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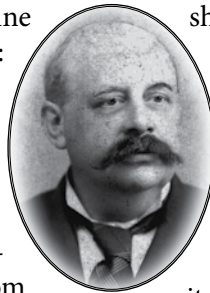
Volume XVII
Issue 408

The Doctrine of Eternal Hell

by — Arthur P. Adams (1847-1925)

Some are very much exercised over the doctrine of endless torment. One person writes thus:

Why do you oppose endless punishment? If that goes, endless salvation of necessity goes with it. Why rob Christians of their hope for the sake of comforting and hardening sinners in their sins? The age is drifting away from all restraint and you will help it along. If endless punishment is not true, then 99-100ths of all God's people have been misled by Christ's own words.



The writer evidently has considered the subject very superficially. My answer to these sentiments I have published in the pamphlet, *Endless Torments not Scriptural*. I insert the above not for the sake of arguing against it, but that our readers may see how utterly in the dark many sincere Christians are.

It is indeed sad that this hideous and false dogma of an endless hell has so blinded eyes and hardened hearts that many have come to think that if there is no endless hell there can be no endless heaven, and in a spirit of utter selfishness, as unlike Christ as it possibly could be, they stoutly contend for the former doctrine for fear of weakening the evidences of the latter. They are sure to go to heaven, they think, and rather than have their pious complacency disturbed they are perfectly willing that, side by side with their heaven of eternal joy, there should be a hell of everlasting woe. May the time speedily come when this awful slander against God shall be obliterated from the hearts of all His "offspring" (Acts 17:29).

For my own part, I confess that I feel that even heaven purchased at such an appalling cost as the existence of an endless hell would be too dear; and I hesitate not to declare that it seems to me it would be better that there

should be no future life at all, than that any soul should suffer eternally.

I thank God that the Bible teaches no such doctrine. So far as "hardening sinners in their sins" and releasing them from "restraint" is concerned, I would ask what effect does the preaching of the doctrine of endless torment have? Does it soften the heart and restrain from sin? Does not everyone know that the preaching of this dogma hardens the heart, and makes the sinner reckless and defiant? Infidelity and godlessness would not be so rampant in these days as they are if it had not been for the preaching of this false doctrine. It is not too much to say that there would be no Robert Ingersoll today going about the country undermining the people's faith in the Bible, if this doctrine had never been promulgated. I for one, feeling sure as I do that the dogma is false, contrary to Scripture, and an outrage upon reason and common sense, am resolved to do all I can to disabuse the minds of the people of this awful misrepresentation of God and His Word.

In regard to the statement that 99-100ths of God's people have been misled by Christ's own words, I would say that there is nothing new in that, for God's nominal people as a whole, in every age, have invariably erred from the truth. Those who have had the most advanced light, and the purest truth, have always been in the minority. So it was in Elijah's day (I Kings 19:14, 18), so it was in Jeremiah's (1 & 2), so it was in the days of the first

(see *HELL*, page 3663)

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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HELL (continued from front page)

advent, “He came to His own and His own received Him not” (John 1:11). So it was in the days of Martin Luther, and so also today.

If you follow the majority in any age you will be led into many and serious errors; whereas if you would find the truth you must seek it, not among the most popular and numerous branches of the Christian Church, but among the little companies, the faithful few who have “*gone forth unto Him without the camp bearing his reproach*” (Hebrews 13:13, compare Exodus 33:7). These have been called “Come-Outers.” They have been well called this, for though the name has been used as a term of reproach, yet those who have thus applied it have thereby unwittingly borne testimony to the scriptural character of these, for even so has the Lord commanded, “*Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing ...*” (II Corinthians 6:17).

The fact that the majority have accepted any particular doctrine would, according to ecclesiastical history, be a stronger argument against that particular doctrine than for it. However, this tremendous doctrine of everlasting woe is not one to be decided by a majority. Our appeal must be to the teachings of the Bible, and we must be content to abide by that, whatever others, either few or many, may think. I am perfectly satisfied with its teachings. I thank God that the Scripture is not burdened with any such monstrous doctrine, but that from beginning to end it is in perfect accord with that golden declaration of holy writ that “*God is love*” (I John 4:16).

Another writes a lengthy and very decided letter against the doctrine of salvation after death. I will give a few extracts from his communication to show how carelessly and thoughtlessly men read the Bible, and what flimsy, shallow talk is advanced and accepted by many as sound reasoning. The correspondent seems to be quite satis-

fied that he has presented a very formidable argument against the “foolish doctrine” (as he calls it) of posthumous salvation. He says,

The texts I have given you will be very troublesome for you to deal with; and I deny that you can make them agree with your theory without quibble.

Now, although the brother seems to think that I shall be almost overwhelmed by the might of his logic, yet the fact is (and it is almost laughable) that many of the texts he quotes as against the truth he opposes, are the very ones that I have used again and again in my writings and preaching to prove that doctrine, and the brother misses the point because he has not studied close enough. Now for a few specimens of his reasoning.

To prove that death fixes our eternal destiny, he quotes Hebrews 10:27,

But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

This passage says nothing about death whatever – not a word. The question is this: Is our eternal destiny irrevocably fixed at the moment of death? A passage that makes no reference to death at all, like the last one mentioned, surely can have no bearing on this question, and to present such an utterly irrelevant passage shows the carelessness and superficiality of the writer.

The next passage urged to prove the same point is Matthew 12:31-32,

Wherefore I say unto you, “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.”

Of this we say the same as of the one just considered: it says nothing about death at all; whatever it proves, or however it is understood, it does not touch the question under consideration, and hence proves nothing one way or the other concerning it. He quotes texts that do not make any reference at all to the point under consideration. After quoting this passage he adds, “If death does not fix the eternal destiny or the blasphemer, then
(see HELL, page 3666)

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The Father and the Son

by — John H. Essex (1907-1991)

The doctrine of the Trinity, as generally understood, is a most pernicious one, and is yet another attempt by the Adversary to undermine the Deity of God. **The words Father and Son lose their meaning if the Father does not precede the Son, and if the Father is not greater than the Son.** Jesus Himself said, *“The Father is greater than I”* (John 14:28), and spoke of the Father as His God (John 20:17).

It is surprising how widespread this undermining doctrine has become, and how many it has deceived. We get into real difficulties whenever we use terms that are not in the Scriptures to describe scriptural matters.

“Trinity” is a term invented by theologians; it has its origin in their creeds and finds expression in their hymns. We should be very wary of using terms which are unscriptural, and even more wary of building doctrines on them. It is true that there is a Father and there is a Son and there is a holy Spirit; but they are not three Beings in one, still less are they one in three.

The Father is God in absolute right [sense]; He was, is, and always will be the Supreme. As such, He is entitled to the worship and adoration and affection of all.

The Son is “God” in a relative sense only. He is *“the only begotten God”* (John 1:18). As the Original of God’s creation (Revelation 3:14), the Firstborn of every creature (Colossians 1:15), He appeared before creation *“in the form of God”* (Philippians 2:6).

Invariably the Son is pointing to the Father, and directing that glory be given to Him. It is the Father Who (subsequent to obedience of His Son on the cross) ordains that acclamation be given to Christ, when He highly exalts Him and gives Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. It is clearly stated that this acclamation is *“for the glory of God, the Father.”*

The beautiful relationship which exists between the Father and the Son was most aptly expressed by Jesus when He said, *“I and the Father are one”* (John 10:30), but this can by no means be used to support the theory of the Trinity, for later Jesus prayed that His disciples may also *“be one, according as We are”* (John 17:11), and later in the same chapter, *“that they may all be one, according as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us”* (:21).

Jesus always recognized the Deity of His Father, and will always do so, for at the consummation He gives up the kingdom to His God and Father, and Himself is subject to the One Who has subjected all to Him, that God may be All in all (I Corinthians 15:24-28).

Let this disposition, which is in Christ Jesus, be in us also, and let us give all honor and glory to God, realizing and acknowledging that we can do nothing of ourselves. Thus may we subject ourselves to Him, that He may be All in us now. ■



**Charles
“Charlie”
W. Cronk**

September 23, 1952 - June 17, 2013

Our dear friend and lover of truth Charlie Cronk of North Fairfield OH has died. I met him on only two occasions. Thankfully one of them was as a very special guest in our home. There was an instant bond. He will surely be missed. We will see him in the morning!

Quick to Find Faults

by — J.R. Miller (1840-1912)

*Why do you look at the **speck** of sawdust in your brother's eye - and pay no attention to the **plank** in your own eye? (Matthew 7:3).*

It is strange how *oblivious* we can be of our own faults and blemishes, and how clearly we can see those of other people! One old writer says,

Men are rather more apt to use a magnifying glass to behold the faults of others – than a mirror to behold their own.



A *bad-tempered* person is most apt to be censorious toward a neighbor who displays his irritability.

One with a *sharp uncontrolled tongue* has the least patience with another whose speech is in any means deemed unsuitable.

A *selfish* man discovers even the slightest *specks* of selfishness in others.

A man can see a *little speck* of dust in his neighbor's eye – while utterly unaware of the *great plank* in his own eye! He observes the *most minute* fault in his brother – while unconscious of his own *far greater* fault!

Rude people are the very first to be hurt and offended by least impoliteness in a neighbor.

We would think that a plank in a man's eye would so blind him that he could not see the speck in another's eye. As our Lord represents it, however, the man with the *plank* is the very one who sees the *speck* and thinks himself competent to remove it!

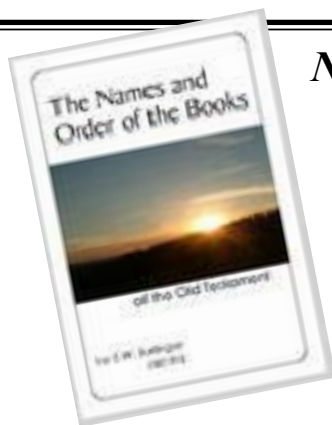
So it always is, **if we are quick to perceive blemishes and faults in others** – the probability is that we have far greater blemishes and faults in ourselves!

So it is in morals. No man is so sharp at seeing a fault in another as he who has the *same* or a similar fault of his own!

This truth ought to make us exceedingly careful in our judgments, and exceedingly modest in our expressions of censure – for *we really are telling the world our own faults!*

A *vain* man is the first to detect the slightest indications of vanity in another.

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by — E.W. Bullinger

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I want you to know that [World Affairs and National Politics](#) was a game changer for me. I'm in the process of developing a whole new perspective. – **Ohio**

I do so appreciate what you pass along. Truth is always sweet to the taste, and the spirit within is blessed and fed. ...

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I have just started [The Church in Ruins](#) and I am already

enjoying it. I wish more saints could see and accept the truth. – **Montana**

Thank you for spreading such a true and meaningful word. – **Washington**

The devotion to the eternal torment doctrine creates a nervous tension and hatred in those involved. Right now I have someone name-calling me because of it. – **Ohio**

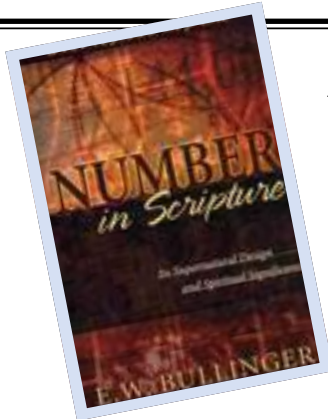
I love reading your *Bible Student's Notebook*. I enjoyed the book [Being OK with Not Being OK](#) and will be getting more.

Your BSN that talked about the [I-Cycle](#) was very good. Thank you for sharing that revelation. – **Nebraska**

HELL (continued from page 3663)

words fail to convey ideas" – but there are no words at all in this passage to convey any such idea; death is not referred to in the passage. Again I say, the question is: Does death fix our eternal destiny? How can a passage that does not say anything about death at all have any bearing on this question? Oh, how blind and befogged men must be thus to talk round and round a point and never come anywhere near it!

The correspondent goes on to refer to many other passages, every one of them as wide of the mark as those we have noticed. ■



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A Look at Alcohol in the Scriptures

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

[God brings forth] *wine which makes man's heart glad* (Psalm 104:15).

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