

Is there forgiveness in Hell?

Yes! There is forgiveness. It simply has to be accepted

There are no good people in Heaven, only forgiven sinners, and there are no bad people in Hell, only forgiven sinners. The only difference is that those in Heaven accepted God's unconditional acceptance of them and those in Hell didn't. You have to wonder why they didn't, when God told both groups he'd accepted them in Jesus Christ and offered them all free passage to the Kingdom of Heaven. Why didn't they all accept the offer with both hands, then?

Because human beings are naturally suspicious of "something for nothing." There's got to be a catch in there somewhere, or a scam. It's also very difficult for our self-esteem to accept a free gift without having to do something to earn it, or do something in return. "I'm not a charity case," people say. Pride and self-respect come into the picture. We feel the need to hold up our end, do our part, pay our way, and perform some effort or duty to earn and justify the gift being given to us, especially if it's valuable.

It must come as quite a surprise, then, that God expects nothing in return for the gifts he has for us. He doesn't keep an account, either, of what he's given us, and what we give back to him. God's not a bookkeeper. Instead, he took care of everything we'd need to enter his Kingdom, free of charge, himself - and before we were even aware he'd done it, too!

Everything that stood between us and God's acceptance of us was taken care of when he came among us in Jesus Christ. What stood between us and God was our sinful nature, so Jesus took on our human nature and nailed it to the cross. The Father then raised him to a new creation and closed the books on sin forever. "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us (**Ephesians 1:7-8**)." And before we think there's some part we have to play in this, the word "lavished" is in the past tense. It's already been done. We don't have to do anything. It's a gift. There are no strings attached, no catch, no small print and no expectations in return.

We were chosen for this gift before our Earth even existed, in fact, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight (**verse 4**)." It was all pre-planned, or predestined, as **verse 5** says. He's already "blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ (**verse 3**)." And the blessings on us are in heavenly realms too, not just on Earth.

That's the plan he "purposed in Christ (**verse 9**)," and all God asks of us is to believe it and accept his gift with the grace in which he gave it, recognizing what the gift is, that because of Christ, God the Father unconditionally accepts us.

What a relief, because we can do as Jesus suggested and "rest in him."

Is there forgiveness in Hell, then? Oh yes, but those in residence didn't believe it and turned it down. It all comes down to belief. "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son (**John 3:17**)."

Religion, however, does not talk of Hell as condemnation for those who don't believe in what God accomplished for us in Christ. It uses Hell to condemn people who don't fulfill their own denominational requirements. It exploits people's fear of Hell to recruit them into their church or cult. And to avoid being sent to Hell, there are conditions that must be met, that "God requires," or else.

But Christianity is the absolute opposite to that. God has already fulfilled the conditions necessary for us to avoid being sent to Hell, because he's already redeemed us and reconciled us to him in Jesus. He's already put in place all that's necessary for us to have a relationship with him, and for us to enter into heavenly realms, not Hell.

That's because God's interested in a relationship, not religion. Religion wants to put conditions on receiving God's gifts and blessings. But God doesn't. Everything we need for entering his Kingdom is a gift. There is no more to be done, or can be done to make it more certain, or to change it. To enter into the peace and security of the relationship God gave us before we even existed, there is nothing we need do but simply accept what God forged for us in Jesus Christ, and enjoy it.