

QUESTION # 4 WHAT ARE SOME COMMON OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF HELL?

Skeptics say that believing in hell is “morally reprehensible” and that the doctrine of hell makes God “a barbaric moral monster, the worst being ever to exist.” These objections are serious and loudly proclaimed by many in our society.

1. Objection: God is too _____ to send someone to hell.

Truth #1: Eliminating hell actually makes for a very narrow view of the love of God. For sinful human beings to enter into God’s presence would be like a tissue paper touching the surface of the sun!

Truth #2: If God let us into heaven as we are, we’d turn heaven into the mess the world is in! All the injustice in the world is a result of our sin. We love the wrong. We reject God’s authority, which amounts to cosmic treason. We are idolaters who put ourselves front and center—instead of putting God front and center!

2. Objection #2: Hell is too _____ a punishment for sin.

Many will say it like this, “The idea of hell is unjust! A finite sin is followed by infinite punishment. That’s just not fair!”

Truth: Our sin is against an infinite God, and justice requires an infinite punishment. Hell is a very clear statement about the greatness and majesty of God.

- We think hell is severe because we don’t think trampling on the glory of God is that big a deal. We think the big deal in the universe is US! Hell is horribly offensive to humans who think the universe is all about us. It isn’t about us!
- One of the reasons we often react so strongly against the idea that God allows some people to go to hell is that we don’t really believe that we ourselves are worthy of hell. The more we are persuaded of our own righteousness, the more the question of God’s justice troubles us.
- Only when we first see ourselves as absolutely worthy of hell are we ready to understand the greatness of God’s grace! We can’t really appreciate the cross until we can appreciate the reality of hell. Most Christians don’t weep at the cross because they don’t really feel God’s verdict of condemnation on their own souls.

3. In the end, God's _____ is far above our own.

Truth: If God is real, He is infinite in both power and wisdom. A lot of our apologetic questions might disappear if we ever reckoned with how LARGE God is. There comes a point where our mouths must close and knees must bow.

**QUESTION #5: ARE THERE DEGRESS OF PUNISHMENT IN HELL? The answer is _____.
The key to the answer is found in Matthew 11: 20-24.**

- Hell will be less painful for some than others, though it will be t_____ for everyone who is there.
- God judges on the basis of revelation, what has been revealed to us. Revelation brings responsibility. Thus, the more one knows and rejects, the more accountable one is, and the more severe the judgment.

QUESTION #6 WHAT ABOUT THE ETERNAL DESTINY OF THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD THE GOSPEL AND THE NAME OF JESUS?

This objection usually sounds like this: "If people are saved only by believing the gospel, what about those who have never heard the Gospel?" the idea that God would throw people into hell who have never heard about Jesus seems unfair, almost arbitrary. It's lie the moment they die, God appears and says, "You didn't receive Jesus! And when they say, "Jesus who?" God answers, "It's too late now!"

Or...."What about the innocent person in Africa or some other remote region of the world who has never heard about God? How could God hold him accountable for what he didn't even know?"

Truth: We must understand that God does not judge people on the basis of what they DON'T know, but on the basis of what they DO know and REJECT. (Romans 1: 18-3:20)

- 1. All people have _____ about God.**
 - What can be known about God has been made plain to all people. (Rom. 1: 19)
 - Every human being everywhere has been made aware of God in two ways:
 - a. **CREATION:** The glory and beauty of creation testifies that there is a Creator (Psalms 19: 1-6)
 - b. **CONSCIENCE:** The presence of our conscience teaches us there is a Lawgiver (Romans 2). Therefore, we know there is a right and a wrong.
- 2. All people have _____ God. (Psalm 14: 1-3)**
 - Since the Fall in Genesis 3, the human race has been in a posture of rebellion.
 - All of us have rejected the glory of God. (Romans 1: 21-25)
 - Because of our posture of rebellion and idolatry, our foolish hearts have been darkened, which means we distort the truth about God when it is presented to us(Rom 1:18)

- This rejection of God comes in various forms:
 Outright Atheism: we refuse to acknowledge God
 Idolatry: we give other things a God-like priority
 Works Righteousness: we keep a list of rules so we feel like God owes us good things

But they are all expressions of humanity rejecting the authority and the goodness of God.

3. All people are _____ before God.

- Our hearts naturally hate God and reject His rule, a rejection that culminated in the murder of Jesus.
- We underestimate the wickedness of our sin.
- All this means is that we are guilty, not because of things we haven't heard, but because of what we have heard and have rejected. Thus, the "innocent" person in Africa doesn't exist.

4. Only Christ can _____.

- The resounding theme of the entire Bible is that salvation is only found in Jesus Christ.
- The gospel teaches that our acceptance of God is not based on anything about us— not our morality, heritage, reputation to others...we have nothing to boast in
- God gives salvation as a gift to all who will repent and receive it.

5. What is really "not fair" is that any of us has a chance to be _____ at all.

- The more we are persuaded of our own righteousness, the more the question of God's justice troubles us.
- If we find ourselves still really troubled about the doctrine of hell rather than amazed at God's salvation, we should ask God to help us understand more about our own wickedness and the amazing grace that saved us.

6. It is unfair for those of us who have heard the Gospel to do _____.

"How can they be saved without ever hearing about Jesus? We should rather ask, How can we be saved if we do nothing to take the Gospel to them?" -Charles Spurgeon when asked his opinion about those who had never heard of Jesus or the Gospel.

The doctrine of hell should fuel our desire to engage in missions and evangelism.

(Thank you to JD Greear for his insight into helping answer this question!)

