

# Pastor Fired for Embracing Rob Bell's Book Saying There Is No Hell

Original title of this article: *Who's in Hell? Pastors' Criticism of Eternal Torment for Some Sparks Fierce Debate*

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**Note from Pastor Kevin Lea: *I have interspersed comments in this article below (indented in italics). All Scriptures are from the New King James Version.***



Methodist pastor Chad Holtz, who voiced support for a new book [Rob Bell's book *Love Wins - a book about heaven, hell, and the fate of every person who ever lived*] questioning the view of hell as a place of eternal damnation, said he is "shocked" by his church's decision to fire him.

*All Pastors who teach their congregations contrary to what the Bible clearly states should be fired. They are false teachers and wolves in sheep's clothing. We shouldn't be surprised that the wolves are "shocked" at not being able to devour the sheep anymore. Mr. Holtz should be thankful that he has been removed from a position where he can deceive because Jesus warned that those who lead others astray will receive a greater judgment in hell (Matthew 18:2-9).*

Holtz, who served as pastor of the United Methodist church in rural North Carolina, said he hoped his personal belief posted on Facebook would engage -- not anger -- members of his congregation.

Holtz was dismissed this month as pastor of Marrow's Chapel in Henderson after he wrote a note on his Facebook page supporting a new book by Rob Bell, a prominent young evangelical pastor and critic of the traditional view of hell as a place of torment for billions of damned souls.

Holtz said church members complained to a pastor-parish relations committee that his views did not reflect the views of the congregation.

"They felt that what their pastor was writing publicly was not reflective of what they think," Holtz said in an interview. "I was quite shocked, and also disappointed that no one came to me personally to talk about why they were upset. It's OK to disagree."

*It is okay to disagree with each other over issues that are not fundamental to salvation. However, it does matter when someone masquerading as a pastor of a Christian church wants to say Jesus lied to us when He taught so extensively about hell and the lake of fire as an eternal place of suffering for the damned. Holtz is using the same tactic as Satan did with Eve in the garden:*

*Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "**Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'**" Then the serpent said to the woman, "**You will not surely die.**"*  
*Genesis 3:1-4*

The debate over Bell's new book "Love Wins" has quickly spread across the evangelical precincts of the Internet, in part because of an eye-catching promotional video posted on YouTube. Bell, the pastor of the 10,000-member Mars Hill Bible Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., criticizes the belief that a select

number of Christians will spend eternity in the bliss of heaven while everyone else is tormented forever in hell. "This is misguided and toxic and ultimately subverts the contagious spread of Jesus' message of love, peace, forgiveness and joy that our world desperately needs to hear," Bell writes in his book.

*It is tragic that Rob Bell is leading so many astray. I pray he will someday repent before he pays the price for every soul he deceives. It is true that Jesus spread a message of love, peace, forgiveness, and joy to those who believed in Him as their Savior and Lord. But he also warned that those who did not receive Him would die in their sins and spend eternity in the Lake of fire (Matthew 10:34-39, Matthew 22:1-14, Luke 13:22-30, John 8, Rev 20:11-15, and many others).*

Holtz, 36, who has served as pastor of Marrow's Chapel for almost four years, said he took to Facebook on March 2 to share his "personal journey" with the notion of hell as a place of torment. He told FoxNews.com that he wrote about the four things he "lost" when he "lost the idea of hell."

"I lost the idol of **belief**; I lost a very powerful and useful motivator -- **fear**; I lost the right to hate my enemy and I lost my place in a tribe," he said.

*Holtz thinks that belief, fear, and a place in a tribe (those going to heaven) are something to cast off rather than embrace. These are the very things the Bible teaches as being necessary to be saved and to have everlasting life.*

*And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.**" Acts 16:30-31*

*And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather **fear Him** who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:28*

*And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; And we [**a "tribe" of believers**] shall reign on the earth." Revelation 5:9-10*

*And true believers do not hate their enemies. (Matthew 5:44)*

He said he had hoped his personal experience might engage members of his 80-person congregation, but instead the posting angered congregants who complained that it did not represent their views. "The people at my church are good, decent people," he told FoxNews.com. "They're simply feeling a little threatened by a pastor who is asking questions that they don't want to ask right now. I hope some seeds are planted and that God will bring some good about it."

*Jesus said in Matthew 18:7, "Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!"*

Making his new belief public was both liberating and a little frightening for Holtz, even though his doubts about traditional doctrines on damnation began long before he heard about Rob Bell's book.

A married Navy veteran with five children, Holtz spent years trying to reconcile his belief that Jesus Christ's death on the cross redeemed the entire world with the idea that millions of people — including millions who had never even heard of Jesus — were suffering forever in hell. “We do these somersaults to justify the monster god we believe in,” he said. “But confronting my own sinfulness, that's when things started to topple for me. Am I really going to be saved just because I believe something, when all these good people in the world aren't?”

*It is clear that Holtz doesn't believe in the God of the Bible, and therefore has joined Satan in accusing Jesus of being a monster God. Jesus made it clear that there are no “good” people on earth. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We all deserve to go to the Lake of Fire. Far from being a monster, God so loved the world that He sent Jesus so that we could be rescued from an eternal destiny in hell. But just like those on the Titanic, you have to get on the lifeboat (Jesus) to be saved. Those who thought the Titanic was unsinkable kept dancing on the ballroom floor until they perished.*

Gray Southern, United Methodist district superintendent for the part of North Carolina that includes Henderson, declined to discuss Holtz's departure in detail, but said there was more to it than the online post about Rob Bell's book. “That's between the church and him,” Southern said.

Church members had also been unhappy with Internet posts about subjects like gay marriage and the mix of religion and patriotism, Holtz said, and the hell post was probably the “last straw.” Holtz and his family plan to move back to Tennessee, where he'll start a job and maybe plant a church.

*False teachers who reject God's word about Heaven and Hell are certainly going to reject God's word on other things too. Those who reject the truth will be given over to the lie.*

*The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.  
2 Thessalonians 2:9-12*

“So long as we believe there's a dividing point in eternity, we're going to think in terms of us and them,” he said. “But when you believe God has saved everyone, the point is, you're saved. Live like it.”

*“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ Matthew 7:21-23*

FoxNews.com's Cristina Corbin and the Associated Press contributed to this report

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