

## Doctrine of the World

### Finding Peace

1. One of the most famous pieces of sculptor in all the world is Auguste Rodin's, *The Thinker*. The French sculptor, Rodin, lived from November 12, 1840 – November 17, 1917.
2. It is fun to ask, "What is he thinking about?"
3. Originally named, *The Poet*, the image, commissioned in 1880, was to be the centerpiece for a doorway surround called *The Gates of Hell*, based on Dante's, *The Divine Comedy*.
4. Some scholars believe the idea was to present Dante, still at the gates of hell, contemplating the fate of himself, but that is only a theory.
5. Hell is something that individuals are reluctant to think about. The doctrine of justification by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, has been replaced by the doctrine of justification, by death. All a person has to do is die, in order to be transferred into heaven, or to be annihilated.
6. The idea is rejected of a grimmer destination for the soul other than eternal life in heaven, or eternal sleep in the grave.
7. The reality is that there are many tragedies in time, and in eternity, which cannot be ignored.
8. One such tragedy is described in the gospel of Luke.
  - *Luke 13:1 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?*
9. The setting for this historical event was worship. While people were offering their religious sacrifices to the Lord, the soldiers of Pontus Pilate suddenly appeared, and slaughter them. The blood of the Galileans was mixed with the blood of the animals being sacrificed.
10. The implied question was, "How could God allow this to happen?"
11. Some might assume that the Galileans deserved to be slaughter for some sinful behavior, which is why Jesus asked, "Do you believe that the Galileans who were in the act of worship were greater sinners than all other Galileans?" Jesus went on to say, "I tell you they were not."

12. By way of application, the people who died on September 11, 2001, in the World Trade Center Towers in New York, were not greater sinners than all others in New York. They were not.
13. The lesson of life is that suffering must not be equated with sinful behavior unless the Lord specifically reveals that to be the case. Some other reason must be considered.
14. While many perished on September 11, 2001, many others survived the ordeal. "Why?" It was not because they were more righteous than those who perished, nor was it because they were the lucky ones. Those who survived did not survive because of chance, or in an accidental way.
15. The only explanation for life and death is God.
  - *Ecclesiastes 3:1 To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:*
16. For a Christian, death need not be dreaded. It is not the end of all things good. There is something far better than life on earth.
  - *Philippians 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.*
17. When Jesus said that people who died were not greater sinners than others, He went on to say that those who were listening to Him would also perish, unless they repented.
18. Instead of offering grieving individuals hope and comfort, Christ called upon those present to repent. It was an astonishing response to those trying to find peace of mind.
19. At the very least, some in the audience wanted the Lord to give them permission to be angry, to hate Pilate, and Rome, and to rise up in retaliation. Jesus would have none of that. He turned hearts from time, to eternity, because eternity is where people will live, or perish.
20. As long as people maintain a posture of impenitence towards God, they shall perish.
21. Turning to another historical event, the collapse of a tower in Siloam, Jesus notes that eighteen precious souls perished. They did not perish because they were worse sinners than all other people living in Jerusalem. They died because of a divine appointment with death.
  - *Ecclesiastes 3:1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:*
22. Again, Jesus did not try to comfort the people as much as He tried to prepare them for their own date with destiny.
23. In people want to find peace, they must bow before the sovereignty of God. Jesus had a world view that He wanted to instill in others.

24. Jesus had a view of God, that He was perfect, and righteous in His justice. Jesus also had a view of man, that every person is a sinner before God, and stands in need of a Saviour.
25. Of what were people to repent? They were to repent of sin. They were to turn to Christ.
26. As unpopular as the concept of people perishing may be, as difficult as it is to embrace the Biblical doctrine of hell, no one teaches us more about hell than Jesus. Jesus taught more about hell than heaven.
27. The author of Hebrews likes people to those in the Old Testament economy, who received the mercies of God, and rejected Him to the point they had to endure His wrath.
28. The heart of love pleads with individuals not to do that. Jesus pleaded with people not to perish.
29. Jesus warned individuals of the wrath to come, as surely as God warned individuals of His wrath if they turned from Him.
- *Hebrews 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.*
30. The rhetorical question by the author of Hebrews provides its own answer. We cannot escape the wrath of God if we neglect the salvation offered to us in Christ.
31. The way to escape the wrath of God is through repentance, and faith in Christ.
32. The way to escape the wrath of God is not by believing the popular presentation of the gospel, that God loves everyone unconditionally.
33. When people hear that God loves individuals unconditionally, they understand that to mean they can do anything they want in life, and still go to heaven.
34. That is a false presentation of the gospel and leads to delusional thinking in the hearts of the unconverted.
35. The love of God is reserved for the elect. The elect of God are those who shall be the heirs of salvation. The heirs of salvation are those who have repented of sin, and turned, by faith, to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.
- *Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

36. There is a sense in which the love of God is unconditional, but His salvation is conditional. God requires all men, everywhere, to repent.

- *Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.*

37. There is nothing a person can do to save themselves.

38. Jesus describes people as debtors. Debtors are people who have unpaid obligations. God is our Maker, and our Ruler. We are indebted to Him because we have not honored our obligations to Him.

39. A burden of guilt is imposed on the individual who does not honor the known will of the Lord.

40. The obligation God has imposed on every person is obedience to His Law. The degree of a person's indebtedness to God is based on how well they have conformed to His Law.

41. Sin is disobedience to God's Law, and that is rebellion. Every act of rebellion becomes a greater part of a person's moral indebtedness to God.

42. Individuals mount up wrath against the day of wrath. The only hope for the removal of a person's spiritual debt is someone to pay our debt for us, because no one can pay their debt to God. That Someone, is Jesus.

"He paid a debt He did not owe  
I owed a debt I could not pay  
I needed someone to wash my sins away  
And now I sing a brand new song  
Amazing Grace  
Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay.

My debt He paid upon the cross  
He cleansed my soul from all its dross  
I tho't that no one could all my sins erase  
But now I sing a brand new song  
Amazing Grace  
Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay.

O such great pain my Lord endured  
When He my sinful soul secured  
I should have died there but Jesus took my place  
So now I sing a brand new song  
Amazing Grace  
Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay.

He didn't give to me a loan  
 He gave Himself now He's my own  
 He's gone to Heaven to make for me a place  
 And now I sing a brand new song  
 Amazing Grace  
 Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay.”

43. God demands perfect righteousness. Even one sin will damn a soul to eternal judgment. But the God of wrath is also the God of mercy.
44. In the doctrine of justification, God reveals His grace. In Christ there is no debt. So He becomes a suitable Substitute for sinners. Christ blots out our moral debt.
- *Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.*

***Special Note.***

In the ancient world, when a debt was paid, a large X, the Greek letter for chi, was placed on the document of a debt paid in full. The letter chi became a symbol of the Cross. At the Cross Jesus took our debt, and stamped X on it, blotting out the debt against us. It was stamped with an X, meaning, legally, “Paid in full”. Christ has, for us, cancelled our debt against God. God is both just, and the Justifier of sinners. He does not ignore our debt. Rather, He gives us a Substitute to pay our debt. Herein is the glory of the Cross.