

## BENEFITS OF GOING TO HELL (?)

Mark 9:42-48

### I. INTRODUCTION: I

- I. 2 Today we live in a world mad with political correctness (“PC”). For example, consider the following:
- A. Professor Stephan Thernstrom, a distinguished professor of history at Harvard, was forced to stop teaching an undergraduate course after he was harassed because he used the term “Indian” instead of “Native American.”
  - B. During the Persian Gulf War, officials at the University of Maryland forbade students from hanging American flags and pro-war banners from their dorm windows. “This is a very diverse community, and what may be innocent to one person may be insulting to another,” according to Jan Davidson, a University of Maryland official.
  - C. When the NCAA endeavored to set minimum academic standards for athletes, they were charged with a “covert racist agenda.” John Thompson, Georgetown basketball coach, walked off court during a game to protest this “racist” policy. He attacked standardized educational testing as “culturally biased” toward the white middle class (BTW: non-white Asian students have the highest test scores of any ethnic group including white middle class Americans).
  - D. In New Jersey, despite the death of several patients nationwide who had been infected by dentists who had concealed their infection with the AIDs virus --- the state commissioner of health announced that due to “right to privacy” concerns health providers who are HIV-positive need not ..... need not!..... tell their patients that they are infected.
  - E. In San Francisco, the Board of Supervisors voted to pay for sex changes for city employees. “The measure would pay up to \$50,000 in benefits to city workers who want to switch their gender. The measure was approved by a 9-2 vote of the city council and was signed by then Mayor Willie Brown.
  - F. David Howard (an African American), head of the Washington, DC Office of Public Advocate, used the word “niggardly” while talking to colleagues about budgetary matters. Of course, “niggardly” means stingy or scanty. But within days Howard was forced to publicly apologize and resign. As columnist Tony Snow wrote: “David Howard got fired because some people in public employ were morons who:
    - (1) didn't know the meaning of niggardly,
    - (2) didn't know how to use a dictionary to discover the meaning, and
    - (3) actually demanded that he apologize for their ignorance.”
  - G. A new term is rapidly gaining acceptance and widespread use in our society. The term has been used for quite some time among one of our most “politically correct” groups...archaeologists. The term is “BCE” which stands for “Before the Common Era”. The term “BCE” has been coined to replace the more familiar “BC” (“Before Christ”). It is interesting, and even humorous, to note that even if one uses the term “BCE” the central event --- the dividing line, if you will --- is *still* the birth of God's Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Even though people want to avoid Jesus like the plague; even their PC designation revolves around Him!
  - H. In Seattle, the term “brownbag lunch” is no longer allowed in government or public school documents or programs, so not as to appear biased or racist.
  - I. Administrators at a California high school sent five students home after they refused to remove their American flag T-shirts on Cinco de Mayo, the Mexican Day of Independence. That’s right, kids, you can’t wear your country’s flag in your country, lest it offend someone celebrating the holiday of a different country.

J. The fear of genetically modified (GM) crops, whipped up by environmentalist hysteria in Europe and America, has prompted many African countries to ban ALL U.S. food aid because it may contain GM corn. This occurs even as desperate Zambians and Angolans break into government silos to “steal” donated GM food that is being denied them. There are no restrictions on these foods in industrialized nations, yet people too poor to buy their next meal are denied the same foods even when it’s free. They could realistically starve without it, yet *Greenpeace* prides itself on stopping shipments of GM food to starving people.

K. In a *Washington Post* article by Alan Cooperman (appeared in *Houston Chronicle*, 8/18/02, sec. A4) and a *Boston Globe* article by Michael Paulson entitled “Catholics Reject Evangelization of Jews” (8/13/02) we are informed that “it is theologically unacceptable to target Jews for evangelization.” According to a committee of the *U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops* (Cooperman article):

“Campaigns that target Jews for conversion to Christianity `are no longer theologically acceptable in the Catholic Church,’ a committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has declared.

“Summing up a series of Vatican pronouncements since 1965 that has reversed the church’s historical approach to Judaism, the bishops said last week that the Old Testament covenant between the Jews and God is valid and that Jews do not need to convert to Christianity to be saved. While the Roman Catholic Church `must bear witness in the world to the Good News of Christ...this evangelizing task no longer includes the wish to absorb the Jewish faith into Christianity and so end the distinctive witness of Jews to God in human history,’ they said.”

2. Certainly as Christians we don’t want to be seen as a bunch of “cultural Neanderthals”; so in this lesson I want to preach a “PC Sermon” (“politically correct” sermon).
  - A. After all, we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are educated; we are socially and culturally sophisticated.
  - B. Therefore, we don’t need the outmoded style of preaching characteristic of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. We’ve surely evolved beyond the need to be “convince[d], rebuke[d], exhort[ed]” (2 Tim. 4:2). Can I get an “amen” on that? Amen!
3. **3** Therefore, in the interest of “political correctness” the title of this lesson is: “*The Benefits of Going to Hell*”. (Please note one of the primary features of this sermon is sarcasm!)

## II. DISCUSSION: 4

### *In hell there’ll be no more...*

#### I. **\*\* Gospel Preaching**

- A. Doesn’t it just burn you up that faithful gospel preachers always getting on your case!
  - (1) Don’t you just get sick and tired of those long boring sermons every Sunday?
  - (2) Don’t they always seem to preach at you and leave the rest of the congregation alone?
  - (3) “blah, blah, blah, blah, blah; Bible this and Bible that; book, chapter and verse this and book chapter and verse that!” Doesn’t it just make you want to scream after awhile!
  - (4) And the worst of all are those embarrassing invitations at the end of the sermon...you know what I’m talking about...the one’s that really make you feel guilty. Well, all I can say is Sai-a-na-ra baby!...no more preachers; no more sermons; good-bye and good riddance!
  - (5) Thankfully, in hell all these things will be H-I-S-T-O-R-Y! As the commercial says, “Oh, what a relief it is!”
- B. But there’s more! If there are no faithful gospel preachers and preaching in hell think of some of the other benefits that will bring!

- (1) Why, there'll be no more Gospel Meetings! Even though our congregation's gospel meetings account for less than 4% of the days in a year; I won't have to hustle and bustle to attend the meetings or feel guilty because I usually stay at home and watch CSI reruns!
- (2) And, even though I don't support the gospel meetings of other congregations, at least now I finally have a legitimate excuse! I won't be able to go even if I wanted to! Because there are no more gospel meetings! Hey, I'm really beginning to see the benefits of this thing! Aren't you!
- C. Oh, but wait...I guess I'll have to admit that there will be some downsides to this.
  - (1) You know, I'm really going to miss those long naps I've been taking in the church building every Sunday! Well, I guess you just have to take your medicine sometimes. You have to be willing to take the bad with the good.
  - (2) And, another downside is that I won't be able to complain about that "old so-and-so" of a preacher needing to "keep his nose out of my business." I'll really miss rakin' that turkey over the coals, but I'll just have to focus on the cost:benefit ratio.

**\*\*In hell there'll be no more...**

## 2. Faithful Brethren

- A. You know the type I'm talking about, don't you?
  - (1) The ones that bother you with phone calls, cards, e-mails...and sometimes those pests even have the audacity to visit you at home...always raggin' on you to be more faithful, to attend more regularly, trying to encourage you to come to Bible study and the gospel meetings. Whew! Don't you just get tired of all that harassment? Thank goodness we won't have to put up with that anymore!
  - (2) Why, just who do they think they are anyway? Always stickin' their noses in my business! Interfering with my life! Who appointed them "king of the world" anyway!
- B. I'm really glad these folks aren't going to be in hell! After all we won't need them there anyway!
  - (1) There isn't any gospel preachin' there, so we won't need them for that, and I'm sure not about to start preachin'!
  - (2) There won't be any worship services there either, and anyway none of us ever really wanted to participate in them anyway; I always hated it when they asked me to lead in prayer.
  - (4) And thank goodness there won't be any truth to defend "down there." You know I never liked that standin' for the truth stuff anyway. You know...those fanatical faithful brethren were the only ones that ever stood for the truth, so we'll have no need for them!
  - (5) And hey, we aren't going to be spreadin' no gospel "down there" either...so we don't need them "do-gooders" that always go around trying to convert folks...no-siree!
  - (6) And, we certainly don't need those "goody two shoe" types that are always trying to encourage us to be more faithful. Those days are over...all I can say is good bye and good riddance!
- C. But, I guess I'll have to admit there'll be a few downsides to this too.
  - (1) You know, old brother Jones sat at my bedside all day when I had that operation last year. Yep, he even took a day off work to be with me.
  - (2) And, oh, yea, his wife, sister Jones, she came over and washed my dishes and did up my laundry...well I guess I won't be missin' her too much...probably won't be doin' any laundry or dishes "down there" anyhow.

**\*\*In hell...**

### **3. All of My Friends Will Be There**

- A. You know I just go to the bare minimum of services to keep the brethren off my back! I get so tired of the brethren telling me they missed me on Sunday night and Wednesday night.
- B. Anyway, I don't have any friends at church because I never stick around long enough after services to really get to know anybody.
  - (1) And I never go to those stupid potlucks the brethren have from time-to-time.
  - (2) Why, if I ever went to one of those I might really get to know a faithful Christian; now that's a scary thought!
- C. Fortunately most of the friends I have don't have one bit of interest in the Bible or even go to church; so they certainly won't be going to heaven so I'll have a lot of folks to keep me company in hell.
- D. But, I'm a little worried; the preacher told me that hell is a place where there is "*weeping and gnashing of teeth*" so I guess my friends and I will not be spending much time talking to one another, but then that's OK since I was never good at conversation anyway.

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### **4. Bible Classes**

- A. There "ain't" goin' to be any Bible classes there either! So we won't need those "high falutin" brethren for that! Anyway, I hardly ever studied for Bible class anyway; so I'm not about to start studyin' "down there"!
- B. Wow! That's great! Just think of it! No more embarrassing moments when the Bible class teacher calls on me and I don't have a clue!
- C. But I have to admit, I never made it to very many Bible classes anyway, but at least in hell I won't have to feel guilty about it!
- D. And the few times I actually attended a Bible class those boring teachers just drive me crazy, don't they drive you crazy!?! It's Bible this, Bible that; yada, yada yada! Makes me want to pull my hair out and scream! You know what I mean, right!?
- E. I much prefer wasting my time (errr, I mean spending my time) on my I-Phone and I-Pad.
  - (1) I much prefer surfing the net because I never really liked reading my Bible very much; all those "thee's" and "thou's"; all that talk about God, Jesus, and the apostles creeps me out anyway!
  - (2) Anyway the last time I went to Bible class it made me feel guilty the next day when I surfed the net for porn after I got home from the liquor store!
  - (3) Anyway Bible classes are so "old school"; so old-fashioned; I'd much rather spend my time playing *Grand Theft Auto*, *World of Warcraft* or *Call of Duty*; they're much more entertaining than any stale old Bible class!
  - (4) And on Sundays I'd much rather watch the Colts and drink beer with my friends than sit around and talk about God and Jesus; anyway that stuff creeps me out! (I guess I already said that, but it really does freak me out thinking about sin, eternity and all that stuff! My preacher says it is bothering my conscience, but I just try to not think about it.)
- F. I do admit though I'm a little worried; my preacher told me that hell is really hot and dark, so I'm a bit concerned that my *Playstation* and *Xbox* won't work or that I won't be able to see the screen in all that darkness! Plus I just can't stand drinking warm beer!

**\*\*In hell there'll be no more...**

## **5. Interference With My Lifestyle**

- A. Aren't you just sick and tired of those hypocrites always quoting Scripture... "do this, don't do that...yackety, yackety, yack!"
- B. Why don't those "yardbirds" mind their own business anyway. Don't they know this is America! Haven't they ever heard of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"?
- C. Why, just think of it! In hell I won't ever have anyone "gettin' on my case" about my smoking, my social drinking, or my immodest apparel!
- D. And, they won't ever know about all those lottery tickets and pornography. But I'm a bit worried all that stuff will burn up in "*the fire that shall never be quenched*"! But, I guess there's always a silver-lining; if all that stuff is burned up I won't be embarrassed by someone finding it!
- E. But, again, I do have to admit that there'll be a few downsides here as well.
  - (1) It's going to be really hot there, so I probably won't get to do any social drinking...all the alcohol will evaporate.
  - (2) And, "my o' my" with all that heat all my lottery tickets and porno magazines will burn up. I sure hope one of those burnt tickets isn't a big winner!
  - (3) And, those short shorts I wear...well, I guess they won't be too much of a problem. They'll burn off of me, and since hell is a place of "*outer darkness*" nobody will be able to see the nakedness I've been trying to show off all these years!
  - (4) Another plus is that I'll finally be able to quit smoking, but the only problem is then I'll be "smokin"!

## **II. CONCLUSION: 5**

- 1. I hope you appreciate the sarcasm of this sermon.
- 2. Enumerating the "benefits" of hell may be humorous, but the reality of hell is no laughing matter!

**Lk. 6:25:** "*Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.*"

**Eccl. 7:6:** "*For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, So is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity.*"

**Rev. 20:11-15:** "*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*"

**Mk. 9:42-48:** "*But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. 43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched — 44 where*

*'Their worm does not die  
And the fire is not quenched.'*

*45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched — 46 where*

*'Their worm does not die  
And the fire is not quenched.'*

47 *And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire — 48 where*

*'Their worm does not die  
And the fire is not quenched.'*

**Matt. 25:30:** *“And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

**Rev. 14:11:** *“And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever;”*

3. In reality there will be absolutely no benefits there! (**2 Pet. 3:9:** *“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”*). We need to be thankful for God’s longsuffering and that we still have the opportunity to:

- ☛ **Gospel preaching,**
- ☛ **Faithful brethren,**
- ☛ **All my friends will be there,**
- ☛ **Bible classes**
- ☛ **Interference with my lifestyle.**

4. Invitation: 2 Thess. 1:7-9; 2 Pet. 3:9-11, 14

- ✓ **Hear:** Rom. 10:17
- ✓ **Believe (faith):** Heb. 11:6; Jn. 8:24
- ✓ **Confess:** Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:36-37
- ✓ **Repent:** Acts 2:38
- ✓ **Baptism:** Jn. 3:7; Acts 22:16; 10:47-48; 2 Tim. 2:10; Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:41, 47
- ✓ **Faithfulness:** Col. 1:18-23; 2 Pet. 1:3-11