

Sunday, June 28, 2026 am

What God Has Done To Keep Us Out of Hell

From time to time we remind ourselves of the reality of eternal torments for the unsaved. It is something we need to think of because of how serious it is. Any careful student of the Bible sees that hell is a reality. And studying facts about it – what it will be like, who will and will not be there, and why it is the destiny of most – are sobering and ought to scare us into doing all that we can to avoid being eternally condemned to that place.

One thing we learn from scripture about hell is that God does NOT want anyone to go there (2 Peter 3:9, Ezekiel 33:11, 1 Timothy 2:4 – He desires that all be saved, etc.). However, because of His nature and other factors, scriptures teach that most will be eternally lost. That is another lesson (one I have addressed in times past). BUT, my focus in this lesson will be on some things God has done to keep us out of hell.

I. Some things God will NOT do to keep us out of hell

- a. He will not remove your freedom of choice –
 - i. From the very beginning of man's history, God has given man choice.
 - ii. Scripture has always emphasized choice – Deuteronomy 30:19 – Moses set before the people life and death. He challenged them – “choose life”. Joshua 24:15 – Joshua – choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve. On Pentecost, Peter presented them with a choice. Jesus continually called for followers to choose Him.
 - iii. God is NOT going to force obedience. Full Calvinism advocates that man does not have freewill. It teaches that God randomly chose certain people would be saved and all others would be lost. But scripture is clear that salvation is available to everyone – Romans 10:13 – whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.
 - iv. He has presented us with choices – and it is up to us to choose wisely.
- b. He will not save you if you refuse to obey Him
 - i. Hebrews 5:9 – He is the author of salvation to those who obey.
 - ii. Mark 16:16 – he who does not believe will be condemned.
 - iii. Matthew 7:21- not everyone who says ‘Lord’ will enter heaven, but he who does.
- c. He will not change His eternal covenant
 - i. Covenant is an important thread throughout the Bible. God has put into place, at various times, covenants – His promises to mankind. In these covenants God keeps His word.
 - ii. Genesis 3:15 implies a covenant that God made to crush the head of Satan (the serpent). He emphasized this covenant with Noah – Genesis 6:18, 9:1ff; then with Abraham – Genesis 15:18, 17:2ff.
 - iii. He made a covenant with Israel at Mt. Sinai. – Exodus 19:5-9, etc. These covenants brought us to Christ.
 - iv. Christ fulfilled these covenants through His blood and established God's final and better covenant with us – Hebrews 7:22, 8:6ff. This new covenant replaced the former covenant – showing how they are related.
 - v. We are now under the this new covenant established by Christ and it will NOT be changed!
- d. He will not change the gospel plan
 - i. A part of God's covenant with us includes terms of admission.
 - ii. Scripture is clear what God expects us to do to be saved. It includes believing in Him (and believing Him), repentance – we willfully change spiritual masters, confession – a public acknowledgement of our belief in and submission to Jesus, and baptism which puts us into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27) and puts us in contact with His blood that was shed on the cross (Romans 6:3-4, Revelation 1:5).

- iii. Since this became God's plan of salvation beginning at Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:38), He has not changed it.
- iv. Man has attempted to change it throughout history, but that does NOT change the fact that God has established a plan that will last until this world ends.
- e. He will not give you a second chance after death – Hebrews 9:27 – after we die, we will face the judgment. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus bears this out – Luke 16:19-31.
- f. He will not accept salvation by proxy. While Jesus did die for our sins, that is not the point here. We are addressing some man acting on your behalf leading to salvation. The emphasis in scripture leading to salvation is always personal response. No one can be saved (or lost) in place of you. Romans 14:12 reminds us that we will each given an account of ourselves before God.

II. **Some things God has done**

- a. Considering these things, as we noted at the beginning, God WANTS everyone of us to be saved. And He has done much to make salvation available to everyone. Let us consider some things God has done to keep us from eternal condemnation.
- b. He provided the necessary sacrifice –
 - i. He so loved the world He sent Jesus – John 3:16, Romans 5:6-8. 3:23-26 – through Christ God's wrath can be appeased (e.g., propitiation).
 - ii. The fact of the cross itself is a demonstration of His love for us. It shows extreme measures taken to show the depth of His love – Isaiah 53:3 described Him as A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Jesus suffered great agony on the cross and the events leading up to it, but He also endured emotional agony (betrayal, denial, rejection, false accusations, etc.), and spiritual suffering as He bore our sins on the cross. 1 Peter 2:21-24 – He suffered for us leaving us an example – He bore our sins in His own body...
- c. He made a covenant with us – as noted above. When we obey the gospel we enter into covenant relationship with Him. That covenant demonstrates God's working on our behalf. In the midst of discussing covenants Hebrews 6:18 notes that with God it is impossible for Him to lie.
- d. He has made the gospel available to everyone –
 - i. The gospel plan of salvation can be obeyed by anyone. Water is accessible everywhere. John 3:16 – whoever believes in Him...; Titus 2:11 the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all...
 - ii. When we say, "all" understand that our salvation is not based upon our worthiness. Paul illustrated that about himself – 1 Timothy 1:12-15 Paul described himself as the chief of sinners.
 - iii. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 – such were some of you.
 - iv. Acts 17:30 notes that He commands "*all men everywhere to repent.*"
- e. Through His goodness –
 - i. Romans 2:4 notes that the goodness of God leads to repentance. AS we study God's word, we find Him as one who genuinely cares about us. This is contrasted when many gods today who man makes in his own image (what he thinks a god ought to act like) who were often vindictive, short tempered, angry and cruel.
 - ii. Ephesians 1:3 notes that He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...
 - iii. When we consider everything God has done, we can see His goodness, grace, love & mercy. It ought to humble us
- f. Through His patience –
 - i. A recurring thought the righteous who are crying out often ask is, why does He allow so much wickedness? Why has He not returned yet? Etc.

- ii. The answer is because He does not want man to be lost. His longsuffering means another opportunity for someone to make themselves right with him. 2 Peter 3:9 addresses this directly. 2 Peter 3:15 notes, *and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you.*
 - iii. This is why He waited 120 years before destroying the world by flood (Genesis 6:3). It is why He tried everything to cause both Israel and Judah (and neighboring nations) to return to Him. And it is why He still has not returned even to this day.
 - iv. While the righteous anxiously await for His return, understand the opportunity that exists because he delays.
 - v. BUT, never forget that His delay is NOT eternal. He has appointed a day of judgment – Acts 17:31.
- g. By extending the invitation to us –
- i. Matthew 11:28-30 – Jesus while on earth extended the invitation to all
 - ii. As was noted Wednesday in our talk– the gospel IS an invitation. In reality you cannot separate the two.
 - iii. Every time an invitation is offered, it is another opportunity for us to make ourselves right with Him. And that is why we ALWAYS extend an invitation when we gather together.
 - iv. God, too, is inviting us. Consider Revelation 22:17, *And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.*
- h. He has warned us about eternal condemnation
- i. As we noted early in this lesson, not all will be saved. And there is a place of eternal torments that awaits all who refuse to obey His will. Matthew 25:46 speaks of those who will go away into everlasting punishment. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 speaks of God’s everlasting punishment on those who do not obey the gospel and afflict God’s people.
 - ii. Be reminded that while teaching and reading about hell is most unpleasant, it IS an evangelistic subject. God has WARNED us constantly AND strongly what awaits those who reject Him. Consider 2 Corinthians 5:10-11 – knowing the terror of the Lord, we TOO ought to do what we can to persuade men.
- i. By being willing to restore the fallen
- i. Another consideration is how God is willing to take us back if we return to Him.
 - ii. Matthew 18:22 when asked by Peter how often we ought to forgive someone, Jesus said, *70x7* – not a specific number, but not infinite either. When you tie this to what He taught about how our forgiveness depends upon our willingness to forgive others (the context – Matthew 18:23-35 – the parable of the unforgiving servant) we see how much God wants to redeem us.
 - iii. There are plenty of examples of the fallen returning to Him – David, King Manasseh (who made his sons pass through the fire) – 2 Chronicles 33:12-13ff; Peter, etc.
 - iv. This is perhaps the greatest example of His longsuffering, mercy and grace. If we have wandered away, all He asks is that we repent, confess and return to Him. James 5:19-20 concluded his letter with that observation.

Truly, God has done his part to keep us out of Hell. Sadly, in spite of everything He has done, for most it will not be enough. And it is not because of Him, but because of us! The choices we make will determine our spiritual eternity. God has done everything He can, what are you doing about it? Will you let Him keep you out of hell? Think about it!