

The Vine This Month

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Cover Photo:
BB Enrolment Service
on 15th April 2018



Brother Martin Writes

Recently a report came out in the press that the Pope claims that there is no Hell. What does this news tell you? That the Pope is not infallible after all or that he was misquoted, as the Vatican claims.

About a week ago when discussing about some Christian colleagues, my boss told me that some Christians are just as bad as others (non-Christians). I replied that 100% of Christians are bad. The non-Christian argument is, "Why should a good person go to Hell and a bad Christian go to Heaven?"

Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. Mark 10:18

Christians realize they are sinners, that is why they turn to Jesus for salvation. If we depend on our "good works" to save us then we do not understand the need for Jesus to come into this world. We are saved "*not by works, so that no one can boast.*" Ephesians 2:9

Why would Jesus come into this world to suffer painfully and die just to prevent people from annihilation? I believe that many people would rather enjoy now and after death to face annihilation rather than to go to Heaven. Many non-Christians believe that death is the end of it all and that is why they look forward to death to end all their earthly troubles. Christians should only view death like Paul, who said in Philippians 1:23: "*I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.*"

So we come to the question, "Is there a Hell?" I wish there wasn't such a place but who can answer the question better than Jesus? Jesus taught that Hell is a place of torment and fire as these Scriptures reveal:

In Matthew 13:42, Jesus says: "And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

In Matthew 25:41, Jesus says: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire . . ."

In Mark 9:46, Jesus speaks about Hell: "Where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched."

Revelation 20:15 says, "And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Would a loving God send anyone to Hell? NO! *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son (Jesus), that whoever believes in him shall not*

perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned. John 3:16-18

Are there a lot of complicated rituals we must do to be saved?

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Acts 16:30-31

Can we be saved by some other means?

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12

Man in his pride feels that he is good enough to deserve a place in Heaven and therefore do not need to call on Jesus to be saved. *For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”* Romans 1:17

It is hard to tell a person that their righteousness is like filthy rags. That is why unless a person is convicted of their sins, it is very difficult for them to believe in Jesus as Saviour.

In the cell group meeting last week, somebody said that Grace is a license to Sin. Let me answer with the words of Pastor Joseph Prince, “If anyone is living in sin and claims that he or she is living under grace, let me be the first to tell you that this person is not living under grace. How can he or she be when God’s Word clearly states that *“sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace”* (Rom. 6:14)? Based on the authority of God’s Word, a person who is under grace will not be dominated by or want to continue living in sin!”

*What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? **By no means!** We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?* Romans 6:1-2

Read Romans 6 and let God speak to you. *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Romans 6:23

Martin Cheah