

20  
THE THREAT OF HELL AND OTHER FEAR  
TACTICS

Opening Questions:

- How important a role does fear play in religious people?
- Does fear encourage learning and considering different viewpoints?
- Is fear used by people to get what they want from others?
- Is hell real?
- If we are acting in love towards another person, would that include calling that person a nasty thing or labeling them with some negative label?
- If we are secure in our heavenly Father, will we act in fear towards others?

Perhaps one of the most potent things used to control people is fear. Unfortunately, we humans are very susceptible to fear guiding our beliefs and behavior. In truth, we as human beings don't need to be governed by fear. However, we do need another motivation for us to do what is right if we don't have fear guiding us, and that other and higher motivation is love. Remember, the core of God's love is valuing others and selfless behavior motivated by compassion. If that love motivated all people, this world would be a radically different and an infinitely better place.

Unfortunately, this is not so, so in place of the purest love, most have fear motivating them to avoid doing wrong things. In other words, fear would drive me to do whatever it takes to prevent loss or damage to my person or life—to defend my life in this world or defend what I want in this world. Selfishness motivates me to preserve or advance my well-being in this world no matter how it might affect others. Fear is a powerful trap due to our selfish nature, motivating us to protect our self-interests at all costs. Unfortunately, we do not naturally love so our default motivation is fear and selfishness.

Political leaders use fear for their political ends when they say things like, “that nation wants to harm us so we ought to strike them.” or, “those extremists are among us and must be rooted out.” Business leaders use fear when they say things like, “this bad thing is probably going to happen, so you need to buy our products or services to be ready.”; or, “if you don't have this product or service, people won't like or accept you”; or, “if we don't make our profit margins, we are all going to be out of jobs.”

Religious leaders use fear when they say things like, “if you don't believe this, God will be mad at you or send you to hell”; or, “if you don't do this or if you do that, God will condemn you to hell.” *The threat of hell is a potent fear motivator, perhaps the greatest ever created and used by people against others.* "Hell," as defined by the religious leaders, is a place and state of eternal torment, where a person's soul will be tormented forever. Many people will reasonably do whatever they think is necessary to avoid everlasting torture! Thus, most religions, including Bible/Christian religion, have been very effective, over the centuries, at controlling many people by fear.

Here is the ultimate fear trap explained in a bit more detail.

Belief 1: Part of God's character is that he is an angry, vengeful, wrathful, bloodthirsty being, who is eager to want to punish and destroy those people who fail to meet his perfect moral standard – the sinners and transgressors— see the Hebrew scripture and Paul to validate this. In fact, this god had his perfectly honoring, obedient and loving son killed in a horrible way so that he could forgive the guilty sons and daughters.

Belief 1 is entirely false.

Belief 2: Due to that part of God's character of anger, vengeance, and wrath, he created a place to torture eternally those people who don't meet his moral standards.

Belief 2 is false in that God did not create hell as a place to send human souls, nor is it a place for eternal torture.

Belief 3: Therefore, those who don't meet God's moral standards (as given and explained by the religious leaders) – will be sent to eternal torment by God.

Belief 3 is false. God sends no one to hell; instead, we can send ourselves to either Life or justice and destruction. While God did set up the system, He does not decide what an individual chooses.

Along come the religious leaders with their self-serving religious system to allegedly try and help people avoid hell and instead enter into heaven. What is perhaps the most popular “protestant” solution to the hell problem? It is something like, “just believe these things about God and participate in our religious organizations (in reality, give money to us), and by grace, you will be heaven bound.” The Catholics and “Orthodox” are mostly the same, and they say believe God exists and believe this stuff about God that we tell you and do these required rituals.

As an actual example of religious leaders using fear for money, much of the billions of dollars of wealth that the leaders of the Roman Catholic religious system control, came from the fear concepts of purgatory and hell that they propagated and used for many centuries to take money from people.

In essence, religious leaders say that if you don't believe and do what "God wants," you are going to hell – a place where you will be tormented forever. In

reality, if you don't believe and do *what the religious leaders want (not God)*, then they tell you, you are going to hell. Tragically, the religious leaders do not represent Joshua's Father, our Father, and the Creator as we shall see in more detail later on.

As you have seen if you have read and understood his teachings well, Joshua says that he is to be people's life/spiritual leader, not anyone else. And Joshua wants people to love one another each day, and not play foolish, selfish, empty games based on men's religion. God does not exist in the little box called "religion" that people put Him in. Instead, He is the great Spirit which created our soul and spirit, and He wants human beings to love each other all the time in all contexts of daily life—he wants us to do what is right, chiefly love one another.

The reality is that we set our after-physical-death-destiny by what we choose to do with the life we are given. *God condemns no one, nor does He send people to hell – a real place of justice and destruction - not of eternal torment.*

Joshua speaks for the Creator, God and he says:

I did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. (Luke 9:56)

For God so loved the people of the earth, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever puts their faith in him shall not destroy themselves, but rather have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. (John 3:16ff)

Please note, Joshua did not say:

‘For God was so pissed off at the people of the earth that he sent his son so that he could condemn the people of the earth to an eternal torment in hell.’ And yet, if you listen to many religious leaders long enough, that is essentially what they teach at least some of the time.

Furthermore, most religious leaders teach that *what you believe* is what determines if God sends you to heaven or hell. There are two falsehoods and one truth in that statement. One falsehood is that what one believes is solely responsible for one's after-physical-death destiny. The other lie is that God determines a person's fate. The truth is that a person's beliefs do play a role in determining one's future, but only a part, not the sole determining factor as we shall see below.

Joshua teaches that our choices around faith, beliefs, and behavior are what will determine where we end up after our body dies. We determine our after-physical-death destiny by our decisions regarding these three things.

**1. Whether we choose to place our faith in our Creator Father**, an act of our heart or will illuminated by our soul.

If we don't believe God exists, we cannot place our faith in Him. We can also believe God exists and not place our faith in Him. Many people believe

God exists, but they have never put their faith in Him. *Faith is the sure way to enter into Life, and faith is merely a deep, whole person, core level trust in someone or something.* It is best to place one's faith in the Creator Father revealed by the only person in history to defeat death to prove that all he said about God was true. In other words, we can place our faith in the right thing (the Father revealed by Joshua) or the wrong thing(s) like ourselves; money; a god of our own making or the making of religious leaders; etc. Faith is what causes us to be appropriately motivated to execute the third point below. If we place our faith in a god that we are confused about or wrong about - a god of our own or other's making or a corruption of the real Creator - that will lead to wrong understanding and likely wrong behavior and that will hinder us or prevent us from attaining the Life that the True God offers.

**2. What we choose to believe ABOUT God (not whether he exists or not),** an intellectual act of the mind which can affect behavior.

A person only has two choices regarding the things they believe about God. One is to believe Joshua of Nazareth, and thus believe right things about the Creator. Two is to believe one or more of the many other voices – both dead from books, living people, or self – who claim to know God, what God is like and what God wants. Those who choose the former – those who listen only to Joshua of Nazareth to understand God – will have the best opportunity to come to know the Living Creator God. Please listen to the Light regarding the importance of truly knowing the true and living God:

And this is eternal life, that you might know God and the one whom He sent. (John 17:3)

Furthermore, to know God is to love Him and to love Him results in doing what He wants. Those who choose to listen to people other than Joshua of Nazareth (or in addition to Joshua of Nazareth), will at best be confused about God, and at worst, will be badly wrong about God. The people who make up the world's religions make this critical mistake – Muslim, Jew, Hindi, Christian, Buddhist, etc. To have wrong beliefs about God, His Person and His desire for human beings, will hinder us or prevent us from attaining the Life He offers.

**3. Whether we choose to DO what God says we ought to do, the primary of which is to love other people.** We need to change into better human beings—real, measurable progress enabled by faith and effort and guided by the Truth who is Joshua of Nazareth.

Finally, we should do what the true and living God says. Why? The Creator made human beings and knew his intent for those created beings. He had a purpose for creating us, and His Messenger provided that purpose. His Son, the Messenger, Joshua of Nazareth, says that a primary way to manifest our love for our Father is to do what He says. Is that not true of parental human relationships? In other words, if our child values us, won't they want to

please us by doing what we ask? And what God wants us to do is not difficult to understand at all.

The real and living God's top priority is that *human beings love and care for one another (and by definition, "love" means we don't ask for anything in return for that caring and help) and that they don't harm each other and destroy themselves.* Yes, it is that simple.

But no, "love" is not primarily an emotion, nor is it refraining from harming or hating others, nor is it selfish—rather, love brings people together to care for one another in the life we have been given; and NO, "together" does not mean you in YOUR house on YOUR property, etc. Instead, love means we will be together in a measure proportional to our love for the other person as we shall see in a later chapter.

Furthermore, our choice in making God's appointed Leader, our Leader, will lead us into unity, harmony, peace with other followers and cause a desire to help others through the things that we do. If we don't do that, then we fail at the primary purpose of the life we were given, and again, this will prevent us from attaining the Life He offers.

In summary, it does matter what we believe about God and our existence. But what matters equally as much is whether we place our faith in the correct God and how we choose to live our lives each day based on The Light's teachings. In other words and for example, there are hundreds of millions of people who say something to the effect of, "Oh yes, I am a Christian, and I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," but then the next moment they will justify killing their enemies. Or, they make little or no effort to get to know this "Jesus" by reading HIS words in the four gospel books. Or they will seldom or never speak his important truths to others. Or they will not significantly share any of their material things with non-natural-family members. Or they will deceive others to gain money. Or they will very seldom treat others the way they want to be treated. Or many other things which contradict the Light's teachings! *So, their stated beliefs will not help them—will not bring them into everlasting Life,* but will likely only serve to bring greater condemnation upon themselves. The more we know, the more accountable we will be for acting upon what we know.

If you did not claim to see, you would not be guilty, but since you claim to see (and yet reject my truths), your guilt remains. (John 9:41)

Many will respond to these truths by saying, "well, you are right back to fear as the primary motivation for listening to God, because you are saying that if we don't listen to God, then we condemn ourselves to destruction." That is a false or incorrect statement. God does not produce fear in people nor does He use it to motivate or manipulate free-will human beings. Rather, people are trapped **in fear** and this in spite of the Creator's love and His reaching out to us in love. Self-condemnation is a consequence of *our* choices to enter into, and then remain in, the state of self-pride and fear and selfishness, and *no one* has to

choose to stay in that state of being. Joshua came and offers anyone who will listen to HIM the key to open our self-made jail cell and thus be truly free. Again, we condemn ourselves to destruction; God does not. *God merely set up a just system of accountability as well as a Way out of a wasted, selfish life.*

Humans are not neutral beings, meaning we are predisposed to a state of self-pride and fear and selfishness due to our nature. Our choice is simple to understand but challenging to make. Remain bound or guided by our nature of self-pride and fear and selfishness, or reach out past ourselves to the One who can set us free...the One who can lift us out of our self-made pit.

When things are wrong in my life, the correct question is not, "how come God...", but rather, "why don't I want to practice love as God defines that and asks of me." Or, "why will I not admit the truth on this matter and move forward?" Or, "why do I refuse to do what is right?" Or, "why do I continue to be driven by fear?"

Why is it wrong for the Creator to have set it up that free-will beings would need to choose love to be rewarded with the Greater Life? Why would that be unjust?

God gave us our soul and gave us a free will to choose what do with the life he gave us on this earth. Do you fault Him for giving you life? Would you prefer never to have existed? What about, "it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all"? Do you believe that is a true saying? What it is saying is that love is perhaps the most important aspect of human existence and to not experience or practice love is to miss out on the most important aspect of human existence—to miss the purpose of our creation. And that "missing" was not God's fault, but ours.

Is that not also true about existence? In other words, it is better to have existed and had a chance and opportunity to better one's self and preserve one's existence (through faith and love) than to have never existed at all. We don't have to choose to condemn and destroy ourselves by a life lived in bondage to self-pride, fear and selfishness and all the wrong behavior those things bring—there is a Way out of that darkness.

Furthermore, many people, when they hear the truths of Joshua that this book conveys, react with fear by saying some version of, "Oh, but my husband was a Christian, so are you saying they went to hell?" or "But my wife or child was a Christian, so are you saying they went to hell?" This author has no power to send anyone anywhere! We each must choose our eternal destiny. And if anything, this book should give you hope that your loved one will stand before a Judge of love instead of a Judge of wrath and hell.

## Religious Fear and Pride

How many people have been, are, and will be harmed due to the manifestations or behaviors associated with religious fear and pride? Well, we can answer the "have been" as it has been many millions of people, and that is not counting the Nazi persecution of the Jews.

Here is an example of the religious fear and pride dynamic played out.

Person 1 says something about God that contradicts challenges or calls into question person 2's beliefs about God. Person 2 says to themselves some form of the statement, "Oh if I am wrong about God, I might be rejected by God and perhaps sent to hell." That statement is a fear-based statement.

Person 2's next thought is something to the effect of, "Well, I have all these intelligent people I respect who gave me my belief about God (or "I studied the scripture myself") and they can't all be wrong, so I am correct, and that other person is wrong." That is a statement of self-pride.

Person 2 then says to person 1, some form of the statement, "Sorry, but you are wrong about God for this reason..." If person 1 does not "admit" they were wrong, but instead uses reason well to try and show person 2 they are wrong, then the mixture of fear and self-pride will often turn into hatred. Hatred is an intense dislike of another person who one perceives wronged them, or strong dislike by seeing a person as worthless and worthy of punishment, harm or death.

This simple dynamic - while not comprehensive and while coming in slightly different forms - has played itself out probably trillions of times over the millennia. Sometimes it just leads to merely a friendly disagreement between two people. Sometimes, it leads to war with countless thousands killing each other in the name of God. One thing is sure, though; fear and pride are at the heart of it. Not necessarily fear of the other person, but rather fear of God due to ignorance—fear of what God might do to me if I am wrong about who He is or what He wants of me.

A disciple of Joshua will experience this dynamic regularly if they are faithful in speaking the Light's truths to people they encounter. Here is how it usually plays out. The disciple is talking to a religious person and hears the religious person say something that is contrary to what the Light of the world teaches. The disciple will quote the teaching or saying of Joshua that demonstrates the error in the religious person's belief about God. The religious person will typically be offended to some degree and will want to argue with the disciple.

The disciple might make some clarifications as to why the belief is wrong as the discussion progresses. If the religious person will not listen to the Light's teaching but instead will try and defend their error, the tone for the religious person will often demonstrate the fear that is driving their effort to hold onto a wrong belief. At some point - usually when the disciple uses reason well several times to try and show the person their error - the religious person will move from fear to self-pride and start making personal attacks on the disciple. Since the disciple is using reason well to demonstrate the other person's false beliefs, the person with wrong beliefs has nothing left to respond with except personal attacks, and so they attack the messenger instead of humble themselves and receive truth and change their understanding.

What personal, fear-based attacks are most common? Some of the most popular attacks from Bibilians and Christians are calling the disciple a "heretic"

or "a cult leader" or "part of a cult." The Biblical or Christian who has failed in their argument(s) has two choices - be humble and accept the truth the disciple is trying to convey (and thus face change), or let fear and self-pride drive them to attack the messenger. Sadly, the latter is the most common response.

So, what exactly is a "heretic" or a "heresy"? Merriam-Webster says "heresy" is "adherence to a religious opinion contrary to church dogma"; "an opinion, doctrine, or practice contrary to the truth or to generally accepted beliefs or standards."<sup>49</sup> Thus a "heretic" is a person who holds that opinion or doctrine or belief.

So, the question is who determines the correct "church dogma" or "generally accepted beliefs or standards"? The Roman Catholic people and the Protestant people cannot even agree on what books to include in their "sacred scripture" or Bible and called the "other side" heretics - and killed them - for centuries! In fact, the Biblical/Christian religious system is made up of thousands of divisions, which divisions are caused by one sects/denomination's religious opinions or dogma differing from the others, thus the division! The Biblians and Christians seem to thrive on excommunicating one another - by some estimates, there are tens of thousands of divisions - and often in their forming a new sect, the reason they give was that their previous sect was starting to "adopt heresy" or that "God has given this guy/gal some new important revelation". Ironically, the new teaching that causes the division is often offered by some charismatic individual who says some version of "God says listen to me" - see "cult" below!

How about the "cult" accusation and attack? Merriam-Webster defines "cult" as "a small religious group that is not part of a larger and more accepted religion, and that has beliefs regarded by many people as extreme or dangerous"; or, "great devotion to a person, idea, object, movement, or work."<sup>49</sup>

In the U.S. culture at this time, a cult is generally thought to be a religious or social group with socially deviant or novel beliefs and practices. However, whether any particular group's beliefs and practices are sufficiently atypical or unique is often unclear, thus making a precise definition problematic. In the English speaking nations, the word often carries derogatory connotations, but in other European countries, it is used as English-speakers use the word "religion," sometimes confusing English-speakers reading material translated from other languages. The word "cult" has always been controversial because it is (in a pejorative sense) considered a subjective term, used as an ad hominem attack against groups with differing doctrines or practices, which lacks a clear or consistent definition.

As you can see, labeling someone a "cultist" is problematic. The first problem is the lack of an authoritative standard to judge whether any particular group's beliefs and practices are sufficiently deviant or novel - precisely who makes that judgment! The second problem is the term is often used as an ad

---

<sup>49</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com), April 2018



hominem attack (personal attack) against a person or other group who does not tow the party line of the religious person (or their sect or division or denomination) who is leveling the accusation.

I find the accusation of "cult" by Biblians and Christians against disciples of Joshua like myself as particularly ironic and irrational. Here are two reasons that support that the accusation is based on fear or self-pride.

1. We, disciples, have "Jesus Christ" (specifically, the words of the historical Jesus or Joshua of Nazareth as recorded in the four gospel books) as our ONLY Standard for knowing God just as he says we ought! Odd that that would be such a problem or offense for those who claim "Jesus Christ" as their God!

2. Those who define "cult" as more of this - "great devotion to a person" - seem to be quite blind to the fact that many religious people venerate and follow their leaders, thus fulfilling the definition of "cult"! Think any prominent religious leader like Joel Osteen, etc.

Ironically, we as disciples of Joshua seek to follow by faith ONLY the real Joshua of Nazareth revealed by his own words in the four gospel books! In other words, we disciples try very hard to reject the adoration of other people towards us since our Master says "do not call another person a spiritual leader or teacher"—rather, we point people towards the Light instead of ourselves. In contrast, the religious world (just like the other world realms, like entertainment, for example) is filled with men and women who have many followers who are devoted to them to some degree. Those religious leaders encourage this adoration since they like the power over of all those people looking to them, and thus are considered “successful” as a result. In short, many Christian leaders and sects fit the world's definition of "cult" and "cult leaders"!

In truth, any God-belief that varies from a religious person's beliefs - and whatever sect they are a part of - if spoken with conviction and shown plainly to contradict what the religious person considers essential religious beliefs - will likely be judged as “heresy” or “cultic” or worthy of rejection.

In truth, throwing "heretic" or "cult leader" at someone is done so by a person who is losing or has lost the “truth” battle and is operating by fear or self-pride and thus attacking the messenger. It is merely another logical fallacy tactic as we have seen.

In times past and in certain places, that could get a person burned at the stake. In many nations still today, you might well be killed for expressing a God-belief that goes against the ruling or majority groups “accepted orthodoxy”. Today in the US, and for the moment anyway, they will throw you out of their religious organizations or “unfriend” you or stop “following” your page on Facebook!

In conclusion, religious fear and pride cause a tremendous amount of conflict in the world - it always has and it ever will. Human's “operating system,” as given by their Creator, includes a conscience which knows at some level that having a proper understanding of one's existence and what to do with

that existence/life is very important. Thus God-beliefs are a very sensitive issue for many billions of people—and fear of the Unknown God causes that sensitivity. Whether Christian or Muslim or Jew, etc. - they all have the same schizophrenic scary, vengeful, wrathful god who sends many to hell - *one of the great lies that the religious people of the world believe and propagate to stay away from the Creator and His Light.*

The good news is that you don't have to be afraid of your Creator—you don't have to be ruled or controlled or heavily influenced by fear. Nor do you have to put yourself in a cage of ignorance created by your self-pride. All you need to do is to care about what is true and right no matter where that leads you, and if you do, you will find the Life He so much wants you to have!

I placed this chapter here because we are about to enter into the fear realm of many religious people. In other words, the chapters that follow will show how the success failure's beliefs and practices do not match up with the One who called himself, The Son of Man, The Light of the world, and the way, truth and life. You have a choice if you are a religious person. You can push past fear and evaluate what is presented, or you can allow fear to “protect you” from truth.

#### Chapter Summary:

- Fear of hell has been a significant factor in preventing people from considering different views of God or our existence;
- Threatening people with hell has been a benchmark of religious leaders control over people for many centuries;
- While there is a spiritual place of destruction that Joshua refers to as "hell" (fashioned after the real place of Gehenna); and that place is everlasting; the beings who send themselves there do not last forever there. Instead, they receive justice and are destroyed;
- God does not send people to hell; instead, people send themselves there to receive justice for refusing to live by love, truth, and rightness;
- Being labeled a “heretic” or “cultic” or other such fear labels is a hallmark of a religious person losing an argument and using an ad hominem fallacy to try and shut their opponent up;
- Fear is an effective motivator to prevent people from doing certain things due to fear of the consequence or justice or punishment;
- Joshua did not teach that fear ought to be our motivation for what we do with our life or how we behave, but instead, *love should be our motivation.* He did teach that fear as a secondary motivator – if we refuse to be motivated by love – is better than harming other people.