

10-2-1969

From/To: T.W. Graham (enclosure, Chalk's reply
filed first)

T.W. Graham

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October 2, 1969

Mr. Thomas W. Graham
P. O. Box 227
Blue Springs, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Graham:

I have carefully read your recent letter. I can certainly appreciate the reasons you feel so strongly about the question of hell. However, there is too much Biblical material for me to be able to dismiss it as lightly as evidently you do.

The teachings of Jesus regarding hell in Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-49 and John 5:21-29 make it very evident that He believed that those who rebelled persistently at God would suffer eternal and cosmic consequences. I believe one who misunderstands the power of evil will find it hard to understand the reality of hell.

The Scriptures I have given are only a few of those that reflect the teachings of Jesus. They, of course, do not include the very clear teachings in the Epistles and in Revelation regarding this same subject.

It is obvious that we do have a difference. I would hope that it is only one of degree, and not one of category. You must certainly have seen much of the havoc that personal evil wrecks in men's lives. You must have wondered about how all this evil is met. It is my understanding of God's Word that hell is reserved for those who remain in complete rebellion against all that is holy and right (Rev. 20:14, 15; 21:8).

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely yours,

John Allen Chalk

JAC:hm

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P
Y

Math 25: 41-46
Mk 9: 43-49

Blue Springs, Miss.,
9/18/69

John 5: 21-29

Dr. John Allen Chalk,
Highland Church of Christ,
P. O. Box 2439, Aberline, Texas 79604.

Dear Brother Chalk:

I have just read your recent good sermon; the same is ~~very~~ wonderful, beyond words to describe, and I thank you for same.

I am herewith enclosing a letter I got out years ago, and kindly ask that you read, and at your leisure give me your opinion of same. With all my heart and knowledge of the Bible I feel that I am right. As you so well know that man's depth of sympathy and love is far short of Jesus Christ's. Therefore, on this basis, Jesus Crist would be far from condemning sinners of this world a punishment of everlasting life in a hell of fire and brinstone.

I would appreciate your setting up five of the strengest scriptures covering the above point., and I will greatly thank and appreciate same. May God's greatest blessing be continued to fall on you and your wonderful work. I am,

Yours in His name,
Thomas W. Graham
Thomas W. Graham.

Blue Springs, Miss.
August 31, 1952

Dear Bro.

I am mailing to you under separate cover two little booklets, aside from a Pocket Treasure, that you may see another side of the picture of the subject we were discussing the other day. It is only looking at the four corners of a proposition, and giving each its due weight, that places one in a position where he can intelligently arrive at a correct solution. Even then, oftentimes, prejudice, one's long thinking and training prevents giving weight where it is due.

I have long since felt and believed that a literal hell, as pictured by most churches, was an honest misconception of the TRUTH (teachings of the Bible). Reading the booklets that I have enclosed greatly strengthened my thought along this line. I only read Survival Through Faith very recently; however, it didn't suggest a thought but what I have long entertained.

Aside from the Scriptures, the controlling thought that has induced me to think that a literal hell, as has been taught and preached from the pulpit of most churches, is not the truth, for the reason that it doesn't make sense; it is foreign to a God of Love. According to scriptures, all God ever made and planned for the future has super-intelligence behind it.

We will take a father, for instance, who has a son that has proven most unworthy, as well as ungrateful. As an extreme example, the father might even welcome the death of that son; yet, under no conditions would he have the least desire that he be punished to the extent that he be eternally burned by an unquenchable fire and never be consumed, but burned forever and ever. That would be most unmerciful of any man to desire such a punishment on his wayward son, regardless of his station in life. Yet, how much more merciful, loving, and forgiving is God than any man that has ever lived! Beyond measure, which you well know. The Bible is full of the love, mercy and forgiving spirit of God and our blessed Savior.

So, it seems to me, Brother, that the churches are doing God and our Redeemer, as well as mankind itself, a very great injustice to teach and preach of a literal hell that I mentioned above. "They" try to get around laying such an ungodly punishment on God, but that doesn't make sense. This I won't go into, for you know quite well.

It is my opinion that the preaching of the above keeps some people out of the church, as well as make them skeptics of the Bible. I, for one, am out of the church, but not out of God's word - the Bible. It is my daily study and my only life. I know you have studied the Bible far more than I, as well as having been taught and trained in its teaching.

You have been raised up, educated and associated with people who think like yourself. They are fully satisfied with your every thought on the above subject without having to look into the minds of others who are equally intelligent and are equally eager for the truth. It is your sole right, as well as it is mine and others, to think differently. However, I want to leave one thought with you, (which I hope you won't think too bold of me to express), it is my candid opinion that it is not going to be many years until there will be a great change in the churches of today on the subject of a literal hell, and the same will have a wonderful effect in bringing the masses into the church for Christ, and not the devil and his angels.

Just to say that I am always glad to see you, and I hope that you may receive the above in the spirit in which it is given. May God bless you.

Yours in Christ,

T. W. Graham

T. W. Graham

(On the 4/10/69 I was 93 yrs old)