

THE GAP

“Why Hell?”

Pastor Michael Lee

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Selected Passages (ESV)

MAKING SENSE OF HELL

1. Hell is **not** a place of **literal** cruel and unusual punishment.
2. Hell is one's freely chosen path going on forever—the path of agonizing **separation from God** (Romans 1:24, 26; Luke 16:19-31).
 - God's judgment on evil is to allow us our hearts' deepest desire—absolute independence from God.
 - *“Scripture sees hell as self-chosen...Hell appears as God's gesture of respect for human choice. All receive what they actually chose, either to be with God forever, worshipping him, or without God forever, worshipping themselves.”* – J.I. Packer

3. The doctrine of hell is the only way we can know the true scope of the **costly love** of Jesus (Matthew 27:46).

- When Jesus was cut off from God (Matthew 27:46), he went into the deep pit of hell and most powerful furnace, beyond all imagining. And, he did it voluntarily, in our place, so that we would not have to.
- Jesus embraced hell itself rather than lose us, and no other savior ever depicted has loved us at such a cost.

CHALLENGES

1. **TO CHRISTIANS:** Follow Jesus, not out of self-interested fear of avoiding hell, but out of **love and loyalty** to the One who embraced and experienced hell in your place.
2. **TO NON-CHRISTIANS:** Investigate for yourself the possibility of **eternal life** in heaven with Jesus. Is there life after death?

CENTRAL TRUTH

All receive what they actually choose, either to be with God forever or without God forever.