completely from the face of the earth.

In the book of Deuteronomy God describes the punishments for covenant breakers. It is a terrifying list of all the things that will go wrong and the problems and horrible woes that will be inflicted on people who live apart from God.

The book of Kings tells of some youths who came out and mocked the prophet Elisha. He cursed them in the name of the Lord, and two bears came out and mauled 42 of them.

Read the prophecies against the wicked cities of the ancient world. Samaria, the capital of Israel, was attacked and destroyed. Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, such a mighty city with vast walls, fell under God's judgment. Jerusalem itself fell. Tyre, that city of great wealth and power, fell and was crushed under God's wrath, as God had declared. God compared Tyre to a great and beautiful ship that would be destroyed and sunk in the mighty sea. Babylon itself, with walls so wide and thick that chariots could ride side by side three abreast on those walls, huge, massive, immense walls, vast armies--Babylon was crushed by the wrath of God.

When you read of the Old Testament judgments, you can hardly say, "Because God is faithful and loving and slow to anger, he is too nice to hurt anybody." The fact is that we are warned of God's wrath against sin, and it is made very clear again and again and again that God punishes evildoers.

Along with Old Testament judgments, the New Testament also speaks of God judgments. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and were struck dead on the spot.

King Herod was persecuting the church. He had the apostle James killed with the sword. Then one day Herod was standing in front of a crowd trying to impress them, and they cried out, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man" (Acts 12:22). Herod was pleased about that, and on the spot an angel struck him down. Worms ate his insides, and he died.

A false teacher named Bar-Jesus was opposing the work of God that Paul was doing in sharing the gospel with Sergius Paulus, a government official. Paul called him a son of the devil, and God struck him blind on the spot.

People in Corinth were participating in the Lord's Supper in a way that was unworthy, and some of them were dying. The apostle Paul explained that they were dying, because they were treating the Lord's Supper with contempt and treating fellow believers with contempt.

Jesus warned that Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed. Forty years after Jesus gave that warning, that is exactly what happened. The destruction and massacre were terrible.

All of these judgments are pictures of a final judgment and of the eternal hell that awaits the enemies of God, the unrepentant, the unbelieving, who refuse to turn to God. The Old Testament and the New Testament make it very clear that though God is loving, though God is patient, though he delights in the death of no one, yet he is just, and he will punish wickedness that has not been repented of, that has not been paid for.

Does God give fair warning of hell?

Does God give fair warning of hell? Jesus tells a story in which there is a man who does not think so. He lives in luxury, but right at the gate to his estate there is a poor beggar who has nothing. The dogs lick his sores, but rich man doesn't help him. But after death, the beggar is in glory with the people of God, and this rich man is in hell, suffering terribly in anguish. He wishes he could have just a drop of water. He is in terrible anguish. He says, "I am in agony in this fire. I beg you, Father Abraham, send Lazarus, the poor man who was in heaven. Send him back to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment" (Luke 16:24–28).

In Jesus' story, this man in hell is hinting that if only his brothers had enough warning, they would not go to hell. He is really hinting that if he himself had had enough warning, he would not be there in hell. He is blaming God, suggesting that he did not have enough warning. He thinks that if somebody came back from the dead and warned people of hell, then of course they would immediately repent and turn to God. But the man is told, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

Those words of Jesus' story are absolutely true. Think about it. Jesus did rise from the dead, and still people will not take warnings of hell seriously. In fact, he raised a man named Lazarus from the dead, and how did his enemies react? They tried to kill both Jesus and Lazarus. So if someone is in hell, is it because God never mentioned hell, because he kept it a secret, because he wanted to send somebody there and was going to surprise them and not let anybody know? No. Jesus says, "Moses and the Prophets have warned about God's judgment, and if you do not listen to them, you are not going to listen even if someone rises from the dead."

Let us consider some of the biblical warnings of hell. In Deuteronomy God says through **Moses**, "For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains... It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them" (Deuteronomy 32:22, 35).

How about the **Psalms**? Psalm 21 says, “Your hand will find out all your enemies; your right hand will find out those who hate you. You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear. The Lord will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will consume them” (Psalm 21:8–9). Psalm 97 says, “Clouds and thick darkness surround him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. Fire goes before him and burns up his adversaries all around” (Psalm 97:2–3).

Consider the prophet **Nahum**: “The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty... Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire.” (Nahum 1:2–3, 6).

We sometimes like to treat God as a gentle house cat. What if he is a tiger? What if he is a lion? What if he is a consuming fire? That is what the Bible says he is toward those who are his enemies and refuse to turn from their sin. The warnings of God and of his fiery judgment are very clear.

The prophet **Isaiah**, of all the prophets, is the one who speaks beautiful words of comfort. “Comfort, comfort my people,” says your God (Isaiah 40:1). He speaks of the glories of a new creation. He speaks of the coming of one who would be pierced for our transgressions and take all our sins upon himself. The gospel is proclaimed in advance in the book of Isaiah. What a wonderful book it is. But does that mean judgment is not mentioned in Isaiah? No. Judgment is mentioned very clearly in Isaiah, just as the gospel and the good news of the coming Savior are mentioned.

Isaiah says, “But rebels and sinners shall be broken together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed... And the strong shall become tinder, and his work a spark, and both of them shall burn together, with none to quench them.... And people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth” (Isaiah 1:28,31; 2:19). That is what is going to happen when Jesus Christ comes again. People will flee from him in terror at the splendor of his majesty. He first came in humility and veiled his glory and his wrath so that we might come to know him before that second coming. But when he comes again in the splendor of his majesty, the wicked cannot stand before him.

Isaiah also says, “And the Lord will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire... For a burning place has long been prepared; indeed, for the king it is made ready, its pyre made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it” (Isaiah 30:30,33).

“The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless: ‘Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?’” (Isaiah 33:14)

“Behold, they are like stubble; the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame” (Isaiah 47:14).

And the last verse of Isaiah, after talking about a wonderful new creation, speaks of those who are not part of that new creation and who are the enemies of God: "Their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh" (Isaiah 66:24).

Remember, this is Isaiah, the prophet of such beauty, of such blessing, of such comfort, and yet even Isaiah is directed by God to reveal these terrible judgments on the unrepentant.

The great prophet **Daniel** in chapter 12 says, "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2).

And then there is **Jesus**. There are some folks who say, "I know the Bible, especially the Old Testament, talks about a God of judgment and so forth, but Jesus comes with gentleness and sweetness." Yes, Jesus is gentle and he does come in kindness, but no one in the whole Bible says more about hell than the Son of God himself. Here are just a few examples.

Jesus says, "The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:41–42).

Jesus speaks about a worthless servant who did not serve his master, and the master says, "Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 22:13). In a different story the master says much the same thing: "And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:30).

Jesus warns that on the last day he will say to some people, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels..." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:41, 46).

Jesus says, "And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, "where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:43–48). Now Jesus is not saying literally to mutilate yourself. He is saying that anything in your life that you have to give up, no matter how precious to you, you have to give it up if it is a choice between that and hell. Hell is worse than anything you can imagine, says Jesus, and so whatever causes you to sin, get rid of it.

Jesus warns that on Judgment Day, people will say, "We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets." But he will say, "I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!" In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Luke 13:26–28). Even some who claimed to know Jesus will be sent away because Jesus did not know them in a saving way. They were workers of evil.

Jesus also says, "If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned" (John 15:6).

Jesus is absolutely clear, and the apostles sent out by Jesus are just as clear.

Here are some warnings from **Paul**. "The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Jesus' half brother **Jude** gave this warning: "And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 1:6-7).

These days some people say that any kind of sexual behavior is fine, that everybody can marry everybody, men marrying men, women marrying women, abandoning your spouse, do what you like, there is no God, or God is too nice to punish, and supports whatever you do. Such people need to hear what Jude says: Sodom and Gomorrah serve as examples of those who indulge in sexual immorality and unnatural desire, and they serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

Revelation, the last book of the Bible, was written by the beloved apostle John, the disciple who was closer to Jesus than anybody else, this great disciple of love. The Gospel according to John is filled with expressions of love. The book of Revelation has tremendous visions of a new creation, of heaven on earth, of the marriage of God's people to their Lord, and of love for him. And yet the warnings of judgment and hell are fierce and clear. "Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" (Revelation 6:15-17)

In Revelation 16, people suffer terrible afflictions that are a preview of hell coming upon them in the near future. "People gnawed their tongues in anguish and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds" (Revelation 16:10-11). That is the terrible thing about hell. Hell is not a place where everybody really wants to go to heaven and be with God, where they love God and are so sorry and disgusted with their sin. Rather, they are gnawing their tongues in anguish, but they curse God for the punishment. One thing they will never do is say they were wrong and repent.

Revelation 20 tells us what happens to the devil and to all who have wandered far from the Lord and who refuse to go back to him. "The devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and

night forever and ever... if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:10,15).

Now when you hear all of that, can you honestly say that God has not given fair warning? Again and again and again, through Moses, through the Psalms, through the prophets, through Jesus the Son of God himself, and through all of his apostles, God speaks these warnings of hell and of the wrath that awaits the enemies of God.

How should we respond?

How should we respond? "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). That phrase "shall not perish" means: shall not go to hell, shall not be lost forever and suffer forever far from God and banished from him. How do we escape that? Whoever *believes* in him! Believe in the beloved Son that God sent for our salvation! We must trust Jesus.

When we embrace Jesus and his salvation and know that we have been saved from that terrible punishment of hell because he suffered on our behalf, then we praise God for saving us from the agony that we deserve, and we marvel that God the Son, Jesus Christ, endured the horrors of hell for us. That is one more huge reason to treasure and appreciate Jesus. Think of how horrible hell is, and then think about this. Jesus Christ took hell into himself when he hung on the cross. Somehow, in the reality of his eternal being as God and who he is as a man, he was able to take all the punishment and all the hell of all the wicked people of the world who would turn to him. He took all of that hell upon himself and suffered it for us. Think of what he paid so that we might be saved, and not only saved from hell, but then given glory and happiness and heavenly pleasures and blessings forever. Jesus did all that. We need to be warned about hell as a terrifying reality, but we also need to realize that Jesus paid even that price. Somehow he could take all of the eternity of hell into himself when he was on the cross, and did that for us.

Once you have turned to Jesus for salvation and are praising him, let the truth about hell weigh on you as you think about people without Jesus. Grieve for the lost. Pray for those who, unless they are saved, will go to hell. Warn them as God gives you opportunity. Show them, explain to them, the way to be saved. The apostle Paul was a mighty missionary, and he said, "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart" for his fellow Jews who would not believe (Romans 9:2). That is the attitude we ought to have. Jesus wept over the people of Jerusalem when they would not repent. These warnings about hell are meant to cause us to say, "I do not hate those people who are my enemies. Those people are in terrible, terrible danger, and unless they are saved, they will go to hell forever." So do not resent your enemies. Pray for them, agonize over them, ask God to have mercy on them, and urge them to turn to God.

Finally, rejoice that the promises of eternal joy are as sure as the warnings of eternal punishment. C. S. Lewis wrote, "I have met no people who fully disbelieved in Hell and also had a living and life-giving belief in heaven." The fact that God's punishments are eternal and sure has a flip side, and that flip side is that God's promises of eternal joy are absolutely sure and everlasting. If you want to be blessed, you need to take God seriously when he warns of hell, and also thank God when he promises heaven.

What is the gospel?

In response to warnings about hell, we need to embrace the gospel and then communicate that gospel. Here is a reminder of what the gospel is.

My sin: First of all, the gospel is bad news. It is bad news about my sin. I am sinful, and God's holy law condemns my crimes and requires punishment in hell. Without Jesus, I am spiritually and eternally dead, serving Satan, unable to save myself, headed for hell.

Christ's cross and resurrection: Once that bad news is known to be a reality, then we are ready for good news. The good news is the cross and resurrection of Christ. God in love put my sins on his sinless Son, the God-man, Jesus. By suffering and dying on the cross, Jesus took my punishment, canceled all the charges against me, and disarmed Satan. God raised Jesus bodily, showing Jesus to be the divine ruler of all.

New life: Once I know my sin, and once I know of Jesus' cross and resurrection that overcome my sin, God blesses me with new life. The Holy Spirit causes me to be born again as a child of God through faith. When I believe in Jesus, God credits Jesus' perfect goodness to me, and the Spirit lives in me and connects me with Christ and his eternal life. Trusting Jesus, I leave the old behind and join the new humanity in Jesus.

How do I become a Christian?

It is as simple as ABC.

A Admit that you are sinful and totally unable to save yourself.

B Believe the gospel facts, and apply those facts to yourself. Trust Jesus to save you, personally. Make God your greatest treasure and pleasure.

C Commit your life publicly to Jesus as your owner and ruler. Be baptized, if you are not already baptized. Become a daily disciple by listening to God in Scripture, talking to him in prayer, and seeking to live for the Lord in all you do. Join a Bible-believing, Christ-honoring church.

The Bible gives fierce and terrible warnings of hell. We have them in the voice of God and of Jesus Christ himself. We also have the good news, the gospel of salvation, and clear direction on how to become a Christian and to live forever, to experience now a taste of eternal life, and to live forever in the freedom and glory of the new creation. May God give us confidence in his promises, humility before his warnings, and a willingness to warn others while there is still time.

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Slide Contents

Worth worrying about?

- A national survey found that 38% of adults worry “a lot” about not having enough money and health insurance. Only 8% worry that they will go to hell.
- “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 body and soul in hell.” (Matthew 10:28)

Facts to Face

- God’s wrath is real. Though God is love, he will punish unrepentant unbelievers.
- Scripture often warns of hellfire.
- Warnings must be heeded.

Will a loving God really punish sinners?

We know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:30-31)

Old Testament judgments

- Flood that spared only Noah and family
- Fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah
- Plagues that crushed Pharaoh’s Egypt
- Extermination of Canaanites
- Punishments for covenant breakers
- Bears that mauled mockers of Elisha
- Fall of Samaria, Nineveh, Jerusalem, Tyre, Babylon

New Testament judgments

- Deaths of Ananias and Sapphira
- Angel striking King Herod with worms
- Blinding of Bar-Jesus by Paul
- Deaths of sacrilegious participants in the Lord’s Supper at Corinth
- Jesus’ warning that Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed
- Final judgment and eternal hell

Does God give fair warning of hell?

“I am in anguish in this flame... I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.”

“If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.” (Luke 16:24-31)

Warning in Moses

For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below... It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them. (Deuteronomy 32:22,35)

Warnings in Psalms

Your hand will find out all your enemies; your right hand will find out those who hate you. You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear. The Lord will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will consume them. (Psalm 21:8-9)

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. Fire goes before him and burns up his adversaries all around. (Psalm 97:2-3)

Warnings in Nahum

The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty... Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire. (Nahum 1:2-6)

Warnings in Isaiah

But rebels and sinners shall be broken together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed... And the strong shall become tinder, and his work a spark, and both of them shall burn together, with none to quench them... And people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth. (Isaiah 1:28,31; 2:19)

And the Lord will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire... For a burning place has long been

prepared; indeed, for the king it is made ready, its pyre made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it. (Isaiah 30:30,33)

The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless: “Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?” (Isaiah 33:14)

Behold, they are like stubble; the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame. (Isaiah 47:14)

Their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh. (Isaiah 66:24)

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Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. (Daniel 12:2)

Warnings from Jesus

The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt 13:41-42)

Bind his hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt 22:13)

From the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 25:29-30)

He will say, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels...” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matthew 25:41,46)

And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, “where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.” (Mark 9:43-48)

You will begin to say, “We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.” But he will say, “I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!” In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Luke 13:26-28)

If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. (John 15:6)

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[On the last day] the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)

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And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. (Jude 1:6-7)

Warnings in Revelation

Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?” (Revelation 6:15-17)

People gnawed their tongues in anguish and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds. (Revelation 16:10-11)

The devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever... if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:10,15)

How should we respond?

- Trust in Jesus (John 3:16)
- Praise God for saving us from the agony we deserve, and marvel that God the Son endured the horrors of hell for us.
- Grieve for the lost, pray for them, warn them, and show them the way to be saved.
- Rejoice that promises of eternal joy are as sure as warnings of eternal punishment.

What is the gospel?

- **My sin:** I am sinful. God's holy law condemns my crimes and requires punishment in hell. Without Jesus I am spiritually and eternally dead, serving Satan, unable to save myself.
- **Christ's cross and resurrection:** God in love put my sins on His sinless Son, the God-man. By suffering and dying on the cross, Jesus took my punishment, cancelled all charges against me, and disarmed Satan. God raised Jesus bodily, showing Jesus to be divine ruler of all.
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