

2 Things The Pope Will Never Tell You About Hell



By Vic Bishop | [Waking Times](#)

Just before Easter weekend, Pope Francis was [quoted by an Italian journalist, who claimed the outspoken Catholic figurehead had denied the existence of hell](#). A comment like this is big news for such a big belief system, and shortly after the story was published the Vatican refuted the statements, calling it all a misquote. By then, however, the story had already been picked up by international media, generating significant controversy.

During the meeting Scalfari asked the pope where “bad souls” go, to which he was quoted as responding: “They are not punished. Those who repent obtain God’s forgiveness and take their place among the ranks of those who contemplate him, but those who do not repent and cannot be forgiven disappear. A hell doesn’t exist, the disappearance of sinning souls exists.” [\[Source\]](#)

It's a semantic issue, really, just two guys contemplating the greatest question of them all. What happens to us when we die?

It's easy to understand why believers and non-believers would both seize the moment to comment, though. After all, the Pope is a big deal. He's one of those people who is so much larger than life, that a mere sentence of his is enough to become international news.

Here's a couple things the Pope would never tell you about hell, though. Because hell is important.

First of all, whatever one may think about what may or may not happen in the afterlife, human beings have an inherent capacity to create a very real, visceral hell on earth in the here and in the now. We don't have to wait till we die to experience hell. It looks like much of the planet does right now.

This type of hell is really a level of human consciousness. It's a very natural part of human beings, but the very worst part, and more that human consciousness sinks, the more hellish reality becomes.

This level of consciousness is experienced as a planet wracked with human suffering, starvation, war, and all at at time when we have the resources and ingenuity to stop this all. It looks like a world where the most horrible crimes against each other and against nature continue unchallenged in any significant way.



Dante's Hell

Secondly, the church needs the concept of hell, because without it, there is no underlying reason to bestow all of one's hope and faith onto an organization. Without hell, one does not need saving or redemption, which is what the church offers. Hell is the marketing platform for religion in general, and while we're focused on the horrors which may emerge after life, we forget to focus on resolving the hellish problems we have here today.

Retired Episcopal bishop [John Shelby Spong](#), has been a highly controversial figure for explaining how and why the church created the concept of hell. His comments with *Dateline NBC* are noted here.

*"I don't think Hell exists. I happen to believe in life after death, but I don't think it's got a thing to do with reward and punishment. **Religion is always in the control business, and that's something people don't really understand.** It's in a guilt-producing control business. And if you have Heaven as a place where you're rewarded for your goodness, and Hell is a place where you're punished for your evil, then you sort of*

have control of the population. And so they create this fiery place which has quite literally scared the Hell out of a lot of people, throughout Christian history. And it's part of a control tactic."

"Every church I know claims that 'we are the true church' – that they have some ultimate authority, 'We have the infallible Pope,' 'We have the Bible.'... *The idea that the truth of God can be bound in any human system, by any human creed, by any human book, is almost beyond imagination for me.*

God is not a Christian. God is not a Jew or a Muslim or a Hindi or Buddhist. All of those are human systems, which human beings have created to try to help us walk into the mystery of God. I honor my tradition. I walk through my tradition. But I don't think my tradition defines God. It only points me to God." ~John Shelby Spong [[Source](#)]

About the Author

[Vic Bishop](#) is a staff writer for [WakingTimes.com](#). He is an observer of people, animals, nature, and he loves to ponder the connection and relationship between them all. A believer in always striving to [becoming self-sufficient](#) and free from the matrix, please track him down on [Facebook](#).

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