

grains of sand on all the seashores of the world.

2. Clark H. Pinnock, in his article entitled "The Destruction of the Finally Impenitent," published in the *Criswell Theological Review* (4.2 [1990]: 243-259), makes the following (excerpted) statements:

Let me say at the outset that I consider the concept of hell as endless torment in body and mind an outrageous doctrine, a theological and moral enormity, a bad doctrine of the tradition which needs to be changed. How can Christians possibly project a deity of such cruelty and vindictiveness whose ways include inflicting everlasting torture upon his creatures, however sinful they may have been? Surely a God who would do such a thing is more nearly like Satan than like God, at least by any ordinary morals standards, and by the gospel itself Surely the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is no fiend; torturing people without end is not what our God does. Does the one who told us to love our enemies intend to wreak vengeance on his own enemies for all eternity?... Is it a surprise, given the cruelty which the doctrine attributes to God's action, the Christians would repeatedly wonder if it were true? It is no wonder to me why they would gravitate to the kind of view I am defending, that the finally impenitent wicked, rather than suffering torture forever, pass out of existence. Their moral sensibilities demand it of them...

The view I am advancing does seem to be gaining ground among evangelicals. The fact that no less a person than J. R. W. Stott has endorsed it now will certainly encourage this trend to continue. [Pinnock also mentions J. W. Wenham, E. Fudge, P. E. Hughes, and S. Travis as supporting this view.]

Let us ask then whether the traditional doctrine of hell is biblically and theologically sound. In my view it is not.

1. The strong impression the Bible creates in this reader with regard to the fate of the finally impenitent wicked is