

Conditional Immortality

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6:30am, May 29th, 2020

I want the truth of who God is and our relationship to Him to be known better all the time by each of us. That requires digging deeper into difficult and often misunderstood passages, even when the process is difficult and sometimes scary to examine assumptions of belief we may have held for a long time. The result of this process, each time I enter it, is a deeper love for God, a clarity of my life, and sometimes correction of my doctrine we are commanded to watch and preserve closely (1 Timothy 4:16). We are going to examine together an idea that in the past year or so I've studied over and am finding a lot of Biblical support for and not much from scripture that appears to refute it. It's a deep topic so this is only a brief introduction to help in looking into it further beyond our time together.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/will-hell-really-last-forever>

- Let's look at what Conditional Immortalism is saying by reviewing the attachment "Conditional Immortalism" written by James Spiegel.
- Next, let's review the devotional piece written by Greg Morse that refutes Conditional Immortalism and affirms the traditional belief of eternal suffering of the damned.
- After reading both and reviewing the scriptures below, what do you observe? What points are made that don't hold up based on what scripture teaches? What conclusions can you make?

Some questions and points from other articles I've read:

1. How is eternal suffering justice? Couldn't someone affirm that aborting babies are actually a good thing because if they are not aborted, wouldn't they grow up to be sinners (Romans 3:23) and most will not be saved (Matthew 7:13) and then endure torture forever?
2. Read Romans 2:6-8. What are we encouraged to seek here? Specifically of immortality, if all souls are born immortal, why would Paul be encouraging us to seek it?
3. Read John 6:47-51. If we all live forever (immortal), why would Jesus make it a condition for living forever if we eat of this bread (Him)?
4. Read 1 Timothy 6:12-16 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-55. According to these verses, are we immortal now? If not, when do we become immortal?

"For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live." – **Ezekiel 18:32**

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⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; ⁶ for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.” – **Psalm 1:5-6**

⁶ The stupid man cannot know; the fool cannot understand this: ⁷ that though the wicked sprout like grass and all evildoers flourish, they are doomed to destruction forever;” – **Psalm 92:6-7**

“And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.” – **Malachi 4:3**

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy^[a] that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.” – **Matthew 7:13**

“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” – **Matthew 10:28**

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” – **John 3:16**

⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” – **John 6:47-51**

⁶ He will render to each one according to his works: ⁷ to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸ but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.” – **Romans 2:6-8**

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” – **Romans 6:23**

“For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” – **Romans 8:13**

“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” – **1 Corinthians 1:18**

⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵ “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” – **1 Corinthians 15:50-55**

¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?” – **2 Corinthians 2:15-16**

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“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.” – **2 Corinthians 4:3**

“For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.” – **Galatians 6:8**

“²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.”

– **Philippians 1:27-28**

“¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.” – **Philippians 3:17-21**

“⁵ This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— ⁶ since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷ and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from ¹⁰ the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, ¹⁰ when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.”

– **2 Thessalonians 1:5-10**

“⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.” – **2 Thessalonians 2:9-10**

“¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, ¹⁴ to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.” – **1 Timothy 6:12-16**

“⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, ⁹ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, ¹⁰ and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,” – **2 Timothy 1:8-10**

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“⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. ⁷ For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. ⁸ But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.” – **Hebrews 6:4-8**

“²⁶ For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.” – **Hebrews 10:26-27**

“But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.” – **Hebrews 10:39**

“There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?” – **James 4:12**

“if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly” – **2 Peter 2:6**

“⁹ then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, ¹⁰ and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, ¹¹ whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. ¹² But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction,” – **2 Peter 2:9-12**

“⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. ⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” – **2 Peter 3:7-9**

“¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” – **Revelation 20:11-15**

“But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.” – **Revelation 21:8**