

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. For many people, the most confusing and difficult line in the Apostles Creed is the statement that Jesus “descended into hell.”
  - a. Not everyone agrees about what this line in the creed teaches. What different ideas about what it means have you heard and/or thought? How do you evaluate each of these ideas by the Bible’s teaching?
  - b. Why is it important for us to understand and believe that Jesus not only died on the cross for our sins, but in doing so that he literally experienced the agony of hell in our behalf?
2. The Bible teaches that hell is an eternal reality, but most people would admit that it’s a reality we don’t understand well.
  - a. In his message, Pastor Mike showed how the Bible teaches that hell is total separation from God, which was illustrated by the darkness during Jesus crucifixion. How does this picture impact your view of hell and/or sin?
  - b. He also showed how the Bible teaches that hell it’s like a burning thirst of longing for the water our soul needs, as illustrated by Jesus thirst on the cross. How does this picture impact your view of hell and/or sin?
3. John 19:30 tells us that immediately before the moment of his death, Jesus proclaimed, “it is finished.” What was Jesus proclaiming was finished? Pastor Mike pointed out that the words Jesus used wasn’t a passive statement (I’ve survived what happened to me), but was a proactive statement (I’ve completed or accomplished my plan). Why is this a significant difference?
4. Why is it that many Christians can believe that Jesus death was sufficient to pay the price of the sin for all humanity, but they then struggle to truly believe that it fully paid the price to completely forgive the worst of their own sins? How have you faced and/or dealt with this struggle in your own life?
5. Part of the meaning of the resurrection is that followers of Jesus have been resurrected spiritually. We were dead in our sins, and by the power of Jesus’ resurrection, we are made alive in Christ. Practically, how should this truth impact our lives? How should we be different if we really understand this and believe it to be true?
6. Part of the meaning of the resurrection is that followers of Jesus will be resurrected into God’s eternal reward.
  - a. Practically, how should this truth impact our lives? How should we be different if we really understand this and believe it to be true?
  - b. The New Testament repeatedly refers to the assurance of our future resurrection and eternal life as our hope. How is this our hope?
  - c. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:13 states, “*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*” What is the relationship of hope to faith and love?