

The Horror of Hell

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." II Thessalonians 1:8-9

We live in an age in which many who profess faith in Christ question the existence of hell, believing that a loving, gracious God would never send people to a place of eternal torment. The problem with this conclusion is that the whole of the New Testament teaches the opposite.

Hell is not the figment of the imagination of a depraved mind, nor is it created by Satan and his family, but rather for Satan by God; hell is God's creation, as affirmed by our Lord Jesus: "Then He will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

Why does God tell us that He has created hell, and then give such vivid descriptions of what it is like? I suggest that it is because He wants us to fear it – and Him. Edmund Burke observed that "it is impossible to look on anything as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous." **God means for the horror of hell to sober us during those times when we are tempted to disobey or neglect His commands.** No one is so secure with God that he can afford to be cavalier regarding His will.