



THE FBC FAMILY NEWSLETTER

PROCLAIMING GOD'S TRUTH.
INSPIRING A PASSION FOR GOD'S GLORY.

IS HELL FOR REAL?

Tom Buck

The topic of hell has been a popular issue recently with the release of Rob Bell's book *Love Wins*. Although Bell doesn't claim to deny the existence of hell, he raises questions that present more doubts than they offer answers. I don't resent the asking of questions, even about doctrines that I may have already settled on long ago. Questions can help you to grow deeper in your knowledge of the truth and your love for God, and they can cause you to think more deeply about doctrines that are very serious in nature. (Could there be a doctrine with any more serious weight than that of hell?) But what I do resent is men who claim to be evangelical pastors launching an attack on a central doctrine by raising questions in order to confuse rather than clarify.

This topic is too vast to cover in a brief newsletter article. I hope sometime this summer to give it more attention on a Sunday evening. But let me say a few things in regards to this important issue. I acknowledge that hell is a hard doctrine to digest. We naturally resist the idea of God tormenting human beings in a lake of fire for all eternity. And the difficulty of pondering hell is increased when we have those who we love that are resistant to the message of the gospel. It's easy to dream of a hell for someone like Osama Bin Laden, but difficult to picture our grandmother spending eternity there. Imagining someone who is otherwise a "good" person as the object of God's eternal wrath makes hell seem even more unbearable. This is why I believe a book like Rob Bell's is even gaining so much traction among evangelicals.

Our emotions must not drive how we think about these things. God's Word must be the driving factor. No one in all the Scriptures had more to say about hell than Jesus. And Jesus described hell as a "place of torment" (Luke 16:28), a place of "unquenchable fire"

(Mark 9:43) "where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (v. 48). It is where "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt 25:30) – a place of "eternal punishment" (v. 46). If we are going to accept the teachings of Jesus, then we must accept his teaching on hell as well.

Rather than trying to question away or redefine a doctrine that Jesus taught in such a straightforward manner, we should be diligent in our proclamation of the gospel and earnestly praying for the conversion of others. Perhaps if we were to allow the clear warnings of hell to deeply penetrate our hearts, we would be more concerned about rescuing people from such a horrendous punishment.

Again, what is bothersome is not that people wrestle with such a difficult doctrine. In fact, the process should have a positive result. Settling on a biblical view of hell does not inspire a casual or flippant response but one that is sober and submissive to its truth. Jonathan Edwards wrote concerning hell, "This doctrine is indeed awful and dreadful. It is dreadful to think of it, but yet 'tis what the eternal God who made us and who has us soul and body in his hands has abundantly declared unto us, so that so sure as God is true there will absolutely be no end to the misery of hell."

As a final consideration, it is interesting that the biblical context for hell is often an address to professing believers, not a fiery sermon aimed at atheists and murderers. Perhaps in all of this the problem is that when the subject of hell comes up, we quickly think of others – and not ourselves. I think we would do well to consider the words of C. S. Lewis who wrote, "In all discussions of hell we should keep steadily before our eyes the possible damnation, not of our enemies nor our friends... but of ourselves."

DATES OF INTEREST

MEN'S EVENT
JUNE 4, 7:30 AM

WELCOME PARTY FOR
MISSIONARIES: PESTERS
AND MOLLENHAUERS
JUNE 5, 7:00 PM

VBS TRAINING
JUNE 11, 9:00 AM

YOUTH CAMP
JUNE 12-17

DEACONS MEETING
JUNE 13, 6:00 PM

CHURCH COUNCIL
JUNE 14, 6:00 PM

SENIOR ADULT PLAYDAY
JUNE 16, 9:30 AM

VBS TRAINING
JUNE 25, 9:00 AM

OFFICE CLOSED
JULY 4

CHURCH COUNCIL
JULY 5, 6:00 PM

TWELVE-ONE STUDENT
MISSION TRIP
JULY 10 -15

VBS WORKDAY
JULY 16, 8:00 AM

VBS
JULY 18 - 22, 8:15 AM

SENIOR ADULT PLAYDAY
JULY 18, 9:30 AM

CELEBRATION SUNDAY
CHURCH FELLOWSHIP
JULY 31, 5:00 PM

ADOPTION

James Seward

Many of you have already met Charles (“Charlie”) Tyrell and Evangeline (“Eva”) Tia, the two newest additions to our family. We are deeply grateful for these two blessed gifts from God! They represent the culmination of a journey that began 18 months ago – and, in many ways, years before Karen and I even knew each other.

Karen and I share the conviction that, for those who feel able to adopt, it is a right and beautiful picture of what Christ has done for us. In the Bible, the only true Son of God is Jesus. Early on, God chose Israel to be a special nation to Himself and throughout Scripture, the Jews are often depicted as the natural born children of God. But God, in His kindness, also adds children into His family through adoption. Both Karen and I are who we are because God has adopted us into His family. We praise God for His grace and kindness to us.

On the basis of this, we firmly believe that God’s “natural” way is to add children to a family by two different means: some are born into a family; some are adopted into a family. Just as we Gentiles are truly part of God’s family and have equal standing with believing Jews (and Christ!), so our new additions are fully part of our family.

Many of you did not know about the adoption journey we were on. For a variety of reasons, I was hesitant to put us and our adoption in the spotlight. In hindsight, I realize I robbed some of you the joy of walking with us (and gave others of you quite a surprise when we showed up to church with two more children!). We deeply value your prayers and support, and we hope you feel comfortable interacting with us or asking us questions (note: we won’t be offended if you “say the wrong thing”).

We love being a part of a church where adoption is common. Every believer in this church has been adopted by Christ, so how fitting that God has given children to so many families through adoption.

P.S. For those considering adoption, I highly recommend *Adopted for Life* by Russell Moore. It lays out the beautiful biblical backdrop that shapes how we should think about adoption.

PASTORS’ Q&A

Q Should Christians rejoice at the death of Osama Bin Laden?

A As people who believe in the horror of hell and realize that we are equally deserving of its torments, we should think and speak with sobriety about it. Hell is not something we treat lightly. Further, the highest desire we should have for anyone is that they repent and embrace Christ. If there is any Christian who would prefer a Bin Laden under God’s judgment over a repentant Bin Laden worshipping Christ, that Christian is sorely disordered in his heart (see Ezekiel 33:10-20).

At the same time, it is common in the Bible to find the saints rejoicing in God’s victory over His enemies. God’s people rejoice as Pharaoh and his army drown (Exodus 15), as the Canaanites are defeated in battle – including a graphic description of a man whose head is crushed with a tent peg – (Judges 5), and when God ultimately defeats the kings and rulers of this world (Revelation 19).

As Christians, our rejoicing should not spring from personal revenge or chest-thumping glorying in our own superior might. Instead, we ought to rejoice in God’s justice - and we ought to do so soberly and reflectively knowing that every one of us deserves to be under God’s strong hand of vengeance.

Email your questions to james@fbclindale.com

NOTE OF THANKS

I would like to say "thank you" for the many acts of kindness shown to me and my husband, following my shoulder surgery. We truly appreciate all of the food, cards, visits and especially your prayers. We are blessed to have such a loving church family. Thanks again.

Sincerely,
Daphene Caudle

GROWING OLD FRUITFULLY: PSALM 92:12-15

Ronnie Stribble

The Bible says, “The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God. They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, to declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.” A writer once related that when he was in the sixth grade, an elderly lady visited his one-room schoolhouse to help prepare for a Christmas program. She was very energetic but quite wrinkled. After she left, the teacher overheard one little boy say, “Boy, I never want to get old!” The teacher responded, “So you want to die young?” The youngster said “No.” The teacher then responded, “Well, it is going to be one or the other.” Getting older does have its drawbacks. I asked an older preacher friend once how he was doing, and he replied: Ronnie, if it doesn’t hurt, it doesn’t work.” Yes, there are the aches and the pains and wrinkles in getting old, but there are some great promises God gives to us. Psalm 92 promises that just as the palm tree brings forth its best fruit in its old age, so shall the righteous flourish. Most people make their greatest contributions in their sixties and seventies. May God help us as we grow older not to grow colder, but bolder, as we claim God’s promise to flourish and be fruitful.



INTRODUCING OUR CHILDREN'S BULLETIN

Vernon Hughes

In the last Newsletter we discussed some of the influences we allow our children to be exposed to, and how those influences effect their development into the young person God created them to be. We are all Play-doh fun factories, in that what goes in later comes out. If we watch, listen to, and interact with things that are true, honorable, just, pure, commendable, excellent and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8), then those things come out in our speech, actions and are seen in our character. But when we allow ourselves, and our children to be exposed to, and put trash into our fun factories, then we shouldn't be surprised when that's what comes out.

With all that in mind I want to help equip you as parents as much as I can to put into your children good things. Starting Sunday June 5th, we will be producing a weekly bulletin for the children and their families here at FBC. Some of the things you can expect to see each week are:

1. A section for your children to take notes during Pastor Tom's sermons. There will be questions that Tom will answer during his sermon and a place for them to write down things that they remember.
2. A section for you as parents to know what your children discussed in Sunday school that week. You'll know the passage, key verse, and have questions you can ask and discuss on the ride home (that, if they were paying attention, should be easy to answer).
3. There will be a section that discusses upcoming children's events. You'll definitely want to check out some of the things we'll do this summer. We're planning some great activities for you and your children to do together, so don't miss those events.
4. Much, much more that we hope you'll enjoy.

The idea behind this bulletin isn't to just create more work and produce something that you'll just throw away, but to give you another tool that you can use as you shepherd your children toward holiness. You may pick one up in the Worship Service, the check-in area of the nursery or as you check them into Sunday School or Children's Worship. So check it out, use it, and encourage your children to use it. Hopefully this will help your family and your children as they grow in their faith.

WHY'D HE DO THAT?

Andrew Pressley

As a youngster, I spent hours drooling through catalogues of music gear, each one teeming with all sorts of gadgets that I couldn't afford. I was a bit of a gear-head. Naturally, I began to admire the guitars that performers on TV played, many of which cost several thousand dollars.

I remember watching a popular band on a TV show one night. The lead guitarist ripped through the chord changes of their latest single on an instrument I could only dream of owning. It seemed as though he was sweating drops of pure passion as he zealously belted out the lyrics. The song ended with a vigor-inducing final cadence, and then – the unimaginable happened. The lead singer ripped off his guitar... and... smashed it to pieces into his guitar amp. I vividly remember thinking, "Why'd he do that?! He should have just given it to me!"

Sure, it's part of the show. Perhaps it's even a statement about material possessions. And of course the guy could afford a hundred more. But today I'm convinced there was something more at work.

Music can be an incredibly passionate and emotional art. In fact, many people evaluate the success of music based on how emotionally evocative it is. In this case, even the performer himself got what he was after: raw, passionate, aggression... that he just *had* to take out on his instrument. But why? Wasn't the song satisfying enough?

Music, even at its most passionate, will still leave you wanting more. Some people spend their whole lives trying to reproduce a feeling that a certain song or era of music afforded them. We're even tempted to seek a similar goal in church. We assume that if we'd just utilize music that makes us feel a certain way, we'd be doing the Lord's work. History is full of examples of this approach, and it shows that no music can have this enduring effect on its own merit.

The only way music has any profound and eternal impact is if it serves to communicate the only thing that is timeless: "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever" (1 Peter 1:24-25 quoting Isaiah 40). Otherwise, we're ultimately left unfulfilled, seeking that next emotional release. Let's build our meaningful experiences around God's Word, not merely an emotional experience in a song.

DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER

Ryan Taber

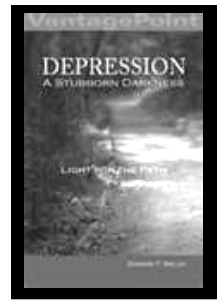
Summer is upon us and unfortunately gone are the days of the free and easy childhood summers. As a child the summer was a three-month respite from the tyranny of school. With the exception of a trip to grandma's house and a week of church camp, there was absolutely nothing to do. The days were spent running around town going to the park and the library, waiting

for the public pool to open and then staying until it closed, swimming in the creek and things like this. By modern standards my childhood summers were wasted. The average summer these days is the exact opposite, there is club baseball/softball, soccer camp, piano camp, football camp, vacation with the family, vacation with my friends family, and the list goes on and on such that with the exception of a few "free weeks" summers are spoken for. I am not sure which one is more of a "waste". My encouragement to you is don't waste your summer. Be strategic in prioritizing your time to focus on eternal things. After all none of the time we invest in eternity will be wasted.

THE FBC FAMILY NEWSLETTER

AVAILABLE IN OUR LIBRARY: *DEPRESSION: A STUBBORN DARKNESS* (ED WELCH)

Most of us go through seasons of depression. Some of us battle it continually. This book is the best we know of at giving a biblical approach to addressing this “stubborn darkness.” It’s treatment of Scripture moves beyond cursory proof-texting and the result is a message that deals with the deepest matters of the heart. If you are dealing with depression or counseling someone who is, this book is a must-read.



LIBRARY HOURS:

SUNDAYS
9:00-9:45 AM & 10:30-11:15 AM

WEDNESDAYS
10:00-12:00 PM & 5:30-6:00 PM

“GOD’S WOUNDS CURE; SIN’S KISSES KILL.”

-WILLIAM GURNALL



103 E. VAN ST. | PO BOX 321
LINDALE, TX 75771
PHONE: 903-882-3396 | FAX: 903-882-1949
WEB: WWW.FBCLINDALE.COM
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

