

I'm scared because so much is at stake. Think about it. If I say there is no hell, and it turns out that there is a hell, I may lead people into the very place I convinced them did not exist! If I say there is a hell, and I'm wrong, I may persuade people to spend their lives frantically warning loved ones about a terrifying place that isn't real! When it comes to hell, we can't afford to be wrong. This is not one of those doctrines where you can toss in your two cents, shrug your shoulders and move on. Too much is at stake. Too many people are at stake. And the Bible has too much to say.

Chan & Sprinkle, Erasing Hell, 2011

So this is the last But What If in our series...

Perhaps you've been to all, or some, or this is your first? But what comes next?

Over the last 6 months we've looked at whether God exists, at why there's suffering, at miracles, the Bible, the resurrection and now at what happens when we die. But what you do with this information is up to you. Hopefully, at the very least it's sparked some interest—and perhaps you'd like to take it further? We'd love to help you work out what's next for you - so if you'd like to speak to someone, find out more, study the Bible, or get involved in the life of the church, we'd love to help you out. Please do contact the leader of this course, or a Christian friend you know, for help with your next steps.

## Further reading from a Christian perspective:

- Mohler Jr, Yarbrough, Packer (etc), Is Hell For Real or Does Everyone Go To Heaven?, 2004
- Ben Cooper, Just Love, 2005
- Tim Keller, The Reason For God, 2008
- Chan & Sprinkle, Erasing Hell, 2011
- D.A. Carson, The Intolerance of Tolerance, 2012
- Marcus Nodder, What Happens When I Die?, 2013
- Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, rzim.org



## What Comes Next?

But  
What  
If?

## 4 Main views on what happens when we die:

1. **Nothing** - you cease to exist
2. **Oneness** - your energy joins the earth with those who died before you
3. **Reincarnation** - either higher or lower in species and status depending on how you lived your current life
4. **Eternity** - judgement followed by heaven or hell. Or a Universalist approach that heaven is for everyone regardless

For the sake of argument, let's imagine that Christianity is not the product of any culture but is actually the transcultural truth of God. If that were the case we would expect that it would contradict and offend every human culture at some point, because human cultures are ever-changing and imperfect. If Christianity were the truth it would have to be offending and correcting your thinking at some place. Maybe this is the place, the Christian doctrine of divine judgement.

Tim Keller, The Reason for God, 2008

## What are heaven and hell really like?

Heaven	Hell
Feast	Fire
Paradise	Darkness
Treasure, Reward	Pain, Regret
House with many rooms	Weeping, Teeth gnashing
Joy, Peace, Love, Justice	Punishment, Destruction, Banishment

## Isn't the idea of hell intolerant?

- What do we expect from God? Affirmation of all our choices?
- Is it intolerant to say that something is wrong?
- If God is as holy as the sun is hot (or even more so) does it make him intolerant to say that we cannot come close to him as we are?
- Especially if that would result in our destruction anyway?

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## How could a loving God allow hell to exist?

- Would it be more loving to let people get away with their sins and crimes?  
How, then, do you define what love is?
- Do you think you deserve judgement? Why/Why not?
- Isn't it actually a loving thing to allow hell and yet provide a means to escape it?

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## Don't all good people go to heaven?

- Where's the line to ensure you're good enough for heaven or bad enough for hell? How do you know?
- The Bible says none of us are good enough. What do you think about that?
- Can Jesus really be the only way to heaven (John 14:6)?

Jesus met the standards heaven required, and paid the punishment that hell demands - so that we don't have to.

## But isn't heaven boring?

- How could being with the person who created the Universe be boring? Won't it be loving, creative, dynamic and exciting?
- The Bible teaches there will be a new heaven and a new earth, plus new bodies, so plenty to be excited about! (Revelation 21)

## Luke 13:22-30 (NIV)

Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.'

"But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'

"Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'

"But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'

"There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

So what is it, according to Jesus, that gets you into heaven?