



AN ACT OF LOVE

How did you go with last week's challenge?

It's difficult to love people who don't love you back. **Have you ever experienced this?** Someone once said that loving someone who doesn't love you back is like hugging a cactus; the tighter you hold on, the more it hurts. Yet this is exactly what God does. In the last study we learned how God prepares a place for those that choose Him, but even in the way He deals with those that don't choose Him, He is loving.

JOHN 3:16

This is one of the most well-known verses in the Bible because it talks about God's love and His decision to save us. But it also speaks to the nature of hell. **According to this verse, what happens when someone dies who didn't believe in Jesus?** They will perish. **What does "perish" mean?** They will be no more!

PSALM 37:20

The Bible says that those who don't believe in Jesus are "consumed" or "vanish" or "disappear" like smoke. **Why is this the most loving way for God to act towards people that don't choose Him?** God respects our freedom to choose Him or not. He's not going to force anyone to spend eternity with Him who doesn't want to be with Him. But unlike popular opinion, He doesn't torture them in a furnace forever, He respects their decision and they cease to exist.

2 THESSALONIANS 1:7-9

How do we reconcile 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 with what we've already read about hell? In 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, it seems to suggest that the punishment for those who don't choose God is eternal, however, this is not what the Bible is saying. It is saying that the destruction, or the consequence, is eternal. When someone perishes, they're gone forever. According to the Bible, God loves us so much that even when we don't love Him back He doesn't seek harsh revenge. He simply honours our decision. **How does this impact the way you view God?**

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Your challenge this week is to learn more about the concept of hell by watching the movie *Hell and Mr. Fudge* It can be rented on www.hellandmrfudge.org.