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# Erasing Hell: What God Said About Eternity, And The Things We've Made Up



## Synopsis

How could a loving God send people to hell? Will people have a chance after they die to believe in Jesus and go to heaven? With a humble respect for God's Word, Francis Chan and Preston Sprinkle address the deepest questions you have about eternal destiny. They've asked the same questions. Like you, sometimes they just don't want to believe in hell. But as they write, "We cannot afford to be wrong on this issue." This is not a book about who is saying what. It's a book about what God says. It's not a book about impersonal theological issues. It's a book about people who God loves. It's not a book about arguments, doctrine, or being right. It's a book about the character of God. Erasing Hell will immerse you in the truth of Scripture as, together with the authors, you find not only the truth but the courage to live it out. A pastor and church planter based in San Francisco, Francis Chan speaks to tens of thousands of people around the world every year. Known for his passionate, biblical style, Chan is on the board of World Impact and is the author of *Forgotten God*, *Erasing Hell*, and *Crazy Love*, which has sold nearly two million copies.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

After watching the promotional video from David C. Cook Publishing I was excited to read a book by an author whom I deeply respect and even admire for their previous emotional & challenging works. After watching the video I expected Erasing Hell to be an exegetical and challenging study of the topic of hell from a Biblical perspective by an author passionate about the truth. I had expectations when I started reading Erasing Hell. Were my expectations correct? Yes. Francis Chan and co-author, Preston Sprinkle (whom Chan admits did . . . "the majority of the research" pg. 11) do a phenomenal job of examining the context of scripture and presenting the Biblical truth about the realities of hell. This book is a sobering reminder of how we as Western Christians and the Western church have watered down the language of hell to appeal to our own comfort, when in reality the words that Jesus and others used in the Bible are both intimidating and clear: Hell is a real place and many people will go there. **WHAT I DIDN'T LOVE** Maybe I missed the point but after watching the promotional video I was expecting Chan & Sprinkle to present their own Biblical study of hell, which they did, however I did not expect them to spend so much time challenging the book: Love Wins by Rob Bell. I am not 100% sure why I did not expect this from Chan, but regardless it was my expectation. In no way do they "bash" Bell or throw him under the bus like many other Evangelical authors, pastors and leaders have been doing over the past few months, but they definitively challenge quotes, thoughts and passages of scripture directly from Love Wins.

I picked up Chan and Sprinkle's book on hell and read it in a day. As other commenters have noted, it is not a bad book. But, it also is not a compelling read either. It appears to have been written as a counter to Rob Bell's book "Love Wins" and, in that sense, it presents some notable rebuttals to some of Bell's points. But, unfortunately, after reading it, I felt like I had not actually read a whole book, but only a "Cliff's Notes" version. Too often, I got to the end of a chapter or a section and thought "where's the rest of it?" There were many points that were tossed out there interestingly, but then not expanded on. I was often left wanting more on the subject and feeling like I had just gotten a summary rather than an analysis. To me, Chan and Sprinkle were not really attempting to explain hell in more detail, but only to rebut a few limited points from Rob Bell's book. As such, it should not be subtitled "What God said about eternity, and the things we've made up." Rather, it should be something much more limited and simpler, like "Rebutting some misconceptions about hell." That is really all it does -- although I do think it does that effectively. But, to give the impression it is a more

detailed discussion of hell is not really accurate. Perhaps this is because Chan and Sprinkle are wrestling themselves with where they come out on understanding hell. From comments in the book, they clearly give both annihilationism and eternal conscious torment views a fair seat within orthodoxy. And, although Chan clearly supports eternal conscious torment, he also goes to some length to indicate that annihilationism is a possible view from an exegesis of the scriptures.

I had some trepidation about even reading *Erasing Hell*, let alone reviewing it. Part of that stems from a desire to not continue to tread the same ground, over and over again. The rest of my uneasiness came from another (greater) concern: Am I spending too much time thinking about hell? Worse, am I turning thinking about it into another academic exercise that doesn't really have any impact on my life? If you're concerned about that tendency in your own life, you'll be thankful to read *Erasing Hell: What God said about eternity, and the things we made up*. Here, Francis Chan and co-author Preston Sprinkle offer a foundational understanding of what Scripture actually says about hell while explaining why it actually matters. In case you were wondering, yes, this book is a direct response to Rob Bell's *Love Wins*. Chan and Sprinkle interact heavily with the former work, carefully addressing the significant issues raised in its pages in Chan's now-trademark conversational style. One of the big questions in the *Love Wins* controversy centers on whether or not Christian universalism and the opportunity for post-mortem salvation is defensible from Scripture. The authors quickly move through a handful of the major proof texts offered in defense of universalism to focus on to the larger issue of post-mortem salvation. In their search for proof texts in its defense, they found exactly none. "No passage in the Bible says that there will be a second chance after death to turn to Jesus," they write on page 35. "And that's frightening . . . because the idea of an after-death conversion is the most important ingredient for the Universalist position. It makes or breaks the view.

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