

SENDING YOURSELF TO HELL

Matthew 12:37 ... “For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

If you are of the belief that only God can send people to hell, I have a warning for you. You can send yourself there simply by rejecting Christ. Both of the two possible destinations for your eternity are a matter of your own choice; you will someday arrive either in heaven or hell as the result of your own decisions. That kind of makes the judgment seat of Christ more of a wave goodbye to those who choose hell, than the unexpected banishment many fear. I can imagine Christ seated on his throne in Jerusalem after he returns, saying to many who will meet him in the final judgment, “Follow the arrows to the destination you chose,” or “I sadly honor your decision to choose hell.”

Hell is, of course, the eternal punishment for those who reject Christ. Using the term “punishment,” is a very gentle thing compared to what it will really be like to reside in hell, suffering for eternity because of one’s rejection of Christ. And, heaven is the reward for those who accept Christ and repent of their sins. When a criminal sits before a courtroom judge to hear the verdict of the charges for which he was prosecuted, he knows in his heart that he intentionally broke the law and will now be punished for it. Our human courts, however, are not perfect. Sometimes evil men go free and innocent men are punished. Many people are hoping that God’s justice system is also imperfect; that they can sneak into heaven despite their sins. But God’s justice system is absolutely perfect. All who arrive at the judgment seat of Christ with unpardoned sins – because they rejected salvation – will go straight to hell. After one’s sentence is pronounced, there is no possibility of parole, time-off for good behavior, forgiveness, appeals, or second chances. God’s judgment is final and irreversible and rendered to all equally and fairly.

In Matthew 7:21, Christ himself says: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven.” So, it appears that many who are judged and sent to hell will be surprised because they went to church or prayed over their meals. Those who fall for the lies of false teachers who offer them an alternative to Christ, may be surprised to find themselves in hell. Unfortunately, many people who go to hell make an intentional decision to reject Christ. This simply means they are sending themselves to hell. Please do not make that decision.

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