

# ***How Can God Send People to Hell?***

## ***DISCUSSION***

Why do people see the doctrine of hell as incompatible with a loving God?

## ***TACTICS***

Remember that every position or explanation for evil must be based upon some beliefs. You seek out those beliefs by listening to people. Don't assume that any one position doesn't require explanation. In other words, the burden of proof should apply to someone who explains evil with or without belief in God.

Ask them...

1. What do you mean by that?
2. How did you come to that conclusion?
3. Have you ever considered? <sup>1</sup>

## ***HELL AS A VIEW ON LIFE AND REALITY***

C. S. Lewis in *The Abolition of Man* wrote about two views of life and reality.

*There is something which unites magic and applied science while separating both from the "wisdom" of earlier ages. For the wise men of old the cardinal problem had been how to conform the soul to reality, and the solution had been knowledge, self-discipline, and virtue. For magic and applied science alike the problem is how to subdue reality to the wishes of men: the solution is a technique; and both, in the practice of this technique, are ready to do things hitherto regarded as disgusting or impious. (Cited in *The Reason for God*, Tim Keller, pp.70-1).*

## ***LIFE IN HELL AS CONTINUAL DISOBEDIENCE AND REBELLION TO GOD***

Consider Luke 16:24-31.

<sup>24</sup> And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' <sup>25</sup> But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' <sup>27</sup> And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' <sup>29</sup> But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' <sup>30</sup> And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they

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<sup>1</sup> Again, Greg Koukl in his book *Tactics* suggests these three questions. I think these three questions probably are used by many for years. I've found them helpful for years before I found Koukl's book.

will repent.’<sup>31</sup> He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’ ” (ESV)

“What is astonishing is that though their statuses have now been reversed, the rich man seems to be blind to what has happened. He still expects Lazarus to be his servant and treats him as his water boy. He does not get out of hell, but strongly implies that God never gave him and his family enough information about the afterlife.” (Keller, p.77-8).

### ***HELL AS MAKING THINGS RIGHT***

Miraslov Volf is a Yale theologian and Croation who has seen the violence in the Balkans.

*If God were not angry at injustice and deception and did not make a final end to violence—that god would not be worthy of worship.... The only means of prohibiting all recourse to violence by ourselves is to insist that violence is legitimate only when it comes from God.... My thesis that the practice of non-violence requires a belief in divine vengeance will be unpopular with many... in the West... .[But] it takes the quiet of a suburban home for the birth of the thesis that human non-violence [results from the belief in] God’s refusal to judge. In a sun-scorched land, soaked in the blood of the innocent, it will invariably die... [with] other pleasant captivities of the liberal mind. (Miraslov Volf, *Exclusions and Embrace*, cited in Keller, p.74).*