

So Why Did Jesus Die If Not To Save Us From Hell?

Description

This article is the 7th part of a 9 part series on Universal Restoration vs Eternal Torment (hell). I recommend reading [the introduction](#) first if you haven't already. (*link below*)

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So, why did Jesus die if not to save us from hell?

That's just the thing, **Jesus DID die to save us from hell**. Even the Universal Restoration crowd believes that. Without His sacrifice, we would be eternally separated from God. It's Jesus death that paid the ransom for many. Without it, all of mankind is doomed.

Both the Eternal Torment position and the Universal Restoration position agree on this. In fact, they agree on almost everything except one point.

The Universalists believe you can be saved after you die, but the Eternal Torment position says the possibility of salvation ends at death.

But remember, Jesus died for more than just saving us from the penalty of our sins.

Matthew 1:21

21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for **He will save His people from their sins.**"

In a nutshell, that's it.

It doesn't say Jesus came **just** to save us from the penalty of our sins. It says He (also) came to save us **from** our sin. Too often, we focus on the first to the exclusion of the second. Sin destroys the life that God wants for us. Sin is so horrible that in God's eyes that there's no difference between being sinful and being dead.

To Him, they are the same thing.

Ephesians 2:1

1 and you were **dead in your trespasses and sins**,

Romans 6:23

23 For the **wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God HATES sin.

Sin is ugly and it's foul. It destroys everything it touches like a plague. It kills the life He wants for us like the black plague. Regardless of which position you believe, Jesus came to give us "Zoen Aionion". (*Eternal life and/or the life of ages*)

Neither is compatible with sin.

If you believe in Universal Restoration, don't "*continue in sin that grace may abound*". Besides the age(s) you'll spend in the lake of fire, it will destroy your life on earth too.

If you believe in Eternal Torment, don't forget that Jesus died to save you from your sins. Not just save you from hell, but from your sin. Don't make His death only about avoiding hell, remember that He died to save you from your sins right here and right now.

Universalism Solves the "can you lose your salvation?" Debate Perfectly

On the same topic, the Church has been debating the question of "eternal security" for a long time. From a Universalism standpoint, "losing" your salvation (*which means you skip the lake of fire*) isn't a problem.

From that perspective, yes you can lose your salvation. You can fall away and thus are subject to the punishment of ages (*lake of fire*). However, it's not "lost" because after your time in the lake of fire, you don't "lose" anything eternally (*except your reward*) because you can be saved again – and

permanently – after you die.

It's the only way I've seen to harmonize the “you can lose your salvation” passages with the “you can't lose your salvation” passages.

Universalism also solves the “*What about those who never hear the Gospel?*” Objection

From a Universalism standpoint, they can be saved. They will be (*rightly*) judged for their sins in the afterlife. However, if you can be saved after you die, then – while they will be justly punished – they will also have the opportunity to repent and be saved. It'll just be *after* the lake of fire. Thereafter, they can join other Christians in paradise with believers. (*because at that point, they would be believers.*)

One other point

There's another point the Universalists make that doesn't fit very well in the other sections, so I'll put it here. Both Positions agree the God wants to save everyone and the Scriptures confirm this.

Ezekiel 18:32

32 For **I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,**” declares the Lord God.
“Therefore, repent and live.”

Ezekiel 33:11a

11a Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, **I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.**

1 Timothy 2:3-4

3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

4 **who desires all men to be saved** and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3:

9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**

The Eternal Torment Position says that God did EVERYTHING He could do – short of revoking free will – to reconcile us to Him. They say that it's not that God can't or won't save us; it's that we won't allow ourselves to be saved.

From the Universalist perspective, **Eternal Torment says: “man's ability to mess things up is greater than God's ability to clean things up.”** It says that God can try His hardest at something He wants to do (*save us*), and He will fail.

Think about that for a moment.

The God of the Universe will fail?

Really?

I hadn't really considered this before I started looking into Universalism, but they have a point. The more I think about that, the less I like it.

Eternal Torment says that God wants to save us, but we won't let Him save us. My biggest problem with that is with the concept of me “letting God” do anything. God has spent many years teaching me the He is in absolute control. I have spent many years learning I can trust Him because that's true.

Humans don't “let” God do anything.

The Bible is filled with declarations of God's power. It's all over every page and a theme that repeats itself thousands of times in the Bible. Mankind is absolutely powerless before God's might and He can do anything He wants.

Verses like the ones below support that point.

Job 42:1-2

1 Then Job answered the LORD and said,

2 **“I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted.**

Isaiah 46:9-10

9 “Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘**My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure**’;

Psalm 135:5-6

5 I know that the LORD is great, that our Lord is greater than all gods.

6 **The LORD does whatever pleases him**, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.

Daniel 4:35

35 “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But **He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand** or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’

Comparing our so-called “power” with His **POWER** is like comparing a single atom to this entire planet. We don’t even register. We are like “dust on the scales”; we’re too small to even notice (*power-wise*)

Isaiah 40:13-18 & 22-28

13 Who can fathom the Spirit of the LORD, or instruct the LORD as his counselor?

14 Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge, or showed him the path of understanding?

15 **Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales** ; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.

16 Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires, nor its animals enough for burnt offerings.

17 Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing.

18 With whom, then, will you compare God? To what image will you liken him?

...

22 He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

23 He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.

24 No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.

25 "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.

27 Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God"?

28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.

The idea that we can prevent God from doing something He wants to do is arguably dangerous, and absolutely contrary to Scripture. (*re-read that passage in Isaiah if you disagree*)

The Universalist says that idea is almost blasphemy.

They would say it exalts mankind far above where we should be. Worse, from a Universalist perspective it exalts Satan to a position of power and gives him an incredible victory over God in the end.

Why?

Because most of mankind will be lost to Eternal Torment. (*if they're right*)

Even a conservative estimate means Satan will bag way more souls than God. Right now there are 2.2 Billion people who say they are Christian. However we know that:

Matthew 7:22-23

22 “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’

23 “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’

But let’s pretend all 2.2 Billion people will be saved. That means less than 1/3 will be saved. That means with the most wildly optimistic projections, Satan will damn twice as many souls to Hell as God will save to Heaven. Even though Satan will end up there himself, he still will have accomplished his goal of destroying most of humanity, even though God wants to save them.

In most any game, getting 2/3 of the total “points” would be winning. Some Universalists even say Eternal Torment/hell would be “*An eternal monument to Satan’s Victory and God’s failure.*”

The Eternal Torment position simply shrugs and replies:

Matthew 7:13-14

13 “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

14 “For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

I’ll let you decide which is more reasonable.

(I should also add that Calvinist are unbothered by all of the above. Calvinists believe that God simply doesn’t want to save many/most people, which I think stands in stark contrast to the verses above.)

The next article in this series is: [The Early Church Fathers on Universal Restoration](#)