

Last Things
Talk Two

Hell – Sacred Scripture

- **Is. 66:24:** For those who rebelled, their worm does not die; their fire is not extinguished.
- **Jer. 7:31:** Valley of Ben-Hinnom as high place where sons and daughters sacrificed by fire.
- **Mt. 3:12:** His winnowing fan is in his hand; gather wheat into barn and chaff burn with fire.
- **Mt. 5:22:** Whoever says, “You fool,” will be liable to the fiery Gehenna.
- **Mt. 25:31-45:** At the judgment of nations, Jesus separates sheep from the goats.
- **Images:** Fiery Gehenna, outer darkness, wailing and grinding of teeth, a blazing fire.

Hell – Church Councils

- **Lateran IV:** Christ will come to judge the living and the dead, and he will reward all...the wicked, a perpetual punishment with the devil, the good, eternal glory with Christ.
- **Vatican I:** Therefore, all who die in actual mortal sin are excluded from the kingdom of God.
- **Vatican II:** Thus, we may not be condemned to go into eternal fire (cf. Mt. 25:41) like the wicked and slothful servant (cf. 25:46), into the exterior darkness where there will be the weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt. 22:13; 25:30) (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 48).

Hell – Catholic Catechism

- **CCC 1035:** The teaching of the Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity. Immediately after death, the souls of those who die in a state of mortal sin descend into hell, where they suffer the punishments of hell, "eternal fire."
- **CCC 1037:** God predestines no one to go to hell; for this, a willful turning away from God (a mortal sin) is necessary, and persistence in it until the end.
 - **Eucharistic Prayer I:** “Father, accept this offering from your whole family. Grant us your peace in this life, save us from final damnation, and count us among those you have chosen.”

Hell – Two Pains

- **Pain of Loss:** The eternal loss of the beatific vision in hell. It is the primary punishment of the evil spirits and of the souls who die rejecting God (Modern Catholic Dictionary).
- **Pain of sense:** Suffering by some agent called “fire” in Scripture, external to the person and secondary to the main punishment, which is the loss of God (Modern Catholic Dictionary).
- **Spiritual Physics:** Sin causes suffering (clouds vision, breaks relationships, affects body, etc.).

| Reasons for Hell | |
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| Freedom | Love by nature is free; we have the freedom to say yes and no to God. |
| Seriousness of this life | What we do here matters; our choices have consequences; God is just. |
| Wedding Banquet | Those who say no to God would be in great pain if forced into the light. |

Purgatory – Sacred Scripture

- **Is. 6:1-10:** The prophet’s lips are purged by a seraph so he can be sent to the people.
- **2 Macc. 12:38-46:** Judas Maccabeus prays and sends collection to Jerusalem for the dead.
- **Lk. 5:1-11:** Peter recognizes his unworthiness and asks Jesus to depart from him.
- **Matt. 12:31-32:** “And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.” Jesus implies that some sins can be forgiven in the age to come.
- **1 Cor. 3:12-15:** Some works will endure (gold, silver, stones), while some will be burned up (wood, hay, straw); the person will suffer loss, he or she saved, but only as through fire.
- **Rev. 21:22-27:** John has a vision of heaven where nothing unclean shall enter it.

Purgatory – Made Perfect

| Catholic | Lutheran |
|---|---|
| Intrinsic Justification: Sinner <u>made</u> righteous (infused justification) by God’s mercy and love (Christ’s Passion). | Extrinsic Justification: Sinner <u>declared</u> righteous (imputed justification) by God’s mercy and love (Christ’s Passion). |
| Baptism: Die with Christ, so that we might live with him. Baptism is a sacrament of faith (assumes faith). | Faith: Confess our wretchedness and God’s grace manifested in Christ’s death and Resurrection |
| Purgatory: For those who die in God’s friendship, but are imperfectly purified, require purification to achieve holiness for heaven. They are made fit for heaven. | Not necessary: Not made clean, but rather remain dunghill covered with snow. We do not become holy, but God covers us with Christ’s blood. |
| Prayers: Church commends prayers, almsgiving, penances for the dead. | No prayers: Superfluous to pray for the dead as in they are in heaven or hell. |

Purgatory - Gift

- **Experience:** We all experience brokenness from ourselves and others in this life.
 - **Examples:** Hold grudges, disordered attachments, addictions, unhealed wounds, etc.
 - **Key:** Sin compromises our ability to both receive and give love to others. Purgatory purifies and removes all that compromises our capacity to receive and give love.
 - **Metaphor:** Jesus washes your baptismal garment (wedding garment) and tailors it making you fit for the eternal wedding banquet of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-8).

Heaven – Short Introduction

- **Objectively:** The dwelling place of God, angels, blessed (OT/NT), wherein the blessed are perfected in Christ (NT). Heaven is an objective reality (not a projection of the mind’s ideal).
 - **Key:** Blessed in heaven see divine essence intuitively, directly, and immediately.
- **Personalistic Language:** Better suited to describing state of happiness and peace with God
 - **CCC 1024:** This perfect life with the Most Holy Trinity – this communion of life and love with the Trinity, the Virgin Mary, the angels and the blessed – is called heaven.