

GROWING OPPOSITION TO THE DOCTRINE OF HELL

By William West

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Perhaps unknown to many members of the church of Christ, there is a growing opposition to the doctrine of Hell which has been taught from it's pulpits for many years. Most of it's preachers who do come out against it just say nothing about it.

1. HOMER HAILEY: "God's Judgments and Punishments" 2003, Nevada Publications. Hailey was a teacher at Abilene Christian College, Florida College where he was dean of Bible for many years. He is the anther of many books and articles; some were in the "Gospel Guardian," now "Truth Magazine," and "Bible Banner." He was one of the best know and most loved preacher and teachers in the church of Christ. I do not think it is now in print. (Church of Christ).

2. EDWARD FUDGE: Was also a writer for "Truth Magazine" and numerous other periodicals. His book, "The Fire That Consumes" has gone through many printing and has been in print for many years. (Church of Christ).

3. WILLIAM ROBERT WEST: His book, "Unconditional Immortality Or Resurrection Of The Dead" is now in print in it's third update available at:

<http://www.buybooksontheweb.com/product.aspx?ISBN=0-7414-4620-0>

It is available free on line at:

<http://www.robertwr.com/resurrection.pdf> and has had more than 620,000 downloads and growing daily. (Church of Christ).

4. MOSES E. LORD: One of the best-known preachers and writers in the church of Christ. "'For the wages of sin is death.' It always pays. Whether the sinner stipulates for his wages or not, he is sure to receive it. What the wages of sin are, the apostle here tells us: it is eternal death. How astounding the fact that so many should serve for such a reward!" Commentary on Romans, Page 218, 1875, Gospel Light Publishing Company. Also his book "Do The Holy Scriptures Teach The Endlessness Of Future Punishment? I have been unable to find a copy of his book but found this about it by Steven Clark Goad in "church of Christ Christian Podcast." He said in a recent conversation he had with Jimmy Allen of Harding University, Jimmy Allen said that he was rethinking and restudying the traditional understanding of hell. That Jimmy Allen of Harding University shared with him more that confidentiality he would not be allow to repeat, but Jimmy Allen at Harding University sent him a copy of a paper by Moses E. Lard, 1879, "Do the Holy Scriptures Teach the Endlessness of Future Punishment?" Steven Clark Goad said this booklet by Moses E. Lord is a magnificent word study of the Greek word aion draws many of the conclusions he had outlined at:

<http://www.godsmessagetheweb.net/2010/07/25/thoughts-on-punishment-of-the-wicked/> and this booklet by Lard points out that his understanding is not new or something a few harebrained fanatics have recently thought up to stir controversy. (Church of Christ)

5. C. R. GRESHAM: "It is generally conceived that there is little about resurrection or after-life in what the Jews called the Torah...and the Former Prophets...Death is seen as the end, the destruction of human existence." Page 25. "Man's soul is primarily his vitality, his life, not some separate part of a person that has independent existence and an immortal nature, God's spirit (His breath, His power) creates and sustains all living things (Ps 33:6; 104:29-30), even the human spirit (Zech 12:1), but never is man's soul or spirit seen as an immortal part of man surviving death." Page 40. "The widespread misunderstanding that the New Testament teaches the immortality of the soul...If one recognizes that death and eternal life in the New Testament are always bound up the Christ-event, then it becomes clear that for the first Christians the soul is not intrinsically immortal, but rather became so only through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Page 275. "What The Bible Says About Resurrection" The College Press, 1983. (Church of Christ).

6. SAMUEL DAWSON: "You may be surprised to learn that most, if not all, of our popular concepts of Hell can be found in the writings of Roman Catholic writers...None of our concepts of Hell can be found in the teaching of Jesus Christ! You know how indignant we get at the mention of purgatory-we know that's not in the Bible. You may also find out that our popular concepts of Hell came from the same place that purgatory did-Roman Catholicism" "Jesus' Teaching On Hell," Page 13. A free copy of this book at: www.gospelthemes.com (Church of Christ).

7. JERRY CROSS: "When Jesus was on earth he didn't speak of immortality, but rather of eternal life. The Greeks taught that the soul had a natural and innate quality to enable it to pass through death and resist corruption. But, Jesus taught that our 'immortality' is anchored in a life-relationship with God. Jesus was a teacher of 'eternal life,' but Plato of the 'immortality of the soul.' Today these expressions are often confusingly used as synonyms. Yet, they spring from two different sources, one from Greek philosophy, and the other from New Testament Christianity... It is very easy to read the term 'soul' or 'spirit' in the English Bible and impart (much later) Descartes, Western

thinking became very much dualistic in its view of man. A person is composed, according to this view, of material, extended, substance (body) and immaterial, non-extended, substance (mind). The soul is the imperishable element that is housed in a bodily prison. Therefore, when western man hears the term 'soul,' he thinks of that element of himself that is confined within his body that is destined to live forever. The presentation of 'soul' in the Hebrew Old Testament is quite different however...the Old Testament presents man as an 'animated body' which is a 'complex of parts, drawing life and activity from a breath-soul, which has no existence apart from the body'" Magnolia Bible College 1984 Lectures, Page 48 and 49. (Church of Christ).

8. CURTIS DICKINSON: "There is not one scripture to support the idea that man is an immortal soul living for the moment in a temple of clay, and that when the body dies the man goes on living...It might come as a surprise to some to know that the term immortal is never used in scripture in connection with soul or man's spirit" "What The Bible Teaches About Immortality And Future Punishment," Page 8 and 9. (Church of Christ).

9. ELIAS SMITH: Also one of the best know-preachers and writers in the church of Christ. Often referred to as "Elder" Elias Smith. "This year, in June, my attention was called to think of the real state of the wicked after the last judgment. Before this time, I had taken for truth the old pagan doctrine of 'eternal misery' for the wicked. In June, 1804, being in Mr. Holmes' bookstore, in Boston, I asked him if he had any new publications. He handed me Evan's Sketch. On opening the book my eyes first fixed on the word, 'destructionists.' I read one page, and concluded, people who held the wicked would be destroyed, were in strange error, as no such thing ever before entered my mind. I bought the book. Often after that the destruction of the wicked would pass through my mind, though I supposed eternal misery was recorded in the Bible. In April 1805, I concluded one day to take my Bible and concordance, and find eternal misery, and not have my mind any longer troubled about destruction. I examined the words misery, miserable, and miserably; and found there was not one

place in the Bible where the word was used to describe the state of man beyond death. Next I looked for the word torment, and found that was limited, and that there was no torment mentioned beyond the day of judgment. I then looked at the words destroy, destruction, death, second death, perish, consumed, perdition, burnt up, end, etc. I examined the similitudes used to describe the end of the wicked, such as chaff and stubble burnt up; dry trees cast into the fire, and tares burnt up; the fat of lambs consumed, whirlwinds, a dream, and noise. All these things proved to me that at the last judgment, the wicked would be punished with everlasting destruction, which would be their end. My mind was settled upon the subject; but concluded to keep my discovery to myself; as the people were almost distracted with having so many new things; such as that God was one and not three, and that all rules but the Bible was useless, and that salvation was free for all. My first preaching and writing disturbed the clergy and the wicked; the next disturbed the Baptists, and I was about certain, if this were known, it would disturb my brethren with whom I was connected. I kept it back as long as duty would suffer me, and was constrained at last to make it known, or preach no more. It made some stir, but people bore it as well as could be expected. Soon after preaching it, I wrote and published five sermons upon the subject, which has never been answered to this day." The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travel, and Sufferings of Elias Smith, 1886, Page 347, (Church of Christ).

10. JOHN SCOTT: "Genesis 2:7 is the classic statement of the uniting of flesh and spirit. Here, we have the creature of flesh and bone created from the dust and then brought into a living existence by the Lord blowing into man's nostrils the breath of life. The phrase 'became a living soul' is the same Hebrew phrase used in verse 19 referring to 'every living creature,' that is, to the beasts and birds as other forms of life. In this sense of the word then, man is not distinguished from the animal world as far as life is concerned by the use of these special terms...The *nehphesh* may even be said to die [Judges 16:30], but *nehphesh* is never used of the spirit of the dead; in fact, nowhere is the suggestion made that the soul survives the

man whose life it was in the Old Testament." Harding Graduate School Lectures, 1971, Pages 130-131, Gospel Advocate Company, (Church of Christ).

11. ROGER DICKSON: "A general meaning would be that the soul has reference to any animate being of life that has sense perception ... thus, the soul would be the life principle of an individual." Page 45, "Life, Death and Beyond" Biblical Research Library. (Church of Christ).

12. AL MAXEY: "The Maxey-Thrasher Debate" A debate on the eternal destiny of the wicked between two Gospel preachers. "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living SOUL/being' (Genesis 2:7). Some traditionalists virtually equate this last phrase (living soul) with 'immortal soul.' But, that is NOT what the passage says. God put breath within this body and the body became a living being. The exact same words are used of animals in the Scriptures. Further, it doesn't say man was GIVEN a soul. It says man BECAME a soul. Big difference!" Free on the web at: <http://www.zianet.com/maxey/MxThrshr.htm> (Church of Christ).

13. ROBERT DOZIER: "Dozier-Johnson Debate" The eternal destiny of the wicked by a Gospel preacher. "But Gehenna was all about destroying that which was dumped there. There were not cries of never ending conscious pain coming out of the bodies cast there. No conscious torment, just destruction of trash, carcasses of animals, and some dead human bodies. It was all about death and destruction. That is what those who heard Jesus speak of Gehenna would think of. Jesus spoke of the wicked and lost as being cast into Gehenna AFTER God killed them (Luke 12:5)." Free on the web at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/Religiousdebats/message/1408>, (Church of Christ).

14. ROBERT L. WHITESIDE: Writer and editor of the "Gospel Advocate" for many years. "If you serve sin, you need not doubt as to what your wages are to be, nor as to whether you will be paid in full. The final reward for your service to sin is eternal death." A New Commentary On Paul's Letter To The Saints At Rome, Page 142, 1945. (Church of Christ).

15. E. M. ZERR: Said it denotes, therefore, that a life devoted to the service of sin will earn or merit the wages of death, not physical death that comes to all, but the second death, designated in Revelation 21:8. Bible Commentary, Volume 5, Page 360, copyrighted 1952 by E. M Zerr. (Church of Christ).

16. E. D. SLOUGH “Punishment lasts so long as its results last, and where death has been administered for the satisfaction of crime, THE PUNISHMENT CONTINUES TILL LIFE IS RESTORED, AND IF NEVER RESTORED, IT IS AN EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT. Lost of property, loss of liberty, loss of life, may all be meted out to the transgressors under the label of punishment. And death as the capital punishment, legalized on the statutes of all civilized nations of the world, is the highest punishment man can inflict—or so recognized,—being the deprivation of life, the first source of all pleasures and enjoyments, and recognized as being forfeited for certain crimes.” “The Indictment Of Eternal Torment—The Self-negation Of A Monstrous Doctrine,” Page 196-197, F. L. Rowe, Publisher, 1914, (evangelist, church of Christ).

17. B. W. JOHNSON: “*For the wages of sin*. Sin is a master of his servants and pays wages. The wages is *death*, one of the saddest, but profoundest truths of the world. But the *gift of God*. God gives to those who turn from sin, life eternal” The People’s New Testament With Notes, Gospel Light Publishing Company. (Church of Christ).

18. LEROY GARRETT: “Nowhere in Scripture will you find the idea that God bestows upon the wicked everlasting (unending) life or immortality so that he can then torment them forever in hell fire. The wicked die forever for two reasons: they do not have the gift of immortality, and they have to receive the wages earned for their life of sin, which is death.” Restoration Review, November 2990, “Is Hell Fire Endless?” (Church of Christ).

19. STEVEN CLARK GOAD: “Our present traditional view of hell, borrowed from Catholicism and paganism, is no more biblical than their doctrine of limbo,” “Thoughts on Punishment of the Wicked” church of Christ Christian Ekklesia Podcast

<http://www.godsmessagetheweb.net/2010/07/25/thoughts-on-punishment-of-the-wicked> (Church of Christ).

20. JEREMY K. MORITZ: "I grew up in the church. For many years, I believed in the traditional view of Heaven and Hell—that souls are taken from the body immediately following death and are placed in either Heaven or Hell where they will spend eternity in bliss or unending torture. This is what most of the Christian church right now believes. For the last six or seven years, however, I have found countless scriptures that have changed my thinking considerably in this area. It seems to me that nearly the entire Bible teaches that eternal life is only experienced in Heaven, that Hell is a place of complete destruction and annihilation." "HELL: Eternal Torment or Complete Annihilation?"

<http://www.jeremyandchristine.com/articles/eternal.php>
(Church of Christ).

21. ASHLEY S. JOHNSON: "Does the doctrine of endless punishment harmonize with the fundamental principles underlying God's government that the hopelessly wicked, the incorrigibly wicked, shall be blotted out? Trace his dealings with the nations through the centuries. On this principle he destroyed the antediluvians (Gen. 5:1-7; 7:1-24). Also Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen., 18:20,21). Also Korah and his rebels (Num., 16:31-33). Also he made provision for the utter destruction of idolaters (Deut., 12:13-18). Also the Egyptians (Ex., 14:1-31). Also Babylon (Isa., 13:19-220. Moses predicted the destruction of the incorrigible (Deut., 18:18, 19). So did Peter (Acts, 3:22,23). John had a vision of the day (Rev., 3:13-21). Why should this be God's method of getting rid of the wicked all through history if he is to suddenly change it at the judgment day, and consign all his sinful creatures to torment and punish that all alike and that without end? I cannot answer. Can you?" Founder and president of the Johnson Bible College, "The Resurrection And The Future Life," Page 432-433, 1913, Knoxville Lithographing Company, (Church of Christ).

22. DILLARD THURMAN, Brown Trail Church of Christ: "The hope and aspiration of many has been shifted from His coming again to receive His own, to an immediate immortality and heavenly bliss immediately at death! Jesus DID NOT promise

that!" Gospel Minutes, Volume 34, Number 5, February 1, 1985, (Church of Christ).

23. F. LaGARD SMITH: Teacher at David Lipscomb University, "If, as we are told at funerals, our loved ones are already in heaven with Jesus, what is the purpose of Christ's Coming and the Resurrection?" After Life, A Glimpse Of Eternity Beyond Death's Door. (church of Christ)

24. OREN ORAHOOD and many others in the restoration movement and after.

In the next few years look for this opposition to grow in the churches of Christ and the Christian Church.

THE VANISHING HELL

Not only is the preaching of Hell vanishing from the preaching in many churches but it is also vanishing from many translations of the Bible.

TRANSLATIONS ARE GETTING AWAY FROM HELL

The King James Version and the New King James Version ARE THE ONLY TWO OF THE MAJOR TRANSLATIONS THAT HAVE HELL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. ALL OTHERS HAVE ABANDONED IT AS A BAD TRANSLATION. Hell is rapidly vanishing from the Bible. It has vanished from the Old Testament in most conservative translations. Moses or Abraham did not know about it. It has all but vanished from the New Testament in the conservative translations, and has vanished altogether in many. Even in the 31 times Hell is in the King James Version, in 12 of these, the New King James Version changed Hell in the King James Version to sheol (from 31 times to 19 times). Were the translators trying to ease away but were afraid to go to far?

THE VANISHING HELL: WHY IS THE NUMBER OF TIMES HELL IS USED DECREASING? TRANSLATORS CANNOT AGREE ON HOW MANY TIMES TO MISTRANSLATE IT.

NUMBER OF TIMES HELL IS USED IN	THE BIBLE	THE O.T.	THE N. T.
THE WYCLIFFE BIBLE	(1395) 83 TIMES	57 TIMES	26 TIMES
MILES COVERDALE BIBLE	(1535) 70 TIMES	50 TIMES	23 TIMES
THE BISHOP'S BIBLE	(1568) 59 TIMES	35 TIMES	24 TIMES
THE GENEVA BIBLE	(1587) 36 TIMES	16 TIMES	20 TIMES
THE ORIGINAL KING JAMES VERSION	(1611) 52 TIMES	30 TIMES	22 TIMES
KING JAMES VERSION	54 TIMES	31 TIMES	23 TIMES

THE KING JAMES VERSION HAS HAD SEVERAL REVERSIONS AND THE ONE THAT IS USED TODAY IS NOT THE ORIGINAL 1611 VERSION; IT IS THE LAST OF SEVERAL REVISIONS.

WESTSTER BIBLE	(1611)	49 TIMES	26 TIMES	23 TIMES
NEW KING JAMES VERSION	(1982)	32 TIMES	19 TIMES	13 TIMES
YOUNG'S LITERAL BIBLE	(1891)	0 TIMES	0 TIMES	0 TIMES
AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION	(1901)	13 TIMES	0 TIMES	13 TIMES
NEW AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION	(1960)	13 TIMES	0 TIMES	13 TIMES
REVISED STANDARD VERSION	(1946)	13 TIMES	0 TIMES	13 TIMES
DERBY TRANSLATION	(1890-1961)	12 TIMES	0 TIMES	12 TIMES
NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION	(1987)	14 TIMES	0 TIMES	14 TIMES
AMPLIFIED BIBLE	(1987)	15 TIMES	0 TIMES	15 TIMES*
NEW CENTURY VERSION	(1987)	12 TIMES	0 TIMES	12 TIMES
NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION	(1989)	13 TIMES	0 TIMES	13 TIMES
REVISED ENGLISH BIBLE	(1989)	28 TIMES	15 TIMES	13 TIMES
CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION	(1995)	20 TIMES	0 TIMES	20 TIMES
NEW LIVING TRANSLATION	(1996)	19 TIMES	2 TIMES	17 TIMES
ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION	(2001)	14 TIMES	0 TIMES	14 TIMES
NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION - UK		14 TIMES	0 TIMES	14 TIMES
TODAY'S NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION		13 TIMES	0 TIMES	13 TIMES
HOLMAN CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE(2003)		11 TIMES	0 TIMES	11 TIMES
UPDATE BIBLE VERSION 1 9	(2003)	12 TIMES	0 TIMES	12 TIMES
PESHITTA - LAMSA TRANSLATION		12 TIMES	1 TIME	11 TIMES
ROTHERHAM EMPHASIZED	(1902)	0 TIMES	0 TIMES	0 TIMES
FENTON'S BIBLE IN MODERN ENGLISH	(1903)	0 TIMES	0 TIMES	0 TIMES
NEW AMERICAN BIBLE (CATHOLIC)	(1991)	0 TIMES	0 TIMES	0 TIMES
WORLD ENGLISH BIBLE (CATHOLIC)		0 TIMES	0 TIMES	0 TIMES
HEBREW NAMES VERSION OF WEB		0 TIMES	0 TIMES	0 TIMES
DANIEL MACE NEW TESTAMENT	(1729)		3 TIMES	
WESLEY' N T (THE ORIGINAL, NOT SOME UPDATED EDITIONS)	(1755)		0 TIMES	
SCARLETT'S NEW TESTAMENT	(1798)		0 TIMES	
THE NEW TESTAMENT IN GREEK AND ENGLISH (KNEELAND)	(1823)		0 TIMES	
NEW COVENANT, NEW TESTAMENT	(1884)		0 TIMES	
SCRIVENRE NEW TESTAMENT	(1884)		0 TIMES	
HANSON'S NEW COVENANT	(1884)		0 TIMES	
TWENTIETH CENTURY NEW TESTAMENT	(1900)		0 TIMES	
ROTHERHAM'S EMPHASIZED BIBLE (REPRINTED)	(1902)		0 TIMES	
FENTON'S HOLY BIBLE IN MODERN ENGLISH	(1903)		0 TIMES	
WEYMOUTH'S NEW TESTAMENT IN MODERN SPEECH	(1903)		0 TIMES	
PANIN'S NUMERIC ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT	(1914)		0 TIMES	
THE PEOPLE'S NEW COVENANT (OVERBURY)	(1925)		0 TIMES	
WESTERN NEW TESTAMENT	(1926)		0 TIMES	
THE NEW TESTAMENT, A TRANSLATION (CLEMANTSON)	(1938)		0 TIMES	
J B PHILLIPS NEW TESTAMENT IN MODERN ENGLISH	(1947)		1 TIMES	
NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR ANOINTED(TOMANEK)	(1958)		0 TIMES	
WESTERN NEW TESTAMENT	(1959)		0 TIMES	
RESTORATION OF ORIGINAL SACRED NAME BIBLE	(1976)		0 TIMES	
THE NEW TESTAMENT, A NEW TRANSLATION (GREBER)	(1980)		0 TIMES	
CONCORDANCE LITERAL NEW TESTAMENT	(1983)		0 TIMES	
CHRISTIAN BIBLE, NEW TESTAMENT	(1991)		0 TIMES	
RECOVERY VERSION, NEW TESTAMENT	(1991)		0 TIMES	
NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS ANOINTED			0 TIMES	
THE ORIGINAL BIBLE PROJECT (DR TABOR)			0 TIMES	
INTERLINEAR GREEK-ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT(NOTE A)(BERRY)	(1897)		0 TIMES	
EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT, GREEK/ENGLISH INTERLINEAR (WILSON)	(1942)		0 TIMES	
ZONDERVAN PARALLEL N T IN GREEK AND ENGLISH (NOTE A)	(1975)		0 TIMES	
NASB-NIV PARALLEL N T IN GREEK AND ENGLISH(MARSHALL)	(1986)		0 TIMES	
INTERLINEAR NASB-NIV PARALLEL NT GREEK-ENGLISH(NOTE A)	(1993)		0 TIMES	
JEWISH PUBLICATION SOCIETY BIBLE OLD TESTAMENT(NOTE B)	(1917)		0 TIMES	
TANAKH, THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, OLD TESTAMENT (NOTE B)	(1985)		0 TIMES	
THE COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE (NOTE B)			0 TIMES	
THE SEPTUAGINT-TRANSLATION OF HEBREW TO GREEK 3RD CENTURY BC			0 TIMES	

*12 times the Amplified Bible has "*Hell (Gehenna)*" in the text, not in a footnote.

Note A. The word-for-word translations beneath the Greek, not the translations in the margin.

Note B. All Jewish translations I found of the Old Testament do not have "Hell" in them. It is not in the Septuagint, a

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