

Who Will Occupy the Lowest Tier of Hell?

During the vision that God gave me that I described in my book *23 Minutes in Hell*, I didn't know what level of hell I was in, but I understood that even worse levels existed.

Most of us can imagine who should occupy the worst level in hell. We might think it should be the murderers, child abusers and Hitlers of the world, and this would be true. However, there is an additional group we might not be aware of.

Whenever Jesus confronted the Pharisees, He called them *hypocrites*. A hypocrite is a fake or a phony. They pretend to hold beliefs, feelings and virtues they don't really possess. The Pharisees were an example of the worst kind of sinner, and we'll read why.

The Bible indicates seven sins that God especially hates. The Pharisees were guilty of all seven, and even one other that was the most severe of all: blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

In Christian circles we often hear people say "sin is sin," implying that all sin is viewed the same, but the Bible actually reveals there are worse or greater sins. Jesus said to Pilate in John 19:11 (NKJV), "The one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin," which indicates that all sin is not looked upon the same. This is one reason why the Pharisees may be among those who will be found in the lowest level of hell.

Ultimately, we must understand that the heart attitude behind the sin is what makes it a worse sin. In Matthew 15:19 (NLT), Jesus said, "For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander." We can commit sin in ignorance or in willful rebellion against God.

While some sins are specifically described as an abomination to God, the one thing all sin has in common is that any sin, no matter how minor, excludes us from heaven. It is only the shed blood of Jesus that can cleanse a person of *all* sin, regardless of what they've done, when they put their trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. First John 1:9 (NLT) says, "If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."

If the Pharisees thought themselves to be the highest religious group, yet they sinned the worst, we would all be wise to examine ourselves often. God sees our motives and our attitudes, which are hidden from public view. He knows whether we act out of genuine love and concern for others or we have a hidden agenda behind our words and actions. {eoa}

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