

## ON THE UNIQUENESS OF GOD, SIN, HELL, AND THE BIBLE

### Question:

To preface, this is just a theory based on my own musings & partly my understanding of parts of the Bible: I'm still thinking this through, but feel like I've really come across something that just makes sense. Not in a casual way, but in a way that aligns itself with the nature of reality, which proves itself as "true" (practically at least) when implemented in real life/spiritual development. I can't help but think that this is, in part, not an accident, but rather speaks to the nature of our existence, and how that relates to God. I think there may be such a focus on interpreting the bible literally, and stopping there, that much is missed in terms of the deeper meaning and Truth.

Whether that deeper understanding is necessary (or even accurate) remains to be seen, but it's something I've been exploring, and would like to hear other perspectives on.

I've come to believe that "God" is the universal consciousness that we all came from. "Original sin" is the birth of the ego (and consequently pride, which is the root of literally all "sins" wink. God's "love" is an emotionless love; a desire for closeness, for oneness, an unconditional acceptance. The goal being reunification with the universal consciousness. The path to this "redemption" is two fold:

1. To repent your "sins", meaning, to acknowledge your ego as the root of suffering and evil, and that apart from "God" you are weak and purposeless. By acknowledging that your ego is wrong ("evil" even), you will see clearly/take to heart that your "will" (opinion, judgement, selfish desire) is not conducive to a peaceful existence, and can never fulfill you. By acknowledging this sin and repenting it, God forgives you.
2. When you know this, you are able to let go of your ego. This is where "prayer" comes in, but it's more like eastern meditation than stereotypical prayer. "Be still and know God", "Pray and never cease" -- this doesn't mean to talk to God endlessly and aimlessly. What it really means is to empty your mind, observe yourself and your thoughts without opinion or judgement, as a way of acknowledging your will is in the way (it is after all this "sin" that sets you apart from God). By emptying yourself of thoughts and will, you open yourself to "receive God's grace".

This means to have God's will as your own, to know God's discernment (which is also to say, you can view reality (more) objectively when it isn't tainted with your own goals/emotions/ judgements), and to know God's love (oneness/acceptance). By making peace with God, you will have the peace of God. And

that, is heaven. Perhaps it's only a state of being while on earth, perhaps it's how we rejoin the universal consciousness that is God after shedding our physical bodies, or whatever.

Hell on the other hand, is that state of being apart from God. And those in hell often don't want to leave it, because it is self serving and pleasurable, but also filled with the suffering and pain of hardship and isolation. That is seen on earth as well. But when you die, I imagine you lose all connection to God. On earth it is like we are in the shade cast by God's "light", but from the peripheral light we can still see. If you die apart from God, you lose even that, and will be in true darkness/isolation, which is Hell.

The pain and suffering of isolation, the burning self hatred knowing you did it to yourself but the anger of being abandoned by God, never to see light again, is Hell. Hell is not a place of torture, punishment, justice or judgement. It is simply "where" you go when you have no connection with God, which is innately akin to torture, but is not dealt out by any entity. It just is, and God wants to save us, but he can't make the choice for us to desire oneness again.

**I think this is fully congruent with Christianity, and I do consider myself a Christian. So if you dislike my use of language or description, please let me know why you disagree before you label me a heretic smiley Maybe I can clarify, but either way I would love to hear some opposing views or some further thoughts to my own.**

Cheers.

**Response:**

I think that judging by my previous responses to you, my answer would already be obvious.

To begin with, what I find in the Bible is:

[12]But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name...

John 1:12 NASB

[15]so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

[16]"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

[18]He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:15-16,18 NASB

That is, one is only a Christian if one believes in Jesus Christ Who is God Who put on human flesh to die on the Cross for all human sins and save us all from the Lake of Fire. One is not a Christian otherwise. Recently, it appears to be a growing thing that the term Christian is seriously considered debatable in some quarters. In addition to that, there are very many individuals and groups who use the label to mean different things that have nothing to do with the term itself, so I think I should explain the term itself just a little so that it does not pose a confusion and a stumbling block here.

The term is very likely a correction of a name that unbelievers in Antioch coined to mock believers in Jesus Christ with. The original term was Χρησιανός, that is, Chrestianos. It meant "(member) of the crowd/group of Goody". It was the equivalent of today's "Goody Two Shoes" or "Holy Holy". This is because believers in Jesus Christ tend to behave with a sensitivity to morality that is not typical of unbelievers. This is what the term mocked. You will notice that there is only one letter different between that word and Χρησιανός or Chrestianos. It is the letter "e" which is exchanged with "i". The Christ or Messiah or Savior was meaningless to Gentiles, but there is no culture on earth that does not recognize good behavior and where it is not mocked when people prefer it even at the cost of some personal benefit. It is very likely that as Christians continued to be mocked with the epithet, they started correcting their mockers, telling them that they did not follow some person named "Goody", but rather were followers of the Christ. This is likely why the early manuscripts were edited to read "Christian" instead of "Chrestian". That is also how the name survived until now.

This brief history is to say that whatever the motive behind the creation of the original epithet and the reaction of early Christians to it, it is a legitimate name for believers to bear if they want, and it is not an appropriate name to describe anyone who does not believe in Jesus Christ or to describe any doctrine or philosophy when that contradicts the Bible.

So, if you believe in Jesus Christ as He is revealed and identified in the Bible, you are a Christian, whether you or anyone else considers you to be one or not. If, however, you do not, you are not, regardless

whether you or anyone else considers you to be one or not. Also, if your ideas described here are in agreement with the Bible, then they are Christian teaching. If they are not, then they are not.

You may disagree with the foregoing, but it is not something I can see any point in debating because of what seems to me to be overwhelming biblical evidence holding it up. So, for me, it is a question of whether one agrees with what the Bible says or not. If one does not agree with what the Bible teaches, there is nothing further to discuss about it. If they do, then there is no reason to discuss since we agree with each other. If one agrees with the Bible but does not believe it to teach what I think in the matter, then I would be quite curious what they read in it. That may occasion some discussion, but from prior experience, that almost never goes anywhere productive, so I'm never enthusiastic about it now.

Now to your depositions here...

1. *"God is the universal consciousness that we all came from."*

Perhaps you only mean that God created us all. If you do, you are exactly right. But I doubt that it is what you mean. The language here is very familiar to me. It is common in Oriental philosophy. The sense in which it is used there is that we are emanations or extensions of God. That is, even if God created us, He did not do it ex nihilo. This is not at all the Bible's teaching. The Bible holds that God is completely apart from creation. He invented creation in its entirety out of nothing. Of course He does operate within it, but He is not at all a part of it (Jeremiah 10:6; 1 Samuel 2:2; 1 Chronicles 17:20; Deuteronomy 33:26; Exodus 8:10; Exodus 9:14; Deuteronomy 3:24; 1 Kings 8:23; 2 Samuel 7:22; Psalm 86:8; Jeremiah 10:7; Isaiah 46:9; Deuteronomy 32:31).

[1]In the beginning **God created** the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1 NASB

[11]Then I saw a great white throne and **Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away**, and no place was found for them.

Revelation 20:11 NASB

[1]Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.

[5]And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, **I am making** all things new"...

Revelation 21:1,5 NASB

[9]"Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and **there is no one like Me...**

Isaiah 46:9 NASB

In other words, the Bible simply disagrees with any notion that anything in creation is like God at all. God is utterly different and separate from creation. Your thinking here is not Christian at all.

2. *"Original sin" is the birth of the ego (and consequently pride, which is the root of literally all "sins" ).'*

The Bible does not seem to me to agree. In so far as the term ego here refers to the self and self-awareness, as it seems to me that it does, Adam and Eve were fully aware of themselves before ever they sinned. That is, they had not disobeyed God in any point. To actually disobey God took first an attitude of arrogance to accomplish. In other words, pride was not consequent here: it was antecedent. The real meaning of "pride" is a pretence to superiority or equality with God so that one can disregard what God says in favor of whatever one pleases. That does take self-awareness to accomplish in many cases, but self-awareness is equally necessary in order to make a deliberate decision to submit to God.

[13]"But you said in your heart, '**I will** ascend to heaven; **I will** raise my throne above the stars of God, And **I will** sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north.

[14]'**I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** make myself like the Most High.'

Isaiah 14:13-14 NASB

[17]Then to Adam He said, "**Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'**"; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

Genesis 3:17 NASB

Sin is not self-awareness. Sin is disobedience to God. That happens both ignorantly and deliberately.

**[6]When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.**

Genesis 3:6 NASB

*3. "God's "love" is an emotionless love; a desire for closeness, for oneness, an unconditional acceptance. The goal being reunification with the universal consciousness."*

To begin with, this statement contradicts the idea that seemed apparent to me in your first statement. If we are emanations of God, then how can God be emotionless if we are not?

One thing seems to me to be clear from the Bible: God is not like us. So, it does make sense not to conceptualize Him with emotions. In fact, the Bible uses our emotions to explain things about God to us that we would otherwise not understand since He is not like us. His Love, however, is no desire of any kind. God is Himself Love. There is nothing lacking or needy in Him. His Love just is. It is true that it is this Love that explains the tremendous Sacrifice that the Godhead made in giving Jesus Christ up for us, but it is not out of "a desire for closeness, oneness, an unconditional acceptance", as if God needed these things.

God is One. His Creation was designed to be whole as well. Creature rebellion divided creation and thus ruined God's Work. God permitted this because He willed from eternity past to have a family of willing creatures to be with eternally. This is not out of any lack or need on His Part. He just willed it. To have such a family, He created moral creatures who are capable of choosing to be part of this family, or not to be part of this family. That ability to choose made rebellion possible. Every moral creature was created already part of this family. Call it a default setting, if you want. So, not a single one was made with a natural inclination to be outside that family. But the possession of a free will meant that the default state could be changed. And it did for a third of the angels and for the vast majority of mankind. This is the rent in creation.

That rent is what the Lord Jesus Christ died to fix. With His Cross, He rescued this creation from sure destruction. Without it, God would destroy creation. He can exist without it, as my first response should have demonstrated to you. God has always existed. He is perfect. There is nothing lacking or in need in Him. Creation is merely His invention. Creation needs Him. Or else it would not exist.

[11]"Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and **because of Your will they existed, and were created.**"

Revelation 4:11 NASB

In other words, God could easily destroy this creation that was ruined, and make another infinite times better and more complex. His action in saving it is a demonstration of His Nature of Love. He rescues us because that is what He is, not because He would suffer or lack in any way if He didn't..

So, here again, I cannot agree that this is a Christian teaching at all.

4. *"The goal being reunification with the universal consciousness."*

It is true that reconciliation is why the Lord Jesus Christ came and died for our sins. It is true that when we believe, we are brought back into God's Family and we can look forward to a whole Creation where we will live with Him for all eternity with nothing more breaks in our relationship. But this is not the same at all as being absorbed back into the Brahmin, for example. We may share in the divine nature but we are not and will never be deity. We are also unique individual creatures, just as God is the UNIQUE multi-Person Creator that He is. These things will remain eternally so. We will never lose our individual personhood. God will never lose His Uniqueness and utter Separation in His Deity from His Creation.

[3]And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,

[7]He who overcomes will inherit these things, and **I will be his God and he will be My son.**

Revelation 21:3,7 NASB

5. *"To repent your "sins", meaning, to acknowledge your ego as the root of suffering and evil, and that apart from "God" you are weak and purposeless."*

This is, in my view, the cleverest deception here. I don't mean that as a reflection on you personally, but as a reflection on Satan who crafts lies to sell to any vulnerable person. To separate the truth here from the lie is trickier than all the foregoing.

Yes, selfishness (which is strongly connected to the concept of the ego, a.k.a the self, in general philosophy) is very closely connected with all sin. In fact, as #2 in my response here shows, sin does proceed from a desire to prefer one's own desires and interests to God's command. But sin is disobedience to God, pure and simple. Self-awareness is no kind of disobedience to God. To own who we are honors God because He made us who we are. We are responsible to Him to use the unique gifts and talents and opportunities and natural tastes etc that constitute our individual persons to serve His Will. Failure to do that is what is sin. That failure is what we confess. That is what requires redemption, not acknowledging our own individuality.

6. *'When you know this, you are able to let go of your ego. This is where "prayer" comes in, but it's more like eastern meditation than stereotypical prayer. "Be still and know God", "Pray and never cease" -- this doesn't mean to talk to God endlessly and aimlessly. What it really means is to empty your mind, observe yourself and your thoughts without opinion or judgement, as a way of acknowledging your will is in the way (it is after all this "sin" that sets you apart from God). By emptying yourself of thoughts and will, you open yourself to "receive God's grace".'*

Interestingly, I had already formed my opinion that your post was looking to bring Eastern religion and philosophy into Christianity before I read this bit. When I finally did, I was quite sorry to be reading it.

Free will is a central theme in the Bible. The whole Bible teaches that angels and men have a choice to make: submit to God or rebel against Him. Neither can be done unless one were aware of their own selves. To deliberately "empty yourself" is to vacate the responsibility to choose. That in itself is rebellion against God since we are here by His Will to make a choice. It is escapist, and a waste of time because it accomplishes the opposite of what you are proposing here.

[18]"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.

[19]"**If you consent and obey**, You will eat the best of the land;

[20]"**But if you refuse and rebel**, You will be devoured by the sword." Truly, the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Isaiah 1:18-20 NASB

7. *"By making peace with God, you will have the peace of God. And that, is heaven. Perhaps it's only a state of being while on earth, perhaps it's how we rejoin the universal consciousness that is God after shedding our physical bodies, or whatever."*

The omitted part of this paragraph is already addressed in #6 above. To reiterate, to make God's will yours does not require losing your individuality. In fact, it is only by deliberately making our everyday choices in keeping with what the Bible teaches that we have any chance at all of pleasing God.

It is true that peace with God is a great part of what Heaven is like. But the Bible presents Heaven as an actual place where God has His Chariot Throne for now. That is not mere symbolism. If anyone thinks it is, it would be their responsibility to show how that symbol works with everything else in the Bible.

[34]But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God...

Matthew 5:34 NASB

[1]After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things."

[2]Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.

Revelation 4:1-2 NASB

Everyone who loves God will experience some of the things that we are promised for the future today, so the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit that will be experienced in full in Heaven (for those of us who die before the Lord Jesus returns) and in the New Creation (at the end of the 7000 years of human history) will still be enjoyed in some degree today by us. But it is not Heaven in itself. It may be called a taste of Heaven, but Heaven is an actual place outside of this creation.

[11]But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, **not of this creation...**

Hebrews 9:11 NASB

## 8. About Hell...

First off, this is what the Bible says:

[43]If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into **hell, into the unquenchable fire...**

Mark 9:43 NASB

[41]"Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into **the eternal fire** which has been prepared for the devil and his angels...

Matthew 25:41 NASB

[9]Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,

[10]he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with **fire and brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

[11]And the **smoke of their torment** goes up forever and ever; they have **no rest** day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Revelation 14:9-11 NASB

[20]And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into **the lake of fire** which burns with brimstone.

Revelation 19:20 NASB

[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 20:14-15 NASB

[24]"Then they will go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die And their **fire will not be quenched**; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."

Isaiah 66:24 NASB

[10]"A **river of fire** was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened.

[11]Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the **burning fire**.

Daniel 7:10-11 NASB

It's very hard to explain all the above as a symbol. It is also very hard to see how any of it is pleasurable at all. It is clear too that this is a real place very deliberately prepared by the Lord God (its creation is described in the Daniel reference) for the punishment of all creature rebels. Earth is not hell. It is a painful place, yes, but even here God's rain falls on the just and on the unjust (Matthew 5:45). In hell, there will be nothing of God's good gifts, only His unrelenting displeasure toward all creature rebellion.

I can understand how human beings do not want for God to be like that, but, as my first point went, God is not like us. Those who trust Him find that He does all things well even when one of those things is creating a hell where He will deposit all rebels for all eternity. God is absolute good. There is nothing evil in Him. That means that His Justice is just as good and desirable and praiseworthy as His Mercy.

9. Finally, your first paragraph...

The Bible is a challenge to everyone. It is the one book here on Earth that simply dismisses every attempt to discover it except on its own terms. The human heart, unfortunately, is incredibly arrogant, so the vast majority of readers insist on forcing meaning from the book rather than yielding to its own clear demand. That has led to the confusion in interpretations that are abroad. It has also led to very many adding or removing from the Bible in order for it to make sense to them. I'm afraid that is what you have done here too. There is only one way to learn and understand the Bible:

[11]And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

[12]for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

[13]until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

[14]As a result, we are no longer to be **children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men**, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

[15]but speaking the truth in love, we are to **grow up in all aspects** into Him who is the head, even Christ,

[16]from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:11-16 NASB

In short, the Lord Jesus gave the gifts of apostle, prophet, pastor-teacher, and evangelist to provide the Church with the tools it needs to grow and mature and be complete and thus ready for His Return. The apostles and prophets wrote the now-complete Bible and witnessed to the work of God in Christ. The pastor-teacher and evangelist use the Truth revealed in the Bible to bring new believers into the Church (for the evangelist) and to train them to spiritual maturity when they can begin to play their own part in the growth of the whole Church (for the pastor-teacher). This is the Spirit's Own Strategy. He chose this way of operation. He created it and empowered it. That is why no one will gain anything outside of it.

Only by submitting to a pastor-teacher who is gifted and prepared to teach the Bible, who fears the Lord, and loves fellow believers, and treats the Bible respectfully, can anyone come to understand the vast majority of what the Bible teaches. If anyone does not do so, they will not learn much beyond the basic Gospel by reading the Bible. If they persist in their stubbornness, they will begin to invent meanings for the Bible, essentially mutilating it and growing in their arrogance until they begin to teach heresies unrepentantly.

This is not something anybody is immune from. I too had my part in this failure. It took a long time before I found and trusted a Bible teacher. Very long. By that time, I had done some damage to myself and to others who had listened to me. Some of that damage is right here on Nairaland. But I did find a teacher. And I did submit to him. He is not God, yes. He stumbles like everyone else, yes. But he is gifted and prepared and he loves the Truth and does excellently at telling it without flinching. He helped to open the Bible up to me so that now I know what I see when I read. That is what teachers do for you. They are warned:

[10]As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

[11]**Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God**; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:10-11 NASB

Teaching is dangerous. It is currently the highest calling in the Church since there are no more apostles and prophets. For this reason, it is attractive to many. But it is extremely dangerous. Those who know what it is about are not hasty to get into it. It takes a hard path of preparation. Very few who do have the gift bother with the preparation. Many who lack the gift usurp the position nonetheless. And let's not forget the many wolves in sheep's clothing too, actual unbelievers deliberately doing their best to mislead believers. I've run into more of them on this board than I care to remember. Those who try to mislead believers have a terrible reward coming to them (Luke 17:1-2). It is good then to take to heart that the Lord is very interested in preparing teachers for everyone who is willing to learn the Truth. He does not leave it to chance (nor is there any such thing as chance). He knows our hearts and is always ready whenever we are ready to learn.

So I encourage you once again to find a good teaching ministry and submit to it. It need not be any of those I recommended to you before. Feel free to find another. But be sure to test it and know that it is true to the Bible.

Suffice to say that what you have said here is not representative of Christianity at all. It actually is quite heretical. Extremely dangerous stuff because in its essence it does away with the Cross of Christ.

Will still say a prayer for you.