

# THE INSTRUCTOR



*"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."* (2 Timothy 3:16)

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## WE SHOULD PURPOSE...

Solomon declared that "To every thing there is a season,, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Eccl. 3:1). He also said, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work" (Eccl. 3:17). Both righteous and wicked have certain purposes in mind to accomplish certain things and both shall be judged according to what they purpose and do. In view of this, we should make sure that we purpose to accomplish the proper things. We must go to the *Word of God* to learn what we should purpose to do.

### WE SHOULD PURPOSE NOT TO TRANSGRESS WITH OUR MOUTHS

It is very important that we purpose to control our speech. We learn that "Death and life are in the power of the tongue..." (Prov. 18:21). Also cf. Prov. 21:23.

Jesus warned "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Mt. 12:36-37). In Eph. 4:29 Paul said, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

Yes, we should purpose as the Psalmist who said: "...I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress."

### WE SHOULD PURPOSE NOT TO DEFILE OURSELVES

Christians are to be vessels "unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21). To be such we *must not defile ourselves*.

In 1 Tim. 5:22 Paul exhorted Timothy to "...keep thyself pure." In Mt. 15:18-20 Jesus tells us that those things that come forth from the heart defile a man. In 2 Cor. 7:1 Paul said, "...let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Yes, we, like Daniel of long ago, *should purpose in our hearts not to defile ourselves!* (See Dan. 1:8).

### WE SHOULD PURPOSE TO CLEAVE UNTO THE LORD

To serve God faithfully we must "...Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9). Yes, we, like Barnabas, *should with purpose of heart "cleave unto the Lord"* (See Acts 11:23).

### WE SHOULD PURPOSE TO GIVE

For us to please God, we should give as we purpose in our hearts. *Yes, we should give cheerfully as we purpose in our hearts* (2 Cor. 9:7).

*Do you purpose properly?* (CRS)

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## Editorial...

### HELL! IS THERE A PLACE OF ETERNAL TORMENT FOR THE WICKED? (NO. 9)

In our prior studies on the subject of *Hell*, it was pointed out that so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses", Seventh Day Adventists, Edward Fudge and other "Materialists" teach that *the wicked will not be tormented eternally*. They contend that the wicked will cease to exist or will be annihilated.

"Jehovah Witnesses" blaspheme the teaching that the wicked will be tormented eternally in a place called hell by calling it a "*God-dishonoring doctrine*" (Let God Be True, page 88). They assert, but they do not *prove* that such is the case.

In our first two studies it was *proven by the Scriptures* that there is a place called *Hell* where the wicked will be tormented. It was proven by referring to passages in which the word *hell* is used and passages which do not use the word *hell* but use words such as *fire, flaming fire, furnace of fire, lake of fire and brimstone, everlasting or eternal fire and unquenchable fire* to describe such a place.

In our third study we gave passages that use such words as *punishment, destruction, torment and suffering* to describe the *suffering and torment* that the inhabitants of *hell* will experience. In our fourth study we gave passages that use words (or expressions) like *mist or gloom of darkness, outer darkness, blackness of darkness, wailing (weeping) and gnashing of teeth and perdition* to describe what awaits or is in store for the wicked.

In our last two articles we gave six additional arguments that prove there is a place of torment called *hell*.

In our last article we began a study of arguments are made in an effort to disprove the plain teaching of God's Word on the subject under consideration. In that study we considered two arguments that have been set forth by advocates of the "no eternal torment in hell" theory.

Before we resume our study of arguments made by advocates of the "no eternal torment (pain, suffering, etc.) for the wicked" theory, there are a few facts that should be pointed out.

1. There is a wide variation in their beliefs. Some believe there is no place of suffering, pain or punishment for the wicked even for a time. They believe that a person ceases to exist at death. Others believe there is such a place and the wicked will suffer anguish and pain for a time and then they will cease to exist.

2. The arguments they make in defense of their theory often contradicts arguments made by others who basically hold the same doctrine.

3. Sometimes the arguments made by a person or a group will contradict other arguments made by that person or that group. For example, the "Jehovah's Witnesses" claim that when a person dies he ceases to exist. Yet they claim there will be a

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resurrection of the wicked as well as the righteous. They are then faced with the problem of a resurrection of people who do not exist.

Men such as Edward Fudge, Curtis Dickinson and groups like Seventh-day Adventists face a similar problem. They contend that *death* means extinction, annihilation, ceasing to be or going out of existence. However, they think there will be a resurrection of those who die, but they believe that "**everlasting punishment**" is annihilation, a going out of existence, a ceasing to be. This, they contend, is the second death. Their problem is really complicated by the fact that they do not believe that there is anything about a man (person, soul, etc.) that is eternal in nature until after the judgment when God gives "**immortality**" to the righteous.

4. We do not hold any person or group responsible for any particular argument unless that person or group advocates such.

Let us resume our study of some *arguments* that are made in an effort to prove that *there is not a place of eternal torment for the wicked!*

#### ARGUMENTS MADE BY THOSE WHO REJECT HELL AS REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES AND REPLIES TO THEM.

III. ARGUMENT: "Matthew 25:46 teaches that the wicked 'shall go away into everlasting (eternal) punishment.' It does not say 'everlasting punishing.' The penalty is not punishing but punishment, and the punishment is death. Therefore 'eternal' has to do with death, and not the means of bringing about that death." (See What The Bible Says About Immortality And Future Punishment, page 28 by Curtis Dickinson; Also see The Fire that Consumes, pages 43-50, by Edward William Fudge. Also see Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine, pages 506, 507, 539, 540. )

#### REPLY:

(1) Although the text says "eternal punishment" statements (such as the above ones) are made in an effort to eliminate *any* pain, anguish, torment, suffering etc. from the word *punishment*. Basically, the reasoning employed to do this is to eliminate (if possible) *punishing* from being eternal. So they simply state that the penalty is not *punishing* but is *punishment*. Then they reason that the *punishment* is death and by death they mean annihilation or ceasing to exist. They go through this process of "reasoning" instead of simply *believing* what the text says.

(2) In order for the "no eternal torment" advocates to eliminate pain, suffering, anguish, torment, etc. for the wicked it is imperative that they get them annihilated or completely out of existence by some sort of reasoning process. Obviously they think the above argument is the way to do it. However, they have to deal with the wicked being in "everlasting (eternal) fire" as well. The King will say: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Mt. 25:41) NOTE: This is a place of *eternal punishment!* It is "**the lake of fire and brimstone**" where *the beast and false prophet* are into which the devil will be cast and "**shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**" (Rev. 20:10). Also see Rev. 19:20.

(3) Is it unreasonable to believe that the *eternal punishment* for the wicked will involve their being *tormented day and night for ever and ever* since they will be in the "**everlasting (eternal) fire**" where *the devil will be tormented day and night for ever and ever?*

(4) Hebrews 10:28-31 shows that the wicked described in that passage will be

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worthy of "much sorer (severer - NASV—ed.) punishment" than being put to death under the Law of Moses. NOTE: Here is a punishment for the wicked that is more severe than death!

If death means nonexistence or ceasing to be as those mentioned above claim, how could the "everlasting punishment" be more severe on the wicked than when he died the first time? Who has the right to boldly *assume* and *assert* that the "everlasting punishment" of Mt. 25:46 is death - meaning nonexistence, ceasing to be, becoming as though they had not been? In my judgment, a person who would do so is very arrogant or uninformed or both!

FURTHER NOTE: Being cast into "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone...is the second death." (Rev. 21:8). In this lake there will be "torment" and *eternal separation from God*. (Cf. Rev. 20:10;

2 Thess. 1:7-10). All the information about the punishment of the wicked in eternity is not found in one passage. We must accept what all the passages say.

(5) The above argument implies that since Mt. 25:46 says "everlasting punishment" instead of "eternal punishing" that there will be no *eternal* suffering, anguish, torment or pain because it means the effect of the punishment. It is implied that if it said "eternal punishing" that it would be referring to "the *act* of retribution" or the penalty itself and thus it could be referring to *eternal* suffering, pain or torment. If this is not the case, I see no point in the argument at all.

The very first definition under "punishment" (in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary) is "Act of punishing". If this is so, then there is no difference in *eternal punishment* and *eternal punishing*. So the above argument is without substantial merit. Let us be content with God's truth. (CRS) (To be continued)

## SENTENCE SERMONS

The light that shines farthest shines brighter nearest home.

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True prayer is a way of life. It is not just a case of emergency.

\* \* \* \* \*

The truth as revealed in the gospel is useless unless it is believed and obeyed.

\* \* \* \* \*

He who will tell you the truth with proper motives is truly your friend. You should love him!

\* \* \* \* \*

The man who has not proper purpose in life will surely fail.

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