**Hell**

**Perhaps hell is nothing more than an enormous conference of those who, with little or nothing to say, take an eternity to say it. (Dudley C. Stone, in Journal of Systems Management)**

**ONE HOT DOMAIN: Hell.com was among hundreds of Internet domain names offered at auction in Hollywood, Florida, last week by domain asset management provider Moniker.com. The owner put a minimum price of $1 million on the underworld’s domain, confident of high interest after the salacious address, Sex.com, sold for about $12 million this year. Bids failed to reach the reserve price. (Reuters, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, November 7, 2006)**

**It is a gripping notion that above the entrance of Dante's hell is the inscription: “Leave behind all hope, you can enter here.” (Phil Barnhart, in Seasonings for Sermons , p. 92)**

**My definition of hell is having to spend from now until eternity watching curling matches. (Rex V. Roades)**

**Ancient boiling oceans: In its early days, Earth became hell. About 3.3 billion years ago, new research indicates, at least two massive asteroids 30 to 60 miles in diameter smashed into this planet, boiling the oceans and sending atmospheric temperatures soaring to an unimaginable 932 degrees Fahrenheit. Stanford University scientists have found evidence of this extreme era in a geological formation in South Africa called the Barberton greenstone belt, which is riddled with telltale round spheres of silica -- rock that was molten and flung skyward, and then settled back to Earth. The energy from the asteroid impacts, researchers say, made Earth so hot that the oceans boiled for a year, with evaporation dropping sea levels by about 328 feet. The cataclysmic events on ancient Earth likely had a dramatic effect on the evolution of the primitive life-forms then in existence. "They'd keep getting whacked by these giant impactors and driven to extinction or near extinction," the study's leader, Don Lowe tells ScienceNews.org. Scientists say deep-sea dwellers and bacteria that thrive in heat, known as thermophiles, may have been the main survivors. (The Week magazine, June 5, 2015)**

**If you call your brother a fool, Jesus said you will be liable to a hell of fire. The Greeks referred to this as “Gehenna,” which was the city dump at Jerusalem where there was a continual fire burning refuse, trash, and garbage, as we do today. *(Jack E. Addington)***

**There is a ravine Southwest of Jerusalem known as the Valley of Hinnom which is called Gehenna in the New Testament. This name has been used as a metaphor for a place of fiery judgment since the first century B.C. During Old Testament times this ravine was the scene for a cult which worshipped the god, Molech, through human sacrifice by passing children through fire. Later, this same location was the sight of the continually burning fires of a garbage dump. *(Rev. Greg W. Neteler, in Unity Church Universal News)***

**Asked to pick the worst year ever, film director Peter Segal chose 1848, "the year gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill. Until then, you could find a nice piece of land in California, pitch your tent, and call it home. The housing market here has been a living hell ever since." *(The Atlantic)***

**Heads You Lose!: A self-centered, unbelieving man died and was delivered into the devil's hands. "You will be spending eternity here, but I'll let you pick your own room from three I'll show you," the devil said. In the first room, the man saw thousands of people standing on their heads on a brick floor. "I don't like that," said the man. "Show me the second." In the second room were thousands of people standing on their heads on a wood floor. "Well, that's better than brick," the man said, "but show me the third." In the third, thousands of people were standing ankle-deep in a foul-smelling, mucky substance, all drinking coffee. "I'll choose this room," he said. Immediately the voice of a minor demon rang out, "O.K.,, coffee break is over, back on your heads." *(Capper's Weekly)***

**Maybe this world is another planet's hell. *(Aldous Huxley)***

**In the 1700s in London, you could purchase insurance against going to hell. *(Noel Botham, in The Book of Useless Information, p. 150)***

**Bad week for: The Westboro Baptist Church, after the radical church said Steve Jobs was going to hell and called for a protest at his funeral. At the bottom of the church’s tweeted call for a protest, it said, “via Twitter for iPhone.” The church later explained that “God created the iPhone,” not Steve Jobs. *(The Week magazine, October 21, 2011)***

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**The safest road to hell is the gradual one -- the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts. (C. S. Lewis, in The Screwtape Letters)**

**In his classic, The Great Divorce, C. S. Lewis claimed no one is sent to hell. People go there by choice. At the end of life or beyond, God doesn't contend with us anymore. He finally says, “Have it your way.” (Dynamic Preaching)**

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**If you have to go through hell, make it pay you! (Georgia Tree West, in Prosperity’s Ten Commandments)**

**Hell, for a mechanic, is a land of grease – with no steering wheel to wipe it off on. (Earl Wilson, Field Newspaper Syndicate)**

**Many of the faithful in the Middle Ages believed God closed down hell every Sabbath to give tormented souls a chance to catch their breath. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Religion is for people who are afraid of hell. Spirituality is for people who have been in hell. (Liza Minnelli, actress)**

**The town of Hell, Norway, draws many tourists because of its unusual name. When our Lutheran friends Gene and Ardis visited this town, they were quick to send a postcard to their pastor back home. He read it at a meeting of the ministerial association, and it broke up the group. "Dear Pastor," it said. "We passed through Hell today, and we're concerned. Almost everyone here seems to be Lutheran. (Robert H. Brague, in Reader's Digest)**

**A pastor argues that hell doesn’t exist: What if hell doesn’t exist? That’s the provocative question posed by Michigan mega-church pastor Rob Bell in a book that has “ignited a new holy war in Christian circles and beyond,” said Jon Meacham in Time.. In Love Wins, Bell argues that the concept of a fiery pit into which all non-Christians will be thrown is theologically rigid, outdated, and dangerous. What kind of loving God, he asks, would only save those within the confines of His church? Would He really throw Gandhi into everlasting fire because he was a Hindu? Instead, Bell suggests that “the redemptive work of Jesus may be universal,” and that every soul might be guaranteed a place in heaven. Not surprisingly, evangelicals have erupted in outrage at Bell’s “universalist” treatise, accusing him of heresy and blasphemy. One Christian blogger dubbed him a “tool of Satan.” Evangelicals have every right to be furious, said Janice Shaw Crouse in The Washington Times. Bell may think he’s trying to modernize Christianity, but he’s actually undermining it. How can a Christian leader argue that accepting Christ is unnecessary? “When everyone is free to make up their own theology, the church becomes both impotent and irrelevant.” Believing in “universal salvation” may fit with the modern world’s anything-goes ethos, said Ross Douthat in The New York Times, but if we are guaranteed a place in paradise no matter what we do, then what use is free will? Without hell, all our actions are “like home runs or strikeouts in a children’s game where nobody’s keeping score.” Bell isn’t opposed to keeping score on people’s actions, said Richard J. Mouw in The Christian Post. He simply wants Christians to question the “stingy orthodoxy” that says that billions of our fellow human beings will go to hell because their beliefs differ from our own. Bell contends that everyone is worthy of God’s love, if they do not explicitly choose to reject it. And for what it’s worth, says Krista Tippett in The Washington Post, Bell does in fact offer a vision of hell in his book. It’s just not the primitive notion of a netherworld of wailing sinners. Instead, it’s a symbol of the evil and chaos that comes from moving away from God – the “hells on earth” that we see in war-torn and violent societies. The real hell is all around us, he says – and it’s time we Christians stopped ignoring it. (The Week magazine, May 6, 2011)**

**The people who don't believe in hell have never tried to get bubble gum out of a mohair sweater. (Phil Pastoret, Newspaper Enterprise Association)**

**The pope drastically lowered the temperature of hell Wednesday when he declared that the physical side of eternal damnation for sinners was less painful than being cut off from God. It was part of a concerted effort by the Vatican to purge clouds, harps, pearly gates, devils with pitchforks and seas of flame from the popular image of heaven and hell, replacing the idea of infinite physical torture for the damned with something more akin to eternal loneliness. “The images with which hell is presented to us by sacred scripture must be correctly interpreted. They demonstrate the complete frustration and emptiness of a life without God,” Pope John Paul II told a general audience in Rome. “More than a physical place, hell is the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God.” (James Meek, in Rocky Mountain News, July 31, 1999)**

**Hell is a place where you have nothing to do but amuse yourself. (George Bernard Shaw)**

**If you get gloomy, just take an hour off and sit and think how much better this world is than hell. Of course, it won't cheer you up much if you expect to go there. (Don Marquis, in Bits & Pieces)**

**Did I say Hell was in Norway? There is a Hell in Michigan, too. A Detroit car salesman writes to say so. Real Town. Not just a state of mind. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Why is it that when we grab for heaven -- socialist or capitalist or even religious -- we so often produce hell? (Margaret Atwood)**

**One man in the office says to the other: "Had I known Hell was going to be exactly like work, I probably wouldn't have spent as much time there." (Mike Baldwin, in Cornered comic strip)**

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