

## All-or-Nothing Land

I once lived in a small town in West Texas. It was easy to tell when you entered the section of town where most of the blacks lived. The streets were no longer paved. That's interesting, I thought to myself. Instead of the streets being badly paved in this section of town, they weren't paved at all. I once saw a documentary on TV about the city of Rio De Janeiro, where there are very sharp contrasts between the rich and the poor. Many of the favelas, or shanty towns, are directly across the street from the wealthiest districts. The single biggest issue dividing the political left in our country from the "religious" right is that of income distribution. The progressive Democrats repeatedly point out the top one percent now own 90% of the nation's wealth, and this disparity seems to be growing worse by the day. Many conservatives, not all, believe that the plight of the poor is justified and mostly due to immorality, laziness and attitudes of dependency.

If you think this is a sad state of affairs, wait 'til you die and go to Heaven. According to most Christian evangelicals, the afterlife will be no different. The haves will have it all and the have nots will have nothing at all. The haves will enjoy a lifestyle more lavish than the billionaires of this world, and the have nots will be even worse off than the poorest of the poor, and to rub salt in their wounds, they will be tormented day and night in a gruesome place, called Hell. Many, not all, who are destined for Heaven, believe that those who end up in Hell will be going there because of their sinful deeds and their bad attitudes towards the God who sent them there.

This makes no sense at all to me, and seems quite contrary to the true Gospel of Christ.