

**Dead People Go To A Better Place**  
10 Dumb Things Smart Christians Believe, Part 10  
August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Wishful Thinking & Blaming the Right Person**

The wicked **DON'T** go to a better place; there's a **REAL** hell, and it's Satan worst nightmare  
**Matthew 18:9** (NIV) "[Jesus said] And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell."

**2 Thessalonians 1:8-9** (NLT) "He [Christ] will come in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from His glorious power."

Whenever God and I disagree over how to run things, God is always **RIGHT**

In our society, the exclusivity of Christ, the reality of hell, and the need for salvation that includes following Christ have all become passé, if not downright **OFFENSIVE**

Eternal destiny isn't determined by where we wish people would go, or where everyone says they went; it's determined by where God put us (or more precisely, where we put **OURSELVES**)

If this sounds too narrow-minded or harsh – blame **JESUS**; He's the one who said the path was narrow and **FEW** would enter in

**Matthew 7:13-14** (GN) "Go in through the narrow gate, because the gate to hell is wide and the road that leads to it is easy, and there are many who travel it. But the gate to life is narrow and the way that leads to it is hard, and there are few people who find it."

**John 14:6** (NIV) "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

**Acts 4:12** (NIV) "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

Jesus certainly didn't **DOWNPLAY** the fear of hell

**Matthew 10:28** (GN) "[Jesus said] Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather be afraid of God, who can destroy both body and soul in hell."

**Matthew 23:15** (NLT) "[Jesus said] What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!"

There is another widely held myth behind this one that is seldom publicly acknowledged; it's the conviction that all roads eventually lead to the **SAME PLACE** despite what Jesus said

When it comes to the eternal destiny of real people we know & love, many choose to create their own **THEOLOGY**, to believe what **WE WANT** to believe

The problem for many Christians isn't what is **TAUGHT** in churches, the problem is how we **LISTEN**

When presented with a truth we don't like, we often **TUNE IT OUT**, and it doesn't register with us

**Why Is This So Important**

The cross and salvation are **CENTRAL** to the gospel (how Jesus can repair our broken relationship with God)

Once we lose any real concept of hell, the natural consequence is more than just putting us at odds with Scripture; it eventually **DEVALUES** the cross, **REDEFINES** salvation, and turns obedience into an extra-credit spiritual **ADD-ON**

This error leads to harmful spiritual results – not only for those who buy into it, but also for those who **NEVER HEAR** about Jesus because of it

- The worse side effect of this myth is it kills any sense of **URGENCY** to tell others about Jesus

For many the biggest roadblock to sharing our faith is the fear of **EMBARRASSMENT**

**Matthew 28:18-20** (NIV) “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go & make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

- This myth also makes the very idea of sharing Christ seem like an **ARROGANT** imposition
- Once we decide that following Christ is merely the **BEST** path, but not the **ONLY** path, we soon decide that our neighbors and world have far more pressing needs than coming to know Jesus

**Proverbs 29:7** (NIV) “The righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern.”

**Micah 6:8** (NIV) “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

**Mark 8:36** (NIV) “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”

- This myth also undercuts our **OBEDIENCE** in following Jesus

This doesn’t mean we can “earn” our way to heaven; if we could, there would have been **NO REASON** for Christ to die on the cross

**Galatians 2:21** (NLT) “For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.”

But the presumption we can **LIVE LIKE HELL** and still be confident of ending up in heaven doesn’t line up with Scripture

It’s foolish to think we can be **RIGHT** with God while **IGNORING** most everything He tells us to do

We all struggle with sin, but setting up **CAMP** in the land of disobedience and then staying there and

**DEFENDING** it as being no big deal, is a different matter

**1 John 2:4** (NLT) “If someone claims, ‘I know God,’ but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth.”

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11** (NLT) “Don’t you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God. Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

**Galatians 6:7-9** (NIV) “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

Jesus said the truth would set us free – always, even **INCONVENIENT** truth

**John 8:31-32** (GN) “So Jesus said to those who believed in Him, ‘If you obey My teaching, you are really My disciples; you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’”

**John 14:15** (NIV) “[Jesus said] ‘If you love Me, keep My commands.’”

### ***My Next Step Today Is:***

- I believe Jesus is the way to God; I want to honor Christ by how I live; I want God to use me to influence others toward a relationship with Christ
- I am interested in being baptized this summer – either Aug 20<sup>th</sup> (Beach Baptism) or Sept 24<sup>th</sup>
- I am interested in joining a small group and would like help finding a group right for me

**Next week:** Join us as we begin a new message series - **Proverbs: Wisdom for Life.** Bring a friend!

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