

Hebrews 10:26-32 ²⁶ "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only the fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the Law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know Him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge His people." ³¹ **It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**" (NIV)

VIEWS ON THE EXTENT OF HELL

1. **MATERIALISM:** There is NO heaven and hell. Once you die you NO longer exist.

Psalms 14:1 "The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good." (NIV)

Proverbs 14:12 "There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death." (NIV)

2. **UNIVERSALISM:** The wicked will be punished for an APPROPRIATE period of time and eventually GOD'S LOVE wins them over so that EVERYONE will be in heaven.

1 Timothy 2:3-4 ³ "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—² for kings and all those in authority; that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who **wants all people to be saved** and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (NIV)

Ephesians 1:9-10 ⁹ "... He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to **bring unity to all things** in heaven and on earth under Christ." (NIV)

Philippians 2:9-11 “⁹ Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus **every knee should bow**, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and **every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.” (NIV)

Philippians 1:27-28 “²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that **they will be destroyed**, but that you will be saved—and that by God.” (NIV)

Philippians 3:18-21 “¹⁸ For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ **Their destiny is destruction**, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.” (NIV)

Isaiah 45:22-25 “²² Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. ²³ By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. ²⁴ They will say of me, ‘In the Lord alone are deliverance and strength.’ All who have raged against Him will come to Him and be **put to shame**. ²⁵ But all the descendants of Israel will find deliverance in the Lord and will make their boast in Him.” (NIV)

Isaiah 45:24 “They will say of me, ‘In the Lord alone are deliverance and strength.’ All who have raged against Him will come to Him and be **put to shame**.” (NIV)

Matthew 25:41 “Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed into the **eternal fire** prepared for the devil and His angels.’” (NIV)

3. ANNIHILATIONISM: The wicked will be punished for an APPROPRIATE period of time and then God will END their existence.

Passage they use:

- “the person who sins will die” (Ezekiel 18:20)
- “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23)

- the lake of fire is “the second death” (Revelation 21:8)
- God will “destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28)
- Sinners “pay the penalty of eternal destruction” (2 Thessalonians 1:9)
- their “end is destruction” (Philippians 3:19)
- “destruction will come upon them” (1 Thessalonians 5:3)
- Those who do not repent will “perish” (Luke 13:3,5)
- God “is able to save and to destroy” (James 4:12)
- The fire of God’s judgment is “a fire which will consume” (Hebrews 10:27)

John Stott’s basic argument:

- Language – words used seem to suggest an ending.
- Imagery – example: how can fire and darkness be at the same time?
- Justice – God’s justice demands sensible punishment.
- Soul – immortality of the soul a Greek concept, not a biblical concept.

4. TRADITIONALISM: Hell is for eternity and the condemned will receive the appropriate punishment for what they deserve.

Passages they use:

- “everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2)
- “eternal fire” (Matthew 18:8; 25:41; Jude 7)
- “eternal punishment” (Matthew 25:46)
- “eternal destruction” (2 Thessalonians 1:9)
- “eternal judgment” (Hebrews 6:2)

Jude 1:13 “They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom **blackest darkness** has been reserved **forever**”

Revelation 14:11 “And the smoke of their torment will rise **for ever and ever**. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.” (NIV)

Revelation 20:10 “And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night **for ever and ever**.” (NIV)

John 3:36 “Whoever believes in the Son has **eternal life**, but whoever rejects the Son **will not see life**, for God’s wrath **remains on them**.” (NIV)

Mark 9:47-48 ⁴⁷ (Jesus said) And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to

have two eyes and be thrown into **hell** (Gehenna), ⁴⁸ where ‘the worms that eat them **do not die**, and the fire is **not quenched**.’” (NIV)

Matthew 25:46 “(Jesus said) Then they [wicked] will go away to **eternal** punishment, but the righteous to **eternal** life.” (NIV)

BOTTOM LINE

Isaiah 57:15-21 “¹⁵ For this is what the high and exalted One says—He who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. ¹⁶ I will not accuse them forever, nor will I always be angry, for then they would faint away because of me—the very people I have created. ¹⁷ I was enraged by their sinful greed; I punished them, and hid my face in anger, yet they kept on in their willful ways. ¹⁸ I have seen their ways, but I will heal them; I will guide them and restore comfort to Israel’s mourners, ¹⁹ creating praise on their lips. “Peace, peace, to those far and near,” says the Lord. And I will heal them. ²⁰ But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud. ²² **“There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked.”**” (NIV)

What should I do?

1. Take HELL seriously!
2. Take GOD seriously!

John 3:16-17 “¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For **God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.**” (NIV)