

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville church of Christ
36364 Chestnut Ridge Road
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

Website: nrcoc.net

Times for Meeting

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)
10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

Elders

Bruce Dean
Mark Ullman

Evangelist

Steven Wallace

THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

May 29, 2022

“Are There Levels of Punishment in Hell?”

Heath Rogers

“For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ‘A dog returns to his own vomit,’ and, ‘a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire’” (2 Peter 2:20-22).

Our text naturally gives rise to a question regarding the eternal fate of those who are lost. Peter says that if one who has been saved (one who has escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ) turns back to the world, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. In the beginning they were lost. How can one be worse than lost? The fiery torments of Hell will be bad enough! Is there a part of Hell that burns a little hotter than the rest of Hell? Are there compartments in Hell, and somehow the life that we have lived

upon this earth determines, not only if we are saved or lost, but also how “lost” we will be?

The Scriptures do not teach such. Heaven is Heaven, and Hell is Hell, and I can not find one passage that teaches that there are different levels to be experienced by man as either a reward or a punishment. So, how are we to understand Peter’s statement – “the latter end is worse for them than the beginning”?

I believe the next verse sheds light on the matter and helps us have the proper understanding. Peter goes on to say, “For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.” Their torment is made worse because of what they know. It will be one thing for a sinner who never rendered any thought or obedience to the gospel to spend eternity in Hell. However, think of the torment that will be experienced by one who spends eternity in Hell knowing that he did not have to go there. There was a time in his life when he was saved. He was cleansed from his sin, but he willingly turned away from the truth and now must suffer eternally for that choice. If only he had died while he was faithful! If only someone had hung a millstone around his neck and drowned him in the sea (Matt. 18:6), then he would have escaped this torment! However, he had the truth and, for some reason, walked away from it, preferring to wallow in the mire of sin rather than sanctifying himself and striving to enter into his rest. Hell will be bad enough, but for such a person as this, it will have been better for him if he had never learned the truth than for him to spend eternity regretting his unfaithfulness.

Contrary to popular opinion, the Bible contains numerous warnings against the possibility of apostasy (1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:4; Heb. 3:12-13; James 5:19-20).

The Bible makes it clear that a saved individual can lose his salvation. Such a person will suffer an eternal fate which will be worse than one who never learned or obeyed the truth. This is

not because he is cast into a hotter section of Hell, but because he must exist in eternal torment with the fact that he, for whatever reason, forfeited his gift of eternal life. Let us resolve to be faithful until death, and then we will receive the crown of life (Rev. 2:10).

Demons

Steven J. Wallace

- Demons are real. They were *really* cast out by Jesus and His apostles (Matt. 12:22-24; Lk. 10:17-20).
- Demons are intelligent. They spoke, believed, wore names, recognized Christ, and trembled (Lk. 4:31-37; 8:26-30).
- Demons fear divine punishment (Matt. 8:29).
- Demons work in idolatry (Psa. 106:36, 37; 1 Cor. 10:19, 20). The table of demons is partaken of within the realm of false worship.
- Demons promote false doctrine (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
- Demons were once able to possess people and work all kinds of bodily harm (Acts 19:11-16). During these times there was no debate as to the reality of demon possession.
- Demon possession is distinguished from physical diseases (Matt. 4:24; Acts 5:15, 16).
- Demon possession ended when the fountain for sin and uncleanness was opened (see Zech. 13:1-3). This happened during the time Jesus came to earth, and subsequently, God caused the *prophets* and the *unclean spirits* to depart from the land. Demon possession ended when prophecy and spiritual gifts ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10).

Perhaps demon possession somewhat mocked the *incarnate* Christ. But one thing we know for sure is that we can resist the devil, the *ruler of demons*, and gain victory through submission to God (Lk. 11:15; Jas. 4:7, 8).