

There is NO place like Hell!

We don't here much about Hell these days, and when we do, it is usually in a mocking kind of way, or is taken very lightly. When we see it portrayed in some kind of way on the television, it never reveals to us the true state of what it is like, in fact there have even been comedy sketches about Hell, people laugh at it!

There is a verse in proverbs that reads **"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the holy is understanding."** Today the world does not fear God as it once did. People are now doing what they please without fearing any kind of consequence or punishment for their sin. Some of us Christians still hold on to sin in our lives, perhaps an habitual sin that we have never been able to get rid of since we have been saved, we hold on to it because Godly fear is held in low esteem, holiness is too hard a walk, and we do not love the Lord Jesus enough, to get rid of it! Yet one day all will be accounted for!

So why talk on such a solemn and not much *welcomed* subject?

Because the world needs to hear it friends, and so do we! Paul said in Acts 20v27 **"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."** We as Christians can not just take the parts of the Bible that we like such as love, joy and peace, we need to hear the whole counsel of God, and friends, Hell is part of it. In fact Jesus spoke more about Hell than He did about Heaven, does it not teach us that, He was warning us of what is to come, if we reject Him? One preacher has said "Because we have taken Hell out of our preaching and teaching, we have got Hell in our world!" The Bible says that there is a Hell, and we need to warn people about it!

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." (Eze 3v18+19) How is that for a solemn verse. Now I know that this verse is concerning Ezekiel, that he is to be a watchman to the house of Israel, but I can not help but think, that we too, have a very serious responsibility to our generation of people to warn them of the Hell to come!

Anyway, let us turn to the passage of scripture that we will be looking at tonight, **Luke 16 v19-31.** (Read)

Now to start off I would say that this account we have just read, is NOT a parable, but a factual account that actually took place, with these two people, Lazarus and a rich man. The reason I say this is because when the Lord spoke in parables He always said things like "Hear ye therefore the parable..." or "Another parable put He forth unto them..." A few times He used the word "like" where a particular truth was compared to some familiar object or scene. Also in this passage Jesus mentions two specific people. a rich man and the beggar Lazarus. Jesus also starts this account by saying "There was..." it is like a definite statement that this actually took place!

Now we notice that the beggar Lazarus went to "Abraham's bosom (and later to Heaven!) and the rich man went to Hell.

Let us sort something out straight away here, Before Jesus died and rose again, the saved (believers) when they died went to Abraham's bosom in the underworld, and the unsaved (non believers) went to the hell part of Hades in the underworld! Now we are not going to look at all the Greek and Hebrew words regarding the underworld, but just to say that before Jesus died and rose again, everyone that died went to this place call Hades (Greek) and Sheol (Hebrew) they are the same place. It is the underworld, and it is situated right under our feet in the heart of the earth. *And that is not my opinion, that is what the scriptures tell us!*

When Jesus died on Calvary's cross where did he go? **"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."** (Luke 23v46) His spirit went back to God!

Now where did His body go? **“This man went unto pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man was laid.”** (Luke 23v52-53) His body went to the grave, it was in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea for three days and three nights.

His soul went down to Hell (Hades, the underworld) Acts 2v27 **“Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”** So where is this Hell (Hades), as we have said it is in the centre or heart of the earth, **“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”** (Matt 12v40)

This is why it was impossible for Jesus to be crucified on Good Friday, as tradition has it, because He arose from the dead three days later on the first day of the week (Sunday!). The scriptures tell us that Jesus was three *days* and three *nights* in the heart of the earth, so if He rose on Sunday morning (the first day of the week!) it is physically impossible to have died on Friday! (Friday night, Saturday night...?)

Now just to clear something else up, that you may or may not find confusing...When someone who is unsaved, and therefore lost, dies, they go to the hell part of Hades in the centre of the earth! But if one of us, who are Christians, was to die this evening, where would we go? to Abraham’s bosom? NO! For Paul writes **“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”** (2 Cor 5v8) Paul also said **“For I am in a straight betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better.”** (Phil 1v23) and again **“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”** (Phil 1v21) Why could Paul say all these things? Because he knew, that when he died he would go straight into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ!

The reason we no longer go to the Paradise section of Hades is because when Jesus Christ rose from the dead we read **“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)** (Eph 4v8-9) Jesus took all the saved ones (Moses, Abraham, David etc...) with him to heaven! Therefore the good part of Hades, Abraham’s bosom, is empty today! **“Absent from the body, present with the Lord!”**

What a hope we have friends, it is the ones who are left that will mourn and be sad, we will be in Heaven worshipping and praising God for ever, waiting for our loved ones! If you are not a Christian this evening, you can not say this, you have absolutely no hope. You will reap the reward of Gods wrath and fiery indignation forever, you will never escape!

So all I’m trying to do here is show you that Hades (Hell) is in the centre of the earth, and that is where non-believers go when they die, but for us Christians we go straight to heaven.

Therefore getting back to Lazarus and the rich man, Hades is the place that we are reading about here! Therefore Hell is an actual place, it is not a *state of mind* and it is not *what you make of life down here*, we read that the rich man “died and was buried, and being in hell, lifted up his eyes”, so we see that hell is the *after life*. The JW’s say that when you die you are annihilated, you cease to exist, we can see again from this rich mans situation, that this too is a lie! Hell is a reality, and every JW will become a believer within three seconds, after they die!

Some people believe that Hell is *soul-sleep*, but again we see the rich man is conscious of his torments, he was in excruciating pain that will never end! Some people believe that *purgatory* (that the RC’s teach) is a hell that fits us for heaven, a kind of purification that we have to go through before we can enter into glory. But Jesus demolished this idea by showing that there is a great gulf fixed, and no one ever crosses it. Once you have died that is it! There is No second chance! You can find mercy now, but you will never find mercy in Hell! (Think about that!)

Some people say that Hell is a place where you can communicate with departed souls of loved ones but yet again we read that the rich man said **“...I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him (Lazarus) to my father’s house. For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this**

place of torment.” You see if the rich man could of communicated with his brethren then he would not have asked Abraham to send Lazarus to talk to them.

Yes friends, I tell you tonight, that Hell is a physical place where every Christ rejecting sinner will spend eternity, with no hope whatsoever of comfort or escape!

We read “the beggar died.” Blessed moment for the beggar. Conducted by ministering spirits into the presence of the King of kings, God Himself wiped away all tears from his eyes; and amidst the songs of angels and archangels, and the innumerable company before the throne, he who on earth had neither food nor raiment, nor house wherein to lay his head, was welcomed an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, and forever installed in an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.

Oh, the joy of that moment to Lazarus! His last enemy had been destroyed, and death had been to him the gate into everlasting life. His light affliction, which was but for a moment, had worked for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The rich man had everything but God, the beggar had nothing but God, and each was contented with his portion. Lazarus had God and was contented; the rich man was contented without God. What about you this evening? Which one can you identify yourself with? Satan, if he possibly can hinder it, will never let a man remember that he must die; consequently it is one of the marks of Satan’s people that they forget God and judgement, and speak and act as if their life on earth was everlasting.

Godliness with contentment is great gain, we read, but, contentment without God is damning!

There will be many people like the rich man in hell. They live good respectable lives, but they have no thought for their soul, their eternal destination, they live only for today! Is anyone hear like that? If so, you to, like the rich man, will wake up in hell, where again I say there is no way out!

Hell is a place of torments, a place of terrible suffering for in v24 we read “**I am tormented in this flame.**” In verse 25 Abraham says to the rich man “**thou art tormented.**” In v28 we also read “**this place of torment.**” It is a place of fire that is never quenched, you can never find release or comfort, no not for a moment.

We notice in Luke 16, the passage that we read, that the rich man had all his faculties....showing us that whoever goes there will also have all their faculties. They see, for the rich man saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. They feel, for he was in torments. they cry for mercy, for he asked, but in vain, for a drop of water to cool his tongue. They are in possession of *memory*, for the rich man was told to *remember* what he had received during his lifetime on earth.

Let us just stop and consider this, that in Hell you will be able to remember, that is part of the torment. We have said this before I know, but, “You do not go to hell by *accident!*” If you are sitting in this place this evening, and you know that you are not a Christian, and even after this message about the unbelievers final state, you still refuse to come to Christ, then when you are in hell, just like the rich man looking up, you will remember this warning.

As someone once said, “There are no tracts in Hell”, but you will remember every single one that was handed to you and that you tore up and threw away. Throughout all eternity you will curse and wail wishing you had taken that tract, wishing you had answered the preachers question “Will you come to Christ this evening!” “**...behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation.**” (Heb 6v2) Do not put it off any longer, come to Christ this evening! “**And whosoever shall fall on this stone (JESUS CHRIST!) shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.**” (Mat 21v44) If you do not fall upon Christ for mercy in this life, He will fall upon you and grind you to powder in the next! Let us wake up friends and realise that God is a God of mercy and wants us all to come to Him and none of us too perish! We read “**The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**” (2 Peter 3v9)

also **“...As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?”** (Eze 33v11)

God does not want any of us to go to hell, but He can not stop us if we chose the pathway there. God will never force Himself upon us! I repeat, you do not go to hell by accident, you chose your own destination!

Just to digress a little here... Just recently someone has said to me (as many people often do!) “How can a God of love send people to hell?” Well first of all we read that hell was not created for us... **“Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”** (Mat 25v41) Now of course God is a God of Love, and what great love He has shown to us, for we read,

Jesus speaking... **“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”** (John 15v9+13)

You see God watched His only begotten Son die for you and for me, He gave His Son, for us, so that we could live, and if we say no to Jesus, after all He has done for us, God will say no to us, and send us to hell. Think about the Fathers grief for His Son, because of us, think about the pain that God went through, watching His Son die with all our sins laid upon Him, He watched the agony that Jesus went through and then at the last, God the Father had to punish and turn His back upon His Son, because Jesus was made sin for us, you and me!

That is how much God loves us! So now you can see I pray, a little more clearly why hell is the final state of a sinner who rejects the Lord Jesus Christ! You chose the devils way, then you will end up in the devils company, HELL!

TO CONTINUE... It is impossible, once you are in hell, to join the redeemed, as we have looked at, because of the great gulf that no one can cross.

The Son of God forewarned that there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. So intense will the suffering be, that men will seek death but not find it! (can you imagine this?) There is also intense darkness there that can be felt, for there is no darkness like the darkness of hell. It is darkness which is completely beyond any ray of light, all natural light, all man made light, all spiritual light, all God given light, all the light of the Gospel, all the light of hope, all the light of peace and all the light of pardon. It is outer darkness. It is outside all light!

There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. There will be no resting place in Hell; no secret corner where they can find a little place of shelter, no cooling fountain to refresh themselves, for we read that there is no water there **“...the pit wherein is no water.”** (Zech 9v11)

There is also no loneliness like the loneliness of Hell. People often say that they will see all their mates, their drinking buddies, the lads down there. This is a lie! Hell is a place of eternal isolation. Hell is a place of everlasting separation. Every damned soul is so tormented in the flames of hell and in agony of the torments of eternal doom, that he or she can not spare a moment to think of others in hell, to speak to others in hell, or to communicate with others in hell. Every cell in hell is built for eternal solitary confinement.

Imagine this, there will be no children in hell, you shall never hear a child laugh again, never hear a bird sing again, never hear the rain or hear any other noise that we take for granted.

This is what hell is like...

- 1) A lake of fire (Rev 20v15)
- 2) A devouring fire (Isa 33v14)
- 3) A bottomless pit (Rev 20v1)
- 4) Everlasting burnings (Isa 33v14)
- 5) A furnace of fire (Mat 13v41-42)
- 6) A place of torments (Luke 16v23)

- 7) Where they curse God (Rev 16v11)
- 8) Where they can never repent (Matt 12v32)
- 9) A place where they have no rest (Rev 14v11)
- 10) A place of everlasting punishment (Matt 25v46)
- 11) A place of blackness of darkness forever (Jude 13)
- 12) A place where they gnaw their tongues (Rev 16v10)
- 13) A place where their breath will be a living flame (Isa 33v11)
- 14) A place prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt 25v41)
- 15) A lake of fire which the Antichrist & False Prophet are cast alive (Rev 19v20)
- 16) A place which the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever (Rev 14v11)
- 17) A place where they drink the wine of the wrath of God (Rev 14v10)
- 18) A place where they do not want their loved ones to come (Luke 16v28)
- 19) A place where there are murders, liars, the fearful and abominable (Rev 21v8)

Someone has written a description of hell as ... Hell is a furnace of unquenchable fire, a place of everlasting punishment, where its victims are tormented in both their bodies and their minds in accordance with their sinful natures their actual sins committed, and the amount of spiritual light given to them, which they rejected. Hell is a place from which God's mercy and goodness have been withdrawn, where God's wrath is revealed as a terrifying, consuming fire, and men live with unfulfilled lusts and desires in torment forever and ever.

Imagine every part of your body on fire at the same time, so that every fibre of your being felt the intense torment of being burned. How long could you endure such punishment? Christ tells us that there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. The lost will wail and gnash their teeth from having to endure the most intense pain and suffering they have ever felt as the flames consume them and constantly burn every part of their bodies. And their will be no relief! Our God is a consuming fire! (Heb 12v29)

CH Spurgeon said "In hell there is no hope. They have not even the hope of dying - the hope of being annihilated. They are forever - forever - forever lost! On every chain in hell, there is written "forever". In the fires there, blaze out the words "forever". Above their heads, they read "forever". Their eyes are galled and their hearts are pained with the thought that it is "forever".

Day and night, forever and ever, shall they be punished. Why because the Holiness of our God is incomprehensible. Who can understand God?

A man once said to a Christian "If there is a Hell, where is it?" The Christian replied, "Hell is at the end of a Christ rejecting life!"

Why do people go to hell? Why did the rich man go to hell?

It is because they have rejected Jesus Christ as their Saviour! They think that they are more righteous than God. People do not go to hell for committing murder. Moses was a murderer; he didn't go to hell. People don't go to hell for committing adultery. David committed adultery; he didn't go to hell. People don't go to hell for swearing and cursing. Peter swore and cursed and went to heaven.

What are you counting on to keep you OUT OF HELL?

If you don't want to go there what are you trusting in to keep you out? **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."** (Rom 10v3-4) Do you want to go to hell, then trust in yourself! Do you want to go to heaven, then trust in Jesus Christ! It is as simple as that!

Do you know where you are going tonight when you die? You know the Bible is an amazing book, it is different from every other book, because it can let you know where you are going when you die! No other book can tell you that!

A bible believing Christian is the only person who knows where he is going when he dies. **John** knew where he was going.. **“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life...”** (1 John 5v13)

Peter knew where he was going... **“Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me... an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.”** (2 Peter 1v14 & 1 Peter 1v4-5)

Paul knew where he was going... **“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”** (2 Tim 1v12)

Prov 1v24 reads **“Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.”** God has stretched forth his hand to this gainsaying people for years, because of His mercy, but when the time comes that all must be accounted for, those who are punished in hell will receive no mercy, God will mock them! **“Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.”** (Eze 8v18) Jonathan Edward’s in his sermon “Sinners in the hands of an angry God” writes “Now God stands ready to pity you; this is a day of mercy; you may cry now with some encouragement of obtaining mercy, But when once the day of mercy is past, your most lamentable cries and shrieks will be in vain; you will be wholly lost and thrown down away of God, as to any regard to your welfare. God will have no other use to put you to, but to suffer misery; you shall be continued in being to no other end; for you will be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction; and there will be no other use of this vessel, but to be filled full of wrath. God will be so far from pitying you when you cry to him, that it is said he will only “laugh and mock”.

Whether you like it or not, you will be a believer some day, if not here on earth, it will be in the fiery flames of Hell! But then it will be too late!

The Bible also teaches that after the unsaved are cast into the lake of fire their existence will be erased from the memories of the righteous in Heaven. **“Drought and heat consume the snow waters; so doth the grave those which have sinned. The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered.”** (Job 24v19-20) **“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”** (Isa 65v17)

In drawing to a close, I shall quote again from that sermon by Jonathan Edward’s, “Sinners in the hands of an angry God!”...

“The wrath of God burns against you, your damnation does not slumber, the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive you, the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whet, and held over them, and the pit hath opened its mouth under you. The devil stands ready to fall upon you, and seize you as his own, at that moment God shall permit him. They belong to him, he has their souls in his possession, and under his dominion. You are walking over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear your weight, and these places are not seen.

God is under no manner of obligation to keep you a moment longer from eternal destruction.

So that, thus it is that natural men are held in the hand of God, over the pit of hell; they have deserved the fiery pit, and are already sentenced to it; and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great towards them as to those that are actually suffering the executions of the fierceness of his wrath in hell, and they have done nothing in the least to appease that anger, neither is God in the least bound by any promise to hold them up one moment; the devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them,

and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up; the fire bent up in their own hearts is struggling to break out: and they have no interest in any Mediator, there are no means within reach that can be any security to them.

Tonight if you are unsaved you are offending God, and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. It is only by the mercy of God that you do not drop into hell this very moment.

Therefore, let every one that is out of Christ, now awake and fly from the wrath to come.

Let God have the final say... **“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3v18)**

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3v36)

Amen.