

Faith  
&  
Family

Connecting the Community to the Christ

Connect

A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

## ETERNAL RETRIBUTION

Pastor Mike Ennis

Matthew 3:7 (KJV)

“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from **the wrath to come?** “

In 1988 Dave Hunt, who is one of my favorite Bible teachers and defenders of the faith, published a book entitled “Whatever Happened to Heaven?” In the preface he said, “*As the title so obviously declares, this book is about Heaven. Unfortunately, too many persons - even dedicated Christians - find such a topic of only minor interest because they consider it to largely irrelevant to the challenges of this present life. In the following pages we will attempt to show, on the contrary, that nothing is more important in shaping how life on earth is lived and what is accomplished both for time and eternity than a person’s attitude towards the life to come.*” [\[1\]](#)

Note what brother Dave said, “...nothing is more important in shaping how life on earth is lived and what is accomplished

both for time and eternity than a person’s attitude towards the life to come.” In other words, the prospect of what will happen to us after we die should impact the way we live. In fact, we could and should view life as a time of testing or preparation for eternity. In our text John the Baptist is pressing upon the Pharisees and Sadducees the need for repentance.



He asked them the question “Who hath warned you to flee the wrath to come?” In the next verse he said, “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance”. The

(See Eternal Retribution Page 2)

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(Eternal Retribution From Page 1)

Pharisees and Sadducees had some apparent false motives for coming to be baptized by John. They had not repented in view of the warnings of John of the “wrath to come.” In view of the coming wrath of God they should have repented. In view of the realities of eternity we should live different lives. Eternity should impact the way we spend the time of this life. As Dave so well argues “the prospect of Heaven should have a profound impact on our lives”. But maybe Dave needed to write a sequel to his book titled, “Whatever Happened to Hell”. Just as the realities of a Heaven to be gained should impact our daily living the realities of a Hell to shun should impact our daily living.



But just like Heaven the subject of Hell is not spoken of very much even in Christian churches. In fact, the doctrine of Hell is under attack in recent times.

There are three main attacks on the doctrine of Hell. The first attack is to deny that it exists. There are those, even

within Christendom, who say that Hell, as a place of eternal torment, does not exist. They say that the Bible references to Hell are translated from words that simply mean “the abode of the dead”, “the grave”, or “the Jerusalem dump”. While we will acknowledge that the literal meaning of these words may in fact refer to places like the Jerusalem dump, they had long ago taken a figurative meaning for a place of eternal suffering.

The second attack on the doctrine of Hell is a denial of the duration of suffering in Hell. There are some who would acknowledge that there is a place called Hell and that it is a place of punishment but that the punishment is temporary and remedial and that those who go there will in the end be granted eternal life. The folks who believe this are called Universalist. *“Universalism refers to the belief that all humans will be saved through Jesus Christ and eventually come to a harmony in God's kingdom. Universalists do not reject the undeniable fact that Hell is in the Bible but contend that the function of Hell is for purification.”* **Ken R. Vincent (Universalist)**

Not only is there no foundation in Our Lord's words for the doctrine of universalism, there is also no shadow of a suggestion of any restoration of the wicked hereafter. So far from this being (See *Eternal Retribution* Page 7)

## October/November 2020

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted, not so much for its spiritual aspects, but in our current world it's nice to read something positive and uplifting. We hope you enjoy it. We don't vouch for its authenticity.

### Information Please



Those of us old enough to remember when the phone was wired to the wall, usually in the kitchen, can relate to this story. I loved this read. When I was a young boy, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember the polished, old case fastened to the wall. The shiny receiver hung on the side of the box.. I was too little to reach the telephone, but used to listen with fascination when my mother talked to it.

Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person. Her name was "Information Please" and there was nothing she did not know. Information Please could supply anyone's number and the correct time.

My personal experience with the genie-in-a-bottle came one day while my mother was visiting a neighbor. Amusing myself at the tool bench in the basement, I whacked my finger with a hammer, the pain was terrible, but there seemed no point in crying because there was no one home to give sympathy. I walked around the

house sucking my throbbing finger, finally arriving at the stairway.

The telephone! Quickly, I ran for the footstool in the parlor and dragged it to the landing. Climbing up, I unhooked the receiver in the parlor and held it to my ear. "Information, please," I said into the mouthpiece just above my head.

A click or two and a small clear voice spoke into my ear. "Information."

"I hurt my finger..." I wailed into the phone, the tears came readily enough now that I had an audience..

"Isn't your mother home?" came the question.

"Nobody's home but me," I blubbered.

"Are you bleeding?" the voice asked.

"No, "I replied. "I hit my finger with the hammer and it hurts."

"Can you open the icebox?" she asked.

I said I could.

"Then chip off a little bit of ice and hold it to your finger," said the voice.

After that, I called "Information Please" for everything. I asked her for help with my geography, and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my math.

She told me my pet chipmunk that I had caught in the park just the day before, would eat fruit and nuts.

Then, there was the time Petey, our pet canary, died. I called, "Information Please," and told her the sad story. She listened, and then said things grown-ups say to soothe a child. But I was not consoled. I asked her, "Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers on the bottom of a cage?"

(See "Information Please" Page 3)

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**(“Information Please” from Page 2)**

She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, " Wayne , always remember that there are other worlds to sing in." Somehow I felt better.

Another day I was on the telephone, "Information Please."

"Information," said in the now familiar voice.

"How do I spell fix?" I asked.

All this took place in a small town in the Pacific Northwest . When I was nine years old, we moved across the country to Boston. I missed my friend very much.

**A faithful friend is  
a strong defense:  
and he that hath  
found such an one  
hath found a  
treasure.**

**Ecclesiasticus 6:14**

[QuotePixel.com](http://QuotePixel.com)

"Information Please" belonged in that old wooden box back home and I somehow never thought of trying the shiny new phone that sat on the table in the hall. As I grew into my teens, the memories of those childhood conversations never really left me. Often, in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had then. I appreciated now how patient, understanding, and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy.

A few years later, on my way west to college, my plane put down in Seattle. I had about a half-hour or so between planes. I spent 15 minutes or so on the phone with my sister, who lived there

now. Then without thinking what I was doing, I dialed my hometown operator and said, "Information Please."

Miraculously, I heard the small, clear voice I knew so well.

"Information."

I hadn't planned this, but I heard myself saying, "Could you please tell me how to spell fix?"

There was a long pause. Then came the soft spoken answer, "I guess your finger must have healed by now."

I laughed, "So it's really you," I said. "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time?"

"I wonder," she said, "if you know how much your calls meant to me. I never had any children and I used to look forward to your calls."

I told her how often I had thought of her over the years and I asked if I could call her again when I came back to visit my sister.

"Please do," she said. "Just ask for Sally."

Three months later I was back in Seattle .

A different voice answered, "Information."

I asked for Sally.

"Are you a friend?" she said.

"Yes, a very old friend," I answered.

"I'm sorry to have to tell you this," She said.

"Sally had been working part time the last few years because she was sick. She died five weeks ago."

Before I could hang up, she said, "Wait a minute, did you say your name was Wayne ?" "

"Yes." I answered.

Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down in case you called. Let me read it to you. The note said, "**Tell him there are other worlds to sing in. He'll know what I mean.**"

I thanked her and hung up. I knew what Sally meant.

Never underestimate the impression you may make on others.

◇

October/November 2020

## Our True Hero

And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

(1 Samuel 27:1-2)

We love to hear and speak about the heroes of the Bible, and rightly so. Yet, the true hero in all our Bible stories is always God.

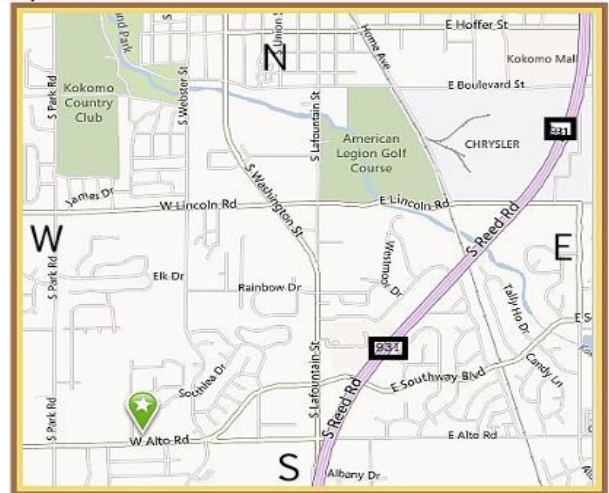
David was a "man after God's own heart," yet here we see him giving up and going over to the enemy. Subsequently, he feigned insanity to stay alive ([1 Samuel 21:13](#)). At the end (1 Samuel 29), King Achish forsakes David. Unbelief always leads to disappointment.

David's experience is not an isolated story in the Bible. Elijah, after his great victory over Baal on Mount Carmel, ran in fear from Jezebel ([1 Kings 19:1-3](#)). After saying that he would die for the Lord, Peter denied Him three times ([Luke 22:54-62](#)). At times, the history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants reads like a trashy novel. The Bible clearly records that even the best of us still have clay feet.

We don't like to hear things like this about our heroes, much less ourselves, yet, these stories have a message. God uses imperfect people to bring about his perfect will. Unflattering stories about our Bible heroes can be an encouragement to us. They remind us that the true hero in all our stories is the Lord Jesus, and if God can use the fallible characters described in the Bible, he might be able to use flawed people like you and me.

(Ken Barnes)

Map to Church



610 West Alto Road. Kokomo.



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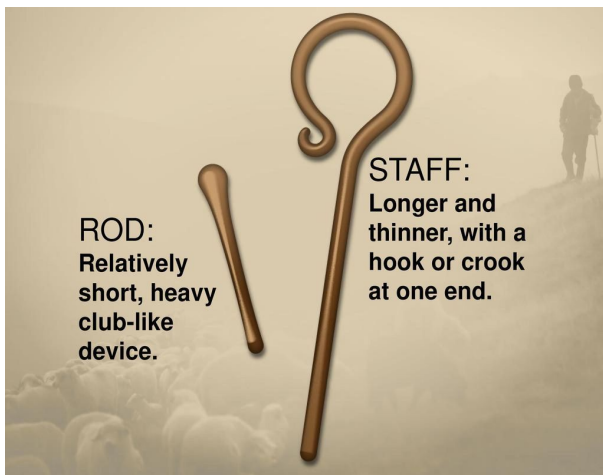
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Morris Starkey - Editor

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## THY ROD AND THY STAFF

Thought: The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalms is full of promise and hope. We follow after the Good Shepherd who leads us to those places of quiet rest. He restores our faith and leads us on paths of righteousness. We will walk with Him through those dark, fearful places of troublesome times and not fear death. His rod and staff will protect us from the enemy and keep us from going astray. He will give us a daily overflow of blessings and we will live in His presence forever.



The one weapon the Shepherd does not leave without is his rod and staff. It not only protects his sheep (me and you) and calls them by their name, but delivers them from evil. The rod and staff is also a sign of authority. Moses used it to bring water from a rock and a snake that consumed the magicians attempts to duplicate what God had done.

Jesus presence within us is guaranteed that he will give us peace, comfort and hope for a better future. In the days ahead, we should not be looking with fearful hearts as to what's coming in a world filled with violence and hate but WHO's coming when the trumpet blows. Are you ready to meet the Lord in the air?

Prayer: Father God, we have that assurance that you will always be with us in times of trouble and you know us by our name. HOPE in your promises is the ROCK (Jesus) we stand on. Your Word is the final authority in all things. Amen

Verse: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." ~ Philippians 4:6-7  
(Lupiey Rile)



**Faith & Freedom meets every Wednesday and Friday evening at 7:00 pm. Wednesday evening sessions are on dealing with a troubled soul and how it impacts wrong behavior. Friday evening sessions deal with addictions and how to deal with them from a Biblical perspective and find victory and freedom in Christ.**

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(Eternal Retribution from Page 2)

the case, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus rings the death knell of any such hope. Abraham is there represented as saying, "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they which would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may Cross over from thence to us" (Luke 16:26). That "fixed gulf" is surely a yawning chasm too deep to be filled up, and too wide to be bridged over; and the awful description of hell by the poet Milton, in "Paradise Lost", remains sadly true: *"Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace And rest can never dwell; hope never comes That comes to all, but torture without end."* The third attack on the doctrine of eternal retribution is simply ignoring it. This attack is even happening in good Bible believing churches. The subject of Hell is not heard in the contemporary American Church and the reason is simple, most Christians are caught up in the now and do not think about what is coming. It is not a denial in doctrinal statement of the reality of Hell or of the duration of suffering there, it is simply ignoring the doctrine. The reason is probably because the human mind finds it so repulsive. William C Procter said, "It is greatly to be regretted that they (the words of Christ Himself) are not more frequently dealt with in the modern pulpit; but ministers are only human, and there is a strong temptation to preach what is palatable, rather than what is profitable." Still

another form of rejecting the doctrine of Hell by ignoring it is happening on the personal level. Many people just do not want to hear of it. Maybe that is you. You had rather not hear about Hell because if you were to embrace the doctrine you would have to surrender to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The prospect of the reality of Hell would interrupt your pleasure and party life now. If that it true of you, now before it is to late, repent and trust Christ to keep you out of Hell. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Hebrews 9:27

[1] Dave Hunt, Whatever Happened to Heaven: (Harvest House Publisher, Eugene, Oregon, 1988)



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**Disrupting the Status Quo**

“And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.”

Mark 5: 16-17 (KJV)

The response to good behavior that is unusual or out of the norm is often met with skepticism and fear. Not everyone will be overjoyed at our good works that exhibit compassion and kindness. People become nervous about actions done in love. Guilt? Conviction? Resistance to change? Yes, all of these. Sameness is safe and comfortable.

But Jesus never intended to keep people in their culturally safe and comfortable places. He said in Luke 12:51, ‘Do you think I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three.’

All of the accepted norms of behavior become unsettled and rearranged with Jesus. Society may stipulate that we practice individualism and independence, but Jesus is about disrupting our selfish pursuits. His behavior towards the demon possessed man in this story teaches us to regard others with genuine affection and caring actions, regardless of whether others like it or not.

What can we initiate today that emulates Jesus’ call to bring ‘division’? Where is there an invitation to share unselfish love among a people entrenched in behavior that is selfishly-safe?

Holy Spirit, lead me to specific action today that challenges the status quo, so that others may be touched by the generous, self-sacrificing love of Christ. Father, even if those actions upset others, help me to obey you always. Amen.

(Jennifer Woodley)

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