

Hell-bound “Christians”?

Our last article addressed the subject of hell and I hope you took the opportunity to connect to the recommended website <http://www.av1611.org/hell.html> to read all the intriguing details! After reading the article, would you want to even take the chance of going there? Hell was never built for man according to Matthew 25:41

.⁴¹Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

You do not get to hell because of the sins you have committed; you get there because you refused to accept the pardon that is available through Jesus Christ. Some churchgoers are not born again!

If you had committed a crime and were sentenced to die, then at the last minute the Governor-General signed your pardon, would you refuse it? I don't think so! Then why refuse the only legal way God has provided to grant you eternal life? Remember, you cannot visit hell and opt to get out – once there, eternally there!

Sadly, not only those who have sworn allegiance to the devil will go to hell, there are also many “good” individuals, who attend church regularly who will be shocked to find themselves in hell because salvation is not by works but through the redemptive shed blood of Jesus Christ. Many churchgoers attend services every time the doors are open and are stalwarts in the Church, but live like the devil on the outside! Although salvation is not by works, a born-again believer cannot expect to intentionally return to the old lifestyle and grow into the person that God called him/her to be! This would indicate that either their conversion was not genuine – it was not from the heart or that they are not allowing their minds to be transformed by the Word.

Hosea 11:7 (CEV) says “*My people are determined to reject me for a god they think is stronger, but he can't help*”. Many people today are looking to political leadership for help and have exalted their leaders to the position that can only be held by the one true God. Likewise, within the church there are laypersons who exalt their leaders to that position and the leaders have exalted doctrine, finances, congregational numbers, programs and all sorts of activities. Everyone has neglected the things that matter most to God and the result of all the distractions has been the weakening of the Church; leaving her wallowing in a morass of spiritual indifference and lack of discernment. Wolves have been entering freely and devouring the flock. Matthew 24:11-12 (The Message) “*In the confusion, lying preachers will come forward and deceive a lot of people. For many others, the overwhelming spread of evil will do them in—nothing left of their love but a mound of ashes.*”

Today we are seeing a lukewarm church that Jesus is sickened by! Revelation 3:15-17 (Amplified) “*I know your [record of] works and what you are doing; you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot!* ¹⁶*So, because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth!* ¹⁷*For you say, I am rich; I have prospered and grown wealthy,*

and I am in need of nothing; and you do not realize and understand that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.”

There are many “Christians” who have not demonstrated their love for God and man, neither have they been committed enough to take a stand for God and His values. Sadly, some of these individuals have been people in the public eye and have the ability to impact millions of young people. Some are Church leaders who head congregations in the thousands. These leaders have bowed the knee to Baal and by their actions encourage others to do the same. They are leading others down the slippery slope to hell, saying “live and let live” to homosexuals and “let them die for our sakes” to the unborn. Many tell leaders of other pagan religions that we can all get together because we all worship the same god!

Their following has increased because it is the comfortable and “politically correct” thing to do! Due to mass media exposure, the minority now have the upper hand in governments and judicial systems in the western world. To the nations God says *“Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised and shown contempt and provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, they have become utterly estranged (alienated).”* Isaiah 1:4 (Amplified). Alienation from God can only bring destruction!

Historians trace the history of the Western Church back to the Roman Emperor Constantine in 313 AD followed by the Great Schism of 1054 AD that divided the Eastern Orthodox Church from what would later become the Roman Catholic Church- the point being that the conception of the western church was in legalism, turmoil and division. These same forces that birthed the western church are still at work today. The New Testament Church described in the Bible was not governed by ritual, but was powerful because it was governed by the Holy Spirit! We must learn to differentiate between formality and order. 1 Corinthians 14:40 Amplified says: *“But all things should be done with regard to decency and propriety and in an orderly fashion”* The order Paul talks about here is dealing with not having everyone talk in tongues at once and out of turn, coupled with others shouting questions willy-nilly during the gatherings. This fixation with “order” has prevented the Holy Spirit from moving in services to heal and deliver individuals in sometimes desperate situations who are seeking help from the Church. Leaders are more concerned with ending the service at a particular time in order to engage in social activities and other worldly pursuits, than being led by the Spirit of God, no matter how long it takes.

The Church has forced many to embrace the “pollution of the world”. 2 Peter 2:20 (Amplified) says: *For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through [the full, personal] knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them and are overcome, their last condition is worse [for them] than the first.*

The Message version puts it graphically: *“If they've escaped from the slum of sin by experiencing our Master and Savior, Jesus Christ, and then slid back into that same old life again, they're worse than if they had never left. Better not to have started out on the straight road to God than to start out and then turn back, repudiating the experience and the holy command. They prove the point of the proverbs, "A dog goes back to its own vomit" and "A scrubbed-up pig heads for the mud.”*

The Church has been grasping at the shadow and losing the substance. There is little or no excitement about spiritual things, which are relegated to the backseat, while temporal pursuits are elevated.

The Church has created its own gods, becoming an organization of backsliders. Most church-going individuals may be indignant at this but, face reality. Jesus said in Revelation 2:4-5 (Amplified) *“But I have this [one charge to make] against you: that you have left (abandoned) the love that you had at first [you have deserted Me, your first love].*

⁵Remember then from what heights you have fallen. Repent (change the inner man to meet God's will) and do the works you did previously [when first you knew the Lord], or else I will visit you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you change your mind and repent.”

This is the time of repentance, prayer and intercession! Time is quickly passing by and there are souls to be saved. These souls need a strong family of believers to nurture them. Let us hear God as He says in 2 Chronicles 7:14(KJV) *“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land”.*

Church, rise up, repent, and seek the face of God in order that you and the nations may be healed!