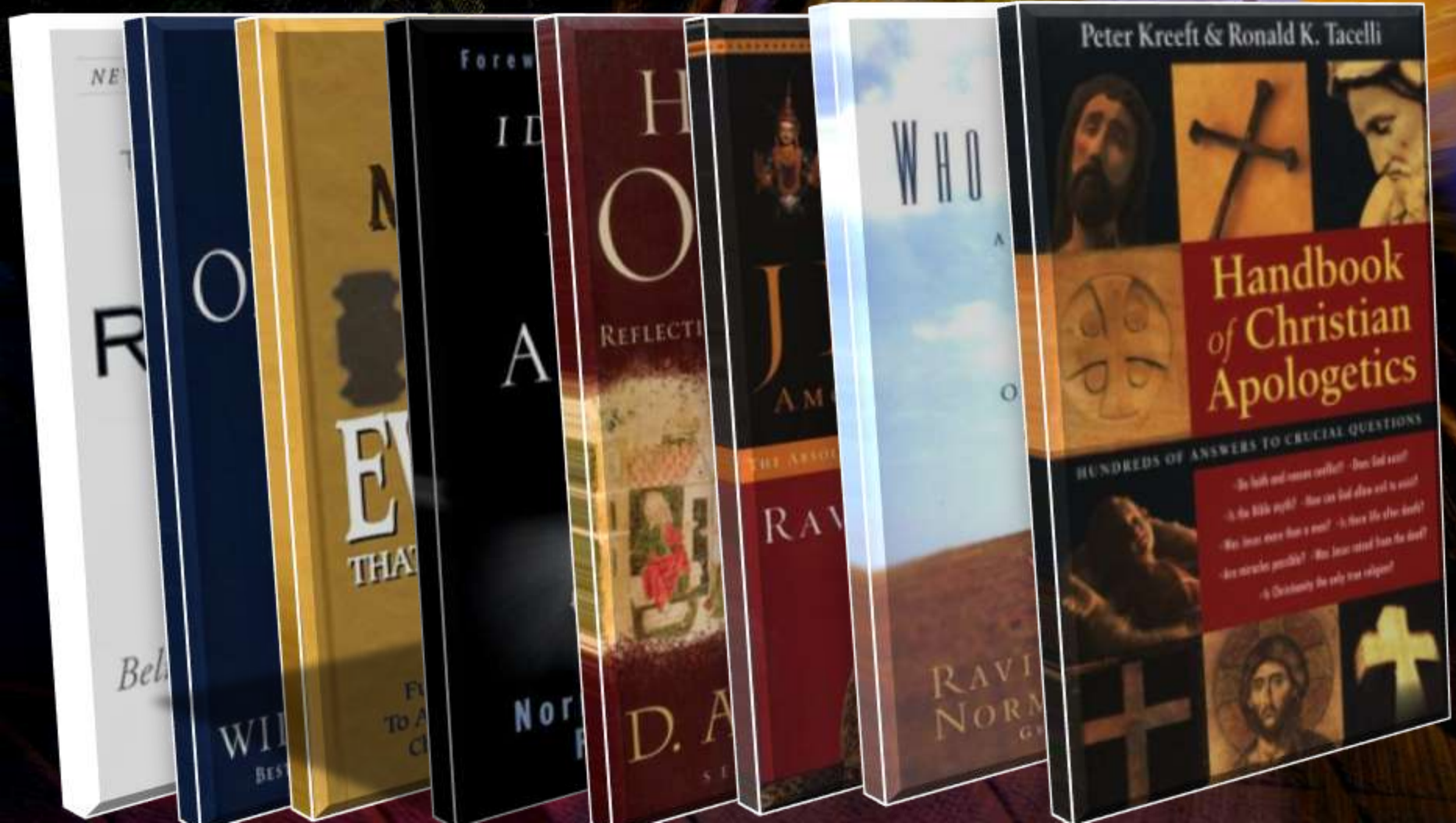


# APOLOGETICS 101:

## LESSON 14: TALKING ABOUT HELL



# Heaven Or Hell?



# Belief in Heaven & Hell

- Gallup Poll (2007 May 10-13)  
Heaven - **81** %    Hell - **69** %
- FOX news Poll (10/28/05)  
Heaven – **87** %    Hell - **74** %





# Hell

**7 out of 10 people  
believe in Hell.**



Hell for Mechanics.




A FREE TRIP WITH EACH HAND-BASKET PURCHASE?  
WHAT DO YOU THINK, ETHEL?



“And remember, this is the first day of the rest of your death.”





IT'S NOT THE  
HEAT... IT'S THE  
HUMIDITY!

WEATHER NEWS  
**SCORCHER**

**HOT AS  
HELL!**

# Spammers

[www.beyondhell.com](http://www.beyondhell.com)





"Cryogenics, eh? Nice try. Think they'll find a cure before your head thaws?"

# The difficult question of Hell

The doctrine of hell is one of the most challenging for unbelievers and many believers to understand and accept. Care must be taken to present it well both biblically and compassionately.



# The Two Roads

Christianity has consistently taught that there is only two choices for eternity: **Heaven or Hell.**

Our destination **eternally** is determined by our choices **temporally.**

This understanding is being challenged today.





**Defining the  
doctrine of Hell**



**What  
hell is  
not...**

**It is not unreal, earthly,  
purgatory, annihilation,  
reincarnation, temporary,  
unpopulated, limbo, divine  
hate, forced on the damned,  
a place for humans,  
necessary, justice over love,  
or double predestination.**



**What  
hell  
is...**

- **Punishment,**
- **Pain and**
- **Privation**

*‘Hell is a place of eternal conscious punishment for the wicked.’*

# Jesus on Hell

*<sup>41</sup> “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels... <sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

**Matthew 25:41, 46 (ESV)**

# Peter Kreeft on Hell

”*What* is hell? The popular image of demons gleefully poking pitchforks into unrepentant posteriors misses the point of the biblical image of fire. Fire *destroys*. *Gehenna*, the word Jesus used for hell, was the valley outside Jerusalem that the Jews used for the perpetual burning of garbage because it had been desecrated by heathen tribes who used it for human sacrifice. In hell you make an eternal ash of yourself.

# Peter Kreeft on Hell

Hell is not eternal life with torture but something far worse: eternal dying. What goes to hell, said C. S. Lewis, is "not a man, but remains".

The images for hell in Scripture are horrible, but they're only symbols. The thing symbolized is not less horrible than the symbols, but *more*. Spiritual fire is worse than material fire; spiritual death is worse than physical death.

# Peter Kreeft on Hell

The pain of loss—the loss of God, who is the source of all joy—is infinitely more horrible than any torture could ever be. All who know God and his joy understand that. Saints do not need to be threatened with fire, only with loss.

Jesus does not tell us much detail about hell. He tells us that it exists, that it's horrible, that any man can go there.

# Peter Kreeft on Hell

Judas seems to be one, for Jesus says of him, "It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." If no one goes to hell, it would seem to be inexcusable for Jesus to give us so many fearful warnings about it. But he does not give us population statistics. To his disciples' question "Are many saved?" he does not answer with estimates but with a forceful appeal to the will: "Strive to enter in."

# The Nature of Hell

## 1. Hell is basically a place of eternal separation from God.

- 2 Thessalonians 1:9 states that those without God *"will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of His power."*
- Instead of knowing God as a loving father, one will know God as judge (Romans 2: 5-8).

# The Nature of Hell

## 2. A place of torment not torture –

- In the New Testament, hell is not described as a place of torture but rather a place of torment (Luke 16:23-28, Revelation 14:11).
- Torture is inflicted against one's will, while torment is self-inflicted by one's own will.
- Torment comes from the mental and physical anguish of knowing we used our freedom for evil and chose wrongly; one's suffering is self-induced.
- The torment of hell comes from the individual who chooses not to love God and now must live with the sorrow of being aware of all that was lost.

# The Nature of Hell

## 3. Loneliness, regret and guilt –

- One of the most severe punishments leveled on a criminal is the sentence of solitary confinement. One of the reasons this is a feared sentence is that the guilty are left to sit alone in their cells and live with the regret and sorrow of their crimes with no one to comfort or minister to them.
- The pain comes from the regret of all that was lost. Pain comes from within as they wrestle alone with their thoughts and emotions. It must be a horrible realization to see lost forever what could have been. Such is the anguish of hell. This is why hell is such a horrible place and a horrible choice.

Is the doctrine of  
Hell necessary?



# Ten Issues at Stake In the Doctrine of Hell

# Ten issues at stake in the doctrine of hell

1. **The trustworthiness of the Scripture and the church** - Does scriptural authority and teaching have any meaning?
2. **The trustworthiness of Jesus** - What did Jesus teach about hell? Does it matter? YES...
3. **The existence of propositional truth; divine revelation** - We cannot take some of the teachings of Scripture and reject the ones we don't like.

# Ten issues at stake in the doctrine of hell

4. **The infinite importance of earthly choices** - If there is no hell then heaven isn't something so great; it isn't good or bad it just is.
5. **The freedom of the will** - If salvation is automatic there is no free will
6. **The objectivity of good and evil** - If there is no morality upon which we live our lives then how we live doesn't matter, but God has said how we should live...

# Ten issues at stake in the doctrine of hell

7. **The reason for a Savior** - if there is no hell then Jesus is not a savior but merely a teacher/spiritual leader.
8. **The consequence of indifference** - Choices no longer matter, religious choices, moral choices, etc.
9. **The need for Christ's sacrifice** - if salvation is universal; this is unnecessary
10. **The basis for believing in God's love** - he revealed it to us, just like the teachings on hell

# Why Hell Is Both Necessary and Just

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

*Hell is necessary because...*

- 1. God's justice requires it.*
- 2. God's love requires it.*
- 3. God's sovereignty requires it.*
- 4. Human depravity requires it.*
- 5. Human dignity requires it.*
- 6. Free will requires it.*

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

*1. Hell is necessary because God's justice requires it.*

- **God is just and holy**, and this must be kept in balance. Justice demands the fair distribution of rewards and punishments.
- **God's holiness demands** that He separate himself entirely from sin and evil. (Habakkuk 1:13; cf. Psalm 73).
- **Justice in eternity** - Evil often goes unpunished in this lifetime. E.g. Joseph Stalin

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

2. *Hell is necessary because God's love requires it.*

- **God does not force anyone to love him.** Love does not force itself on an individual, but honors the option of rejecting the love of another. Those who do not want to be with God in this lifetime, will not be forced to be with Him for all eternity.

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

2. *Hell is necessary because God's love requires it.*

- However, **God is the heart and focus of heaven.** One cannot be in heaven and not know the presence of God. Therefore, those who do not want to be with God in this lifetime will not be forced to be in His presence for all eternity. Instead, God will honor their desire and let them dwell apart from Him in hell. Love honors the right of the other person to reject that love.

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

3. *Hell is necessary because God's sovereignty requires it.*

- **If there is no hell, there would be no final victory over evil.** If there were no ultimate separation of good from evil, good would not ultimately triumph and God would not be in ultimate control.
- **God declares He will have victory over evil** (1 Corinthians 15:24-28 and Revelation 20-22).
- **God will defeat evil by quarantining evil and separating it from good eternally.**

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

4. *Hell is necessary because human depravity requires it.*

- **Human depravity requires hell.** The only just punishment for sin against the eternal God is eternal punishment. God is absolutely perfect and mankind is sinful. **Romans 3:23** states: *For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.*
- Sinful, unrepentant man cannot stand before a holy and perfect God.
- Heaven cannot be a perfect paradise if sin is present. Therefore, man's sin requires separation from God.

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

## 5. *Hell is necessary because human dignity requires it.*

- **Human dignity requires hell.** God created us as free moral creatures, and He will not force people into His presence if they do not want to be there.
- If a person chooses not to be with God in his or her lifetime, He will respect that decision.
- In Matthew 23:37-39, Jesus weeps over Jerusalem and Israel because they rejected their Savior. He did not force His will on His creatures, but instead respected their decision even though it broke His heart.

# Why Hell Is Necessary & Just

6. *Hell is necessary because free will requires it.*

- **Free will requires hell.** Romans 1 states that all have had an opportunity to respond to God's invitation and are therefore without excuse.
- Human beings are created in God's image and are creatures of incredible value. God does not annihilate beings of value even though they rejected His love.
- Instead He respects their decision, honors their dignity, and allows them to dwell eternally apart from Him as they have chosen. God's justice and love plus man's nature requires a hell.

# How Can a Loving God Send People to Hell?

# How Can a Loving God Send People to Hell?

1. *God does not send anyone to hell; people choose to go there.*

2 Peter 3:9 states, *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

God desires all to be saved and has made the way possible by sending His son to die in our place. He invites everyone to accept His free gift of eternal life through Christ.

# How Can a Loving God Send People to Hell?

2. *People go to hell because they knowingly choose to reject His love.*

C. S. Lewis said, "*There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, in the end, 'Thy will be done.'*"

# How Can a Loving God Send People to Hell?

3. *God's love also keeps Him from imposing His will on individuals.*

If a person does not want to be with God in this lifetime, He will not force that person to be with Him for all eternity. In other words, the door of hell is locked from the inside.

# How Can a Loving God Send People to Hell?

## 4. *What about predestination?*

It does not negate our responsibility to repent. God holds us accountable for our decisions, and this responsibility implies the ability to respond. Although we as finite beings may not fully comprehend this doctrine, that does not excuse us from the choice we must all make about Christ. The sad news is that all who go to hell have a choice and **they make a horrible choice.**

# Seven Reasons for Believing in Hell

# Seven Reasons for Believing in Hell

1. **The Bible** - clearly teaches the doctrine of hell
2. **Christ** - clearly teaches the doctrine of hell
3. **The church** - has consistently held to the biblical doctrine of hell
4. **Justice** - Justice demands punishment for evil, God is wholly just.

# Seven Reasons for Believing in Hell

- 5. God's exclusivity** - We must choose to worship God or suffer his rejection in response to our rejecting him.
- 6. Free will** - We have the freedom to choose heaven or hell; to accept or reject the gospel. We have chosen.
- 7. The argument from fear** - It is almost universal that we believe in heaven with joy and eschew hell in fear.



“You’re Going to Hell’,  
he said gleefully.”

...and other ways we  
misuse Hell.



What happens to a soul when  
they reject Jesus Christ as  
Lord God Almighty?

IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU SHOWED UP. WE'VE BEEN HOLDING YOUR RESERVATION FOR NEARLY TEN YEARS NOW.



DAVE COVERLY  
NBC.COM

# Talking About Hell

- 1. Hell is real.**
- 2. Don't avoid the topic.**
- 3. Don't use it as a club.**
- 4. Hell is a warning for me and you.**
- 5. Speak of it to loved ones and others out of genuine concern and compassion.**

# APOLOGETICS 101:

## LESSON 14: TALKING ABOUT HELL

