

HELL IS A HARMFUL DOCTRINE

Christianity and Islam teach that at death, if we are estranged from God by sin, we will go to Hell to suffer forever and once we go there it is impossible for us to leave. Catholics call such sin mortal sin.

Hell is a doctrine of hate. Jesus said that unless we believe in him and get his forgiveness we will go to Hell forever at death deprived of mercy for all eternity.

Christians will not consider a faith that says God had sex with a virgin for a good purpose. For them, what God does is okay as long as it hurts people to the extreme. According to Christian dogma, an eight year old boy can go to Hell to suffer forever, and from it there is no escape, at death just for masturbating or for not accepting Christ. They find that more palatable. That says a lot about them. The sentence of everlasting punishment which involves everlasting torment and abandonment by God is the worst thing imaginable. If we can condone God allowing such a thing and creating such a state then we can condone anything. Why? Because anything else is not as bad as it.

BELIEF IN EVERLASTING PUNISHING IS HARMFUL

The doctrine of endless torture has no beneficial results. There are great humanitarians who do not believe in it and some don't know of it. Now it is time to realise that it certainly has unbeneficial ones by the score.

Implying that the Jews will be eternally damned for not being converts to Christianity, St Paul claimed that his sorrow was intense and his anguish of mind endless and that he would allow himself to be condemned and cut off for Christ if it would help them (Romans 9:1-5). There would be no need for him to face all that pain unless something really bad would happen to unbelievers. That makes it clear that Christianity promotes depression.

The Catholic Church teaches that nobody can know with full certainty that they would go to Heaven if they died right now. Many Protestants would tell you that they thought Jesus had saved them when he hadn't for they hadn't accepted him right now. When one cannot be sure one cannot be too careful. Some religionists suffer from a form of religious neurosis. They are scrupulous. Day and night they are tormented by worry about if this or that thing they did, or thought, was a sin and the awful possibility of going to Hell if they died there and then. The Church trains priests and ministers to "help" such people. Such help will be no good for it is the Christians who are not scrupulous who are the crazy ones. Mortal sin is so bad, so evil, that if there is any chance you have committed it and have forgotten or not realised you have to worry about it. Memory can be so often wrong. You have to try and remember to the best of your ability. It is a mortal sin to allow yourself to forget that you have sinned mortally even if you only think you have committed a mortal sin. It is possible to commit what is a venial sin and mean it to be a mortal sin by the malice you commit it with. The warnings of the Church against scruples have more to do with her wanting a good name than anything else. It conflicts with her doctrine of sin being the most terrible evil. Those who have joy are mistaken or actors. How could anybody be happy when they might go to Hell? A person who thinks she or he has cancer can't be happy think of how the person who knows the risk of going to Hell must feel. It would be a mortal sin to deliberately prefer the thought of going to Hell to that of having cancer for that is preferring to hurt God forever.

We must also dread, just as fanatically, the possibility of committing mortal sin. You never know what you are going to do next. There is no way of knowing what you are likely to do.

The doctrine of eternal punishment claims that God's moral standards seem like madness to us. Anybody can ruin our lives with any stupid moral teaching because of that principle. You could tell a mother to sacrifice her baby to God and hold up Hell as an example that God wills some terrifying things. It would seem to be bigoted of Hellfire and brimstone believers to condemn you for they approve of God's apparent barbarism.

No true Christian would say that it is better to say nothing about Hell. Jesus said more about it than Heaven. Some would say that people need to be warned so that they will not land themselves in it but that though it sounds Christian it is not. Why? Because you are supposed to care about God and not yourself or others. You care about others for God's sake which is only a sneaky way of saying that people should care only about God. Warning people about Hell implies that God cannot do his best to keep people out of Hell or that he wants people to go there in which case warning would be sinful.

The believers in Hell who conceal the doctrine are accusing God who revealed it of ignorance or malice or both for saying it exists. God has the power to cure hearts by his word so it is up to him to take care of the frightening results of hearing the doctrine. The Hell doctrine is as good as unheard of these days in the churches and especially the Roman Catholic Church. Even if it is a sin to want to be good because of the fear of Hell, Hell should be revealed. Revealing it does not imply it is

being revealed as a deterrent. People would still have to avoid it not because they want to but because God wants it.

Some might say, "There is no excuse for a believer teaching the Hell doctrine even if it is true. God can stop people going there for he's almighty so they don't need to be warned. The doctrine is a tool fashioned in sadistic hearts and minds for one purpose, the creation of Hell. Not a burning Hell in subterranean regions but one in the psyche that burns just as savagely." But if we refrain from preaching Hell then we must know about it. When God told us about it, it must mean that he wishes us to tell others. The objection denies his decency.

James said that few must be religious teachers for their judgement by God will be stricter than that of anybody else (James 3:1). (The Amplified Bible says he means self-constituted teachers which is a lie for he includes himself in this gang. The text refutes the Christian notion that everybody is to be preached to, that all Christians must be missionaries, which is why the lie is told about the text.) What about Christians who hide Hell or water it down? When God would rather there were less Christian teachers for their own sake even though they would do more good, in the Christian sense, than harm it proves that not being strict is a grievous sin and an extremely dangerous one for the sinner. Teachers are to take no nonsense and exercise righteous anger against sin.

Christianity teaches the good news or gospel, that is its essence. But what is this good news? It is that God has saved us from sin and its penalty - everlasting torment and despair. You cannot have the good news without knowing about and being grateful for what you have been saved from: eternal torment in Hell. So it follows that people should be warned about Hell before invited to receive the good news. It follows that children should be indoctrinated about Hell. How can you really accept God's salvation right if you don't know that salvation is from Hell? To abandon Hell or to say nothing about it is to fail to teach the gospel. It leads to people making choices when they don't know what they are choosing.

All the evil we do is down to fear. Doctrines like Hell that increase and play on fear therefore have to be a shot in the arm for evil and division.

The vast majority of people do not have a strong faith that the doctrine of eternal punishing is true though many will have a strong fear that it might be true. What use is it then when it is so difficult to believe and when so few do? It would be like saying that murder is right and defending that doctrine though only a few can believe in it with any fervour. When you leave people scared in case there is a Hell that is cruel of you.

Salvation for Christians involves being rescued from everlasting punishment in Hell for sin. If salvation is really about choosing good and damnation is about rejecting it then it follows that nobody can be saved unless they believe in Hell. Christians then need to speak about the doctrine more. It needs to be made a core doctrine.

The Gospel for Catholics is about how God has created a plan for us to go to Heaven and not Hell for all eternity. Thus it is dishonest for a Catholic to tell a child to obey the gospel without explaining what the gospel is about. The child has to be told about Hell. The Christian gospel is about the death of Jesus making up for sin and his rising again. This means Hell is a central doctrine for it tells us what Jesus saved us from and what sin results in. Otherwise the salvation thing is meaningless. The children need to be told about Hell. This is undoubtedly spiritual abuse.

Religious people are horrified at the thought that Jesus their God might have masturbated. When we would be horrified at that but not at Hell which is worse that tells us that religious conditioning has hardened our hearts.

The New Testament claims to be for everybody even children and it speaks of Hell in frightening terms. Jesus spoke of Hell in his sermons to crowds which must have included very young children and older children of about 8 to 12 too. Women that wanted to hear him certainly took all their young children with them. In those days, a female child was a woman at 12 and forced to marry and have babies. Jesus did no protesting against that at all though he did plenty of complaining about the scribes and the Pharisees and people not believing in him. Instead he said knowing that a child of 12 hasn't the consent to get married properly that a woman who divorces her husband commits adultery. To the honest mind these girls were not married at all both because they were forced and because they were so young and because if their husbands really wanted and loved them they would not have been making them pregnant at such a young age. Jesus recognising them as married indicates approval for the abuse of these girls. The point is Jesus was capable of wanting children to be taught about Hell and scared half to death. We see from the evidence that he actually taught them the doctrine. Even in apparitions of the Virgin Mary no effort is made to censor the message. At Fatima, she showed three very young children a vision of Hell in all its horror. She supposedly did the same thing at Medjugorje. Belief in Hell insults the rights of children and legitimises child abuse.

It is accepted by everybody these days that teaching children who are so vulnerable and impressionable and who take all they believe on authority is child abuse. Christianity is a religion of child abuse and it is no wonder so many of its clerics couldn't keep their trousers on when alone with a child.

Hell is about punishment not about reform. But even if it is not about reform it has to keep the door open so that the person can reform if they want to. A God that does not leave that door open is pure evil. It is evil to adore and believe in that kind of monstrosity. The doctrine denies that he leaves the door open. Thus Hell leaves us adoring an evil God and condoning and celebrating his evil.

Such an illogical and nasty doctrine as everlasting punishment is bound to have a bad impact on believers - especially those who take it seriously. Those who claim that there may be nobody at all in Hell are still standing by the nasty principles. They see the doctrine as nasty and harmful and they deal with that by telling themselves that nobody will suffer Hell.