

Comparative Charts

Chart A: Arguments for Traditionalism

Chart B: Arguments for Conditionalism

Chart C: Arguments for Restorationism

Chart A: Arguments for Traditionalism

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
1. Eternal torment has been the orthodox view of hell for 2000 years. How could everyone be so wrong?	This was not true until the sixth century. There were always alternative views held among believers. They were not considered heretical until the Roman Catholic Church condemned them.	But the reformers also held the traditional view, and they were not controlled by the Roman Church. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> But they did retain a number of Catholic traditions not supported in scripture.
2. Jesus warned about hell more than anyone else. How can we call it “unloving”?	Jesus talked about the loving Father more than about hell. Whatever He may have believed about hell (He really didn’t say much about it), He must have understood it in light of God’s love for all mankind.	On the contrary, Jesus’ teaching on love should be interpreted as limited by His teaching on final judgment. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> That would only be true if judgment was His primary teaching, and the love of God a subordinate feature of His ministry.
3. <i>Gehenna</i> was seen by rabbis, in Jesus’ time, as eternal torment.	By some of the rabbis, yes. Not by all. Among the Jews, all three views existed as in the church today. The school of Hillel believed in annihilation.	But the school of Shammai, who taught eternal torment, was more prominently represented among the Pharisees. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Precisely!
4. Jesus would use the term as the rabbis did, unless He clarified otherwise.	Why should He, when there was a precedent of the term being used differently in the Old Testament? How often did Jesus really agree with the traditions of the rabbis against the Old Testament scriptures?	Jesus’ hearers would have understood His use of <i>Gehenna</i> in the sense of the final judgment of sinners, because they heard the rabbis teach in the synagogues. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> True! This often caused people to misunderstand Jesus.
5. “Death” is not unconsciousness, but means eternal separation from God (Gen.2:17)	Separation from God is experienced by sinners in this life (Eph.2:1, 12), but there is no scripture declaring it to mean a separation that is <i>everlasting</i> .	But the separation continues after death. If there is no repentance. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Even if so, it may not necessarily be endless.
6. Daniel 12:2 describes the wicked eternally ashamed. That is conscious suffering.	There is no reference to the subjective shame felt by the lost. They are held in contempt by others, whether alive or dead themselves.	But it could be read as if they were conscious. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Or not.

Arguments for Traditionalism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
7. Isaiah 66:24 talks about unquenchable fires and worms, which speaks of eternal torment.	This verse talks about “corpses” being consumed by fire and maggots. There is no hint that the corpses are conscious of their condition.	But they are an “abhorrence.” This is the same as “contempt” in Dan.12:2. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> And it no more speaks of the consciousness of the corpses than does Dan.12:2.
8. Mark 9:43-44 says it’s better to be mutilated than to go to <i>Gehenna</i> . This would not be true if people are annihilated or restored to God from hell.	First, <i>Gehenna</i> may not be a reference to hell, but to the Valley of Hinnom. Second, even if it is hell, its torments may be prolonged and excruciating without necessarily being <i>eternal</i> .	But it seems that it must be really bad, if it is better to be mutilated. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> No doubt it is! But “really bad” is not a synonym for <i>everlasting</i> .
9. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth—that’s conscious suffering, not annihilation.	Agreed. But this does not prove eternal torment, since the duration of this grief is not mentioned. All views anticipate such.	But these emotions are associated with hell. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Maybe, but neither hell nor these sufferings are declared to be endless for the lost.
10. Hell’s fires are <i>everlasting</i> (Gr. <i>aionios</i>) (Matt.25:41). This <i>everlasting</i> punishment mirrors <i>eternal</i> (<i>aionios</i>) life (Matt.25:46) in the same verse—if one is endless, then both are.	<i>Aionios</i> (“everlasting” or “eternal”) is a word that needn’t be translated that way. It can often mean “enduring” or “pertaining to the age.” Permanent Annihilation is “eternal.” Burnable things (people) may not last as long as the fire does.	But if it is not “endless” when referring to punishment, it can’t mean “endless” referring to life. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> It might not mean “endless.” The alternative definitions work for both cases.
11. Sinners will share the devil’s fate, which is eternal torment (Matt.25:41 w/ Rev.20:10).	They are not said to share the devil’s “fate.” They are cast into the same fire. What becomes of them there might not resemble what happens to the devil—a nonhuman being.	But the beast and the false prophet also are tormented with Satan there. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> These entities are not necessarily human individuals either—nor are “Death” and “Hades,” which are also cast in the same place (Rev.20:14)
12. The rich man was in flames, from which there was no escape (Luke 16:24, 26), as universalists claim.	The story is not about final judgment, but about the intermediate state in <i>Hades</i> , before the resurrection.	But both <i>Hades</i> and hell have the same features: fire and torment. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Possibly true. However, this is a story about <i>Hades</i> , not hell.
13. The punishment of the wicked is to be everlastingly shut out from the presence of God (2 Thess.1:9), suggesting conscious existence.	There is no reference to being shut out from God in the Greek of this verse. Translators enhanced the English with their own words. This is simply “destruction from God.”	But it could involve being shut out from His presence. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> It could, and Paul could have said that, if that’s what he meant to convey.

Arguments for Traditionalism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
14. The smoke of their torment ascends forever (Rev.14:11)—meaning they suffer forever.	The smoke of their torment is not the same thing as their torment itself. It is only the memorial of their suffering that is permanent.	Smoke doesn't keep ascending after the fire is gone. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> But it may ascend long after its victims are dead. (Ge.19:27f)
15. They have “no rest day or night” (Rev.14:11)—so they are conscious.	There is neither day nor night in hell. This idiom means “continuously.” It does not say how long this lasts.	It is connected with the smoke of their torment arising forever. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> True. We mustn't make more of it than does the text itself.
16. The devil is tormented forever in the lake of fire, thus the lake of fire means eternal torment. (Rev.20:10)	It apparently means that for him—and for the beast and the false prophet with him. It is not said to mean that for others (vv.14-15).	People may suffer there as long as the devil does. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> If they are immortal, they may. We are not told that this is so.
17. God's love is not His only trait; He also has wrath.	The Bible tells us His wrath is brief, but His love is forever. Whatever expression of His wrath there may be, must serve the interests of love.	But God only loves the elect. He hates the non-elect. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Not all are Calvinists. If Calvinism is true, this is correct.
18. For justice to be served, punishment must not be less than deserved.	Christians expect to receive less punishment than they deserve, don't they? Where's the justice in <i>that</i> ?	Well, those who repent are forgiven. <hr/> <i>Universalist Response:</i> Then, if all eventually repent, it's all good.
19. The only reason we recoil at the concept of eternal judgment is that we are ourselves sinners and naturally sympathize with sinners.	God and Jesus are not sinners, and they recoil even at death of sinners (Eze.33:11/Luke 19:41-44). How much more, then, would they object to eternal torment?	God sees sinners as criminals deserving judgment. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> God also sees sinners as lost sheep needing a shepherd (Ezek.34:11-16/Matt.9:36).
20. Sins committed in a short space of time may be severe enough to deserve the strictest of punishments.	True, but no sin committed in finite time deserves infinite judgment.	Next...
21. Sins committed in finite time nonetheless deserve infinite punishment because they are offenses against an infinite God.	If the Bible said this, it would be worthy of acceptance. As it is, it is neither affirmed by scripture, nor by common sense.	But the magnitude of sin is determined by the magnitude of the offended party. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> This sounds more like feudal jurisprudence than the Bible.

Arguments for Traditionalism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
22. Not all punishments will be equal in intensity. God recognizes degrees of guilt and punishes proportionately.	Then the previous argument must be false. If all sins against infinite Majesty deserve infinite punishment, then there can be no degrees of guilt.	Next...
23. Even if finite sins do not deserve infinite punishment, sinners will continue to sin eternally in hell, which justifies their being eternally punished.	If the scripture affirmed anything like this, we might be obliged to see this as true. As it is, the scripture's silence on such matters renders this argument 100% speculation.	Next...
24. For God to annihilate sinners would be immoral. It violates the dignity of their being made in God's image.	This is a questionable philosophical point. If it is an affront to human dignity to execute a criminal, how much worse an affront it must be to consign him to eternal indignity and contempt (as per Dan.12:2).	But to be put out of existence is worse than being allowed to live under punishment. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> By whose assessment? Why do men commit suicide in prison, then?
25. Annihilation is no punishment. One who is annihilated feels no pain.	Annihilationism allows there to be pain enough, as necessary—followed by extinction.	But men will endure pain for a while, if they know it will end, at some point, in death. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Your point being...?
26. There is no opportunity of repentance after death. (Heb.9:27)	This is not stated in Hebrews 9:27 (or anywhere else in scripture). It is scripturally-unjustified speculation.	But after death comes the "judgment." <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Yes. But hell (whatever it may involve) comes after that.
27. Jesus said that those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. They must be punished eternally.	<i>Conditionalist:</i> Someone who has been annihilated can hardly be said to have been "forgiven" any more than a man executed for a crime can be said to have been "acquitted." <i>Restorationist:</i> Those who are punished have not been "forgiven," even if their punishment is finite. A man who serves time in jail has not been "forgiven." Had he been forgiven, he would not have gone to jail.	But someone who has been annihilated, or who has suffered only finite punishment, has gotten off pretty easy, compared to eternal torment. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> On what basis are we justified in using "eternal torment" as the standard against which to measure the severity of finite punishments? Unless the Bible teaches infinite punishment, there is no reason to measure against that standard.

Arguments for Traditionalism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
<p>28. Jesus talks about the unforgiving servant being delivered to tormentors until he has paid his whole debt (Matt.18:34). His debt was millions of dollars. How could he pay that from prison? He is never getting out.</p>	<p>Technically, there is no indication that this parable describes postmortem circumstances. It could refer to the tortured conscience of one who does not forgive others.</p> <p><i>Restotationist:</i> The parable does not say that the man will never pay the debt. Even a huge debt, paid a little at a time, would not require eternity to repay. The wording actually does speak of the possibility of release from that situation.</p>	<p>But we see a judgment made here that is best understood as eschatological, and the man’s debt was enormous. The impression given is that it was unpayable.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Response:</i> This is not stated, nor implied. We don’t know what resources or rich friends may have been available to resolve his debts. In fact, the man had claimed that, given some time, he could repay it (v.26). In fact, the original debt had already been forgiven (v.27). All that this man now “owed” was to forgive his neighbor (v.32-33).</p>
<p>29. If there is no eternal torment, there is no compelling reason to live righteously. Why not eat, drink and be merry, if tomorrow we are merely annihilated?</p>	<p>True, unless one loves God and wishes to please Him. If one doesn’t, chances are, his fear of hell alone will not lead him to live a sincerely good life. The Pharisees believed in an eternal hell.</p>	<p>But some don’t love God enough to serve Him without threats.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Response:</i> The worse for them—and the worse for God, to be stuck with such grudging worshipers!</p>
<p>30. If there is no eternal torment from which to save people, there is no reason to risk our lives going out as missionaries to reach the lost.</p>	<p>There is such a thing as loving God, and wishing to spread His Kingdom. On the other hand, it is harder to love one who torments His enemies endlessly. Perhaps those who believe in this doctrine will require it to motivate them.</p>	<p>But why give up our lives, if the worst that will come to sinners is annihilation?</p> <hr/> <p><i>Response:</i> Why indeed? If we are man-centered, rather than God-centered, it is very hard to think of a good answer.</p>

Chart B: Arguments for Conditionalism

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
1. Man was made only potentially immortal (Gen. 2:17; 3:22).	No, man was made only potentially <i>mortal</i> . He was created sinless, and would not die unless he sinned.	The fact that he could sin and die meant that his <i>immortality</i> was not guaranteed. His eternal life depended upon his access to the “tree of life.” <hr/> <i>Response:</i> You could argue this either way. His death depended upon his eating of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”
2. Only God (not man) is immortal (1 Tim.6:16).	This may refer to God’s absolute self-existence from all eternity. If no one else than God has eternal life, then we do not.	Our eternal life is <i>in Christ</i> (1 John 5:11-12). Without Him we do not have it. With Him, we share in His immortality. This is conditional. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Next...
3. Man must seek immortality (Rom.2:7)	This means immortality in heaven. In the passage, it is contrasted with indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish (vv.8-9), which means conscious torment in hell.	These sufferings are not said to continue eternally. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> It is implied, by being contrasted with immortality in the previous verse.
4. Immortality is offered only to those who believe in Christ (John 3:16)	It speaks of “everlasting (<i>aionios</i>) life” (not the word “immortality”). Such a term can speak of a quality of life enjoyed by believers, but not given to unbelievers.	When <i>aionios</i> is connected to punishment, judgment, etc., traditionalists want it to mean “endless.” Why not here? <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Why do conditionalists want it to mean “endless” here, but not when applied to punishments?
5. Those not in Christ “perish” (John 3:16).	This word does not necessarily mean “annihilation,” but it can speak of experiencing ruin. A person’s life can be ruined without being annihilated.	In the vast majority of its occurrences in scripture, this word refers to physical death. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Yes. Physical death. It is not, in those places, talking about ultimate postmortem consequences. For those, we need to consult other passages.

Arguments for Conditionalism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
6. God told Adam, “The day you eat of it, you will die” (Gen.2:17). This is the ultimate penalty for sin, confirmed elsewhere in scripture.	Adam didn’t die physically that day. He “died” spiritually. He was separated from God. This is a conscious condition that can continue into eternity.	Such <i>eternal</i> separation is not affirmed in scripture. It would be strange, if it were true, for God not to warn them of the true penalty. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> It is possible (as in some translations) that 2 Thess.1:9 speaks of such an eternal separation.
7. “The wages of sin is death” (Rom.6:23). “Death” means not living (e.g., Gen.42:2/Deut.33:6/ Isa.38:1/Eze.18:28).	Physical death is the opposite of physical living, but this does not apply when “death” is used of something other than physical death.	It would be interesting to see this demonstrated. Whether used physically, spiritually or metaphorically, “death” is always the opposite of “life.” <hr/> <i>Response:</i> But the absence of “life” may refer to the absence of a <i>certain kind or quality</i> of life.
8. The soul “sleeps” unconscious until resurrection (Matt.9:24/1 Thess.4:13-15).	This is disputable, but not really relevant to the question of post-resurrection immortality.	Next...
9. The lake of fire is “the second death” (Rev.20:14), not perpetual life in torment.	This “death” is the ultimate “wages of sin.” It is not physical death, or loss of consciousness, but loss of the life of the Kingdom of God. We are told that those in the lake of fire continue to be tormented (Rev.20:10).	The devil, the beast and false prophet, yes. Death is also cast in there (20:14), and we specifically know that it is there destroyed (1 Cor.15:26) and will be “no more” (Rev.21:4). Ordinary <i>people</i> are not said to be eternally tormented there.
10. Jesus said that the soul itself can be “destroyed” in hell, after the body has been killed (Matt.10:28). This speaks of annihilation, not immortality of the soul.	1. <i>Gehenna</i> might (or might not) be intended as reference to hell (see chapter 6). 2. “Destroy” can mean “ruin.” The soul in hell can be ruined, but continue to exist. 3. Even if the soul is annihilated at death, the person is later raised for the judgment. It is not the soul, but the resurrected body, that ends up in the lake of fire.	But the impression given by Jesus’ statement seems to speak of the ultimate destruction of body and soul after the judgment. It may be ambiguous on that point, but the impression given is strongly in favor of annihilation. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Next...
11. Someday all creation will worship God, the wicked being no more. If there is a cosmic torture chamber somewhere being eternally maintained, then there is no resolution and no complete victory of righteousness.	<i>Traditionalist:</i> The word “all” often is not to be taken literally in scripture. It is often a hyperbole. <i>Restorationist:</i> The same conditions may be achieved through the conversion of everyone in hell.	Next...

Arguments for Conditionalism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
<p>12. "Fire" is primarily for consuming combustibles (e.g., Isa.9:18/ Jer.21:14/Hos.8:14/Amos 1:4,etc.).</p>	<p><i>Traditionalist:</i> Fire can also be used as an emblem of torture (Luke 16:26/Rev.20:10)</p> <p><i>Restorationist:</i> It can also be a refining or purifying agent (e.g., Isa.4:4; 6:6-7/ Mal.3:3/ 1 Pet.1:7)</p>	<p>But consuming and burning up are the most frequent scriptural concepts associated with fire.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Response:</i> Of course, the imagery must be evaluated case-by-case, and harmonized with the whole theme of judgment in scripture.</p>
<p>13. Twenty-six times in the New Testament the wicked are said to be "burned up."</p>	<p>Most of these passages are figurative, and, in their context, they speak of temporal punishment and physical death. They do not necessarily relate to hell or its effects.</p>	<p>Next...</p>
<p>14. "Fire that is not quenched" does not necessarily burn forever. This imagery is often used in the Old Testament to refer to temporal judgments.</p>	<p>This is a good reason to question whether such "unquenchable fire" is a reference to postmortem destinies at all. As it refers to temporal judgments in the Old, so in the New.</p>	<p>In the New Testament, these terms are applied to eschatological punishment (e.g., Matt.3:12/Mark 9:43).</p> <hr/> <p><i>Response:</i> These texts may not be speaking of the final judgment, but of Jerusalem's destruction AD 70.</p>
<p>15. God is a "consuming fire" (Heb.12:29).</p>	<p>What He consumes is not stated. It may be a reference to His judgment on Jerusalem (context could encourage this). It is also possible that He consumes dross in the purifying of His people. The statement proves little about Annihilationism, except as an example of fire having the function of consuming fuel.</p>	<p>Next...</p>
<p>16. The wicked, like chaff, and fruitless trees, are to be burned up. (Matt.3:10, 12)</p>	<p>To make these statements to refer to hell is to ignore the context, in which John the Baptist describes imminent judgment on those in his day. "The ax is laid to the root..." speaks of a stroke about to fall. It is not the final judgment that is here in view.</p>	
<p>17. Branches broken off the Vine are burned up (John 15:6).</p>	<p>They are being disposed of. The imagery of discarded "branches" (which represent people), suggests throwing them into fire. In reality, people are not branches. The analogy should not be pressed beyond its intended limits.</p>	<p>Branches thrown into fire are eventually consumed. If the case is otherwise with people thrown into the fire, we are never informed of it. There is no hint that the case is different with people than with branches.</p>

Arguments for Conditionalism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
<p>18. The wicked “melt away” (Ps.58:8), “wither” (Ps.37:2), “fade” (Job 14:2), “vanish like smoke” (Ps.37:20).</p>	<p>Where these images are found, they appear to speak of the vanishing of the wicked from the earthly scene, rather than postmortem fates.</p>	<p>The burden of proof would seem to rest upon those who wish to make the ultimate fate of these people different from the fate described.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Response:</i> The burden of proof, rather, rests with those who wish to make the passages speak of subjects beyond their intended theme.</p>
<p>19. The fate of the wicked is “destruction” in 59 New Testament passages.</p>	<p>The Greek words for “destroy” and “destruction” can refer to being ruined or damaged beyond repair, which does not require the additional assumption of annihilation.</p>	<p>To be destroyed sounds severe, but not nearly so severe as to be tormented eternally—a fate for which no definite scriptural support exists.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Restorationist response:</i> True. But eternal torment, and annihilation—neither of which are clearly taught as the final state of the lost—are not the only alternatives available.</p>

Chart C: Arguments for Restorationism

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
1. The ultimate salvation of all is the only logical corollary to the doctrines of God's omnibenevolence and God's omnipotence.	God's omnibenevolence is not an accepted doctrine by Calvinists, and Arminians do not believe that God's omnipotence cancels human free will with reference to salvation.	But God's omnibenevolence and sovereign power to accomplish His purposes are well-established in scripture. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Not all agree upon the interpretations of the relevant texts.
2. It is possible that repentance may occur beyond the grave for those who died unsaved.	There is no scripture affirming this possibility. The strong urgings of scripture to repent now, rather than to delay, suggest this life provides the only opportunities for this.	Scripture does not deny that such opportunities may exist. There are good reasons to repent and serve God in this life (justifying the strong appeals) even if there are further opportunities beyond death. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Still, scripture promises no such opportunities.
3. Only this view provides adequate explanation for the existence of suffering. If God can turn everything, eventually, to every person's salvation, earthly sufferings may be justified as means to that end.	Such sufferings may also be justified as being merely <i>potentially</i> effective in bringing about repentance, whether they actually accomplish this desired effect or not, just as radical surgery may be justified even in cases where it may not necessarily prove effective.	Next...
4. God's love is universal, because He is love.	Love is not God's only attribute. He is also a just judge, and has wrath toward sin. Calvinists do not affirm that God loves all people equally, nor is He obligated to do so.	Love is God's very nature. There is no question of God's <i>obligations</i> , but only of His nature. Parents love their children irrespective of any obligation laid upon them. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> But God is not everybody's Father. Some are children of the devil (John 8:44).
5. God is Father to all people, by virtue of creation. As a result of bringing people into the world, God has the same reasons to love them as an earthly father has to love those whom he brings into the world (Mal.2:10; Acts 17:25-29)—and similar responsibility for them, too.	God is not responsible for, nor obligated to love those of His creation who have rebelled against Him to the enemy's side. Those who have rebelled are children of the devil, not of God.	God counts even rebels to be His children (Isa.1:2; Luke 15:24, 32). Children may join the family of their father's enemy, but this does not change the natural relationship. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> Regardless of having created all people, God loves some and hates others (Rom.9:13).

Arguments for Restorationism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
6. No father would give up one any of his children who could be saved by his continued pursuit of them.	This is still assuming that God counts all people to be His children. A case can be made against this. There are two families on earth: 1) those in Adam, who are in rebellion, and 2) those in Christ, who are God's children. God has a special, parental commitment only to the latter.	The compassion of God toward even the lost (Matt.9:36; Luke 6:35) is evidence that He regards all to be His children and proper objects of His love. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> God may love only the elect (Calvinist); or even those who are loved may choose to reject God's loving overtures (Arminian).
7. A father chastens his children, which is what trials in this life, and hell in the next, is for.	God does chasten His true children (Christians) "for our good." However, scripture mentions no such commitment of God to the unsaved.	Those who are converted are definitely ahead of others, chronologically, but God loves all people, and is committed to their eventual inclusion in His fold. <hr/> <i>Response:</i> This statement depends upon disputed interpretations of certain texts.
8. All of God's actions are for a purpose. His purposes are consistent with His loving character and His benevolent will for mankind (Eph.1:11).	The manifestation of God's wrath against vessels of wrath is also declared to be consistent with His revealed purposes (Rom.9:17, 21-23).	The judgment of sinners is consistent with His purposes. The question is, what kind of judgment (He is not obligated to settle for one He doesn't like) is consistent with His character—restorative chastening or mere vengeance?
9. All of God's judgments have restoration in view.	This requires extrapolating what God said about certain cases and making them apply to every instance. Most cases mentioned in scripture apply directly to God's dealing with Israel, His chosen people.	Israel was chosen to bring the same mercy to the nations as that which God showed to them. They were chosen for this task, not to be saved exclusively. God's character and purpose is not one way toward Israel and another way toward Gentiles.
10. Though all people deserve condemnation, God's mercy can override the demands of justice (e.g., Ps.32:1; 103:10/John 8:11/ Luke 18:13-14).	Mercy can triumph over justice, but not automatically. The mercy of God is given to the repentant—not to everybody.	Unless, of course, everybody becomes repentant. There are scriptures that seem to describe this result (e.g., Isa.45:22-23/Phil.2:10-11).
11. Jesus absorbed the wrath of God on our behalf (Isa.53:6/ 2 Cor.5:21/ 1 Pet.2:23).	<i>Calvinist:</i> Jesus only died for the elect, not for all people. <i>Arminian:</i> Though Jesus died for all, not all will meet the conditions for salvation, so that it is no better than if He had not died for them.	To say Jesus died only for the elect is a partisan Calvinistic assumption, nowhere stated in scripture. To say all men will not meet the conditions for salvation is to assume, without scriptural warrant, that the opportunity to do so is limited to this life only.

Arguments for Restorationism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
12. Jesus died for all, not merely some (John 1:29/ 1 Tim.2:6/ 1 John 2:2/ Heb.2:9)	<i>Calvinist:</i> The word's "all" and "the whole world" can be referring only to the inclusion of all races and all classes of people—not every individual.	The Bible abundantly affirms that God shows no partiality, as He would have to if He selected only a fraction of the human race to save by His grace.
13. If all are not saved, Jesus paid for something He did not receive. He is then cheated, and the enemy wins.	<i>Calvinist:</i> Jesus only died to save the elect, and they will all be saved. <i>Arminian:</i> Jesus paid for the whole world, knowing that only some would be saved. This is the price He was willing to pay for the few.	The Bible says that Jesus died for everybody (1 John 2:2), and that God is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet.3:9). If any ultimately are lost to Him, He will be disappointed. There is no reason for God to accept disappointment, when He could continue pursuing each one until He has saved all.
14. Jesus' impact on the race for salvation was superior (not inferior) to Adam's impact for condemnation.	All have been harmed by Adam's sin. Christ died to recover "many" (Mark 10:45; Rom.5:15, 19). Christ does not recover as many as Adam harmed.	Paul says "the many" whom Christ saves are the same "the many" that Adam harmed (Rom.5:15, 19). "The many" are identified as "all men" in v.18. What Christ accomplished for the race was "much more" than Adam accomplished against it (Rom.5:15, 17, 20)—not "much less."
15. God has purposed to reconcile all things to Himself in Christ through the cross (Col.1:20/ Eph.1:10).	First, "all things" can be a hyperbole, as is often the case in scripture. Second, the creation can also be "reconciled" to God by the fact that the rebellious element has been eliminated in hell.	What God desires to reconcile are "all things" that were created (comp. Col.1:16 and 20). The reconciliation of all things is "through the blood of His cross" (meaning salvation), not be the loss and/or destruction of most things.
16. Every knee will someday bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God (Phil.2:9-11)	First, the verse says "should", not "will." Second, many may bow and confess grudgingly and in resentment.	The verse is alluding to Isa.45:23, which is quoted also in Rom.14:11. In both, it says they "shall" or "will" bow and confess. The language and context of Isaiah 45 and Roman 14 (as well as Phil.2) all require that this is true worship. Besides, it is "to the glory of God," which insincere worship would not be.
17. The gospel is "good tidings of great joy...to all people" (Luke2:10). The good news is to all people—not good news to some and bad news to others.	It is good news to all people to know that God is willing to save them. It is not His fault if they reject this offer.	But it is not news "of great joy" to all people, if most ultimately reject it. There will be no "great joy" in hell.

Arguments for Restorationism (continued)

Argument for the View	Cross-Examination of Argument	Further Discussion of the Point
<p>18. Christians cannot be glad if their loved ones are lost (Rom.9:2-3/ Phil.3:18).</p>	<p>God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Perhaps He will blot out the memory of them from our minds. Or it may just be that we will be perfected to the point that we rejoice to see His justice carried out, even against our loved ones.</p>	<p>If God can't make us happy without concealing His actions, this does not speak well of the innate goodness of His actions!</p> <p>If we are perfected, will that not mean "perfected in love" (1 John 4:17-18)? How can we have less compassion on the lost, when our love is more perfect? How can we rejoice in the judgment of sinners, when God Himself does not (Eze.33:11)?</p>
<p>19. Jesus is the Victor over sin, death and the devil (Isa.42:4/ Matt.12:28/ Col.2:15/Heb.2:14/1 Cor.15:25-26; 54-55/ 2 Tim.1:10/ Rev.5:5; 11:15; 21:4)—the devil and death cannot win in the end.</p>	<p>(The author has never encountered an answer to this in the literature)</p>	