

HOW CAN A LOVING GOD SEND SOMEBODY TO HELL?

Dear Friend:

Voltaire, a French Philosopher, once said: "In the beginning God created man in His own image, and man has been trying to return the favor ever since". Translation: mankind tends to "make-up" an image of God based on his or her feelings of what he or she believes about God's character. In this day and age, it is popular to believe that God is a loving deity handing out cheap grace and would never "send" anyone to hell.

We all need to believe the billboard along I-71 halfway between Columbus and Cincinnati, it reads: "HELL IS REAL". Better yet, believe the solid Word of God: Hell is real! Those who don't believe God would send someone to hell say things like: "Can God be called "good" if He sends people to hell?" The person who says this has two incorrect thoughts on their mind. First, to them, "good" means that there should be no consequences for man's sinful behavior. Second, it wrongly assumes God makes the choice to send a person to hell who chooses to reject God's offer of heaven. We also hear people say: "How can a loving God send people to hell?" Another wrong assumption: the person assumes that love should trump God's holiness and that God should ignore the fact that His words warns that an unrepentant heart has consequences.

Feeling the need (and I have for a long time) to keep In Touch shorter, let me come to some conclusions. First, great news: God doesn't "send" people to hell. People choose to go there. Am I nuts? (It's debatable.) Think about this: we make our own decision about whether to become a Christian, we are free willed moral agents. We are directly making our own decisions for our eternity. Also, God IS holy and righteous, which means He cannot "grade on the curve" or go back on His word regarding who and how people go to heaven. Heaven is filled with God's holiness, and righteousness. God cannot let people spend eternity there who have not been made holy or righteous through the blood of Christ. Sounds complicated? It is a bit. Show-up this Sunday when I try to make it all a bit easier to understand.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Prayer: David Warren, David Hay, Faye Cooper (shut-in)

Events: Tuesday 7:00 p.m. Management Team Meeting; Thursday, 6:00 p.m. Women's Ministry; Sunday August 18th, shelter house rededication at the end of worship service (still done with church, 11:30 a.m.)