

**"The Reality of Hell"**

**Luke 16:19-31**

**Introduction:** Today we live in a world where there is so much deception. There are so many lies that it is difficult to know what to believe. There is also a great deal of deception in many churches today concerning the eternal destiny of people. There are those who teach today that everyone will eventually go to heaven because God is a God of love and would never send anyone into hell. There are other who teach that if your not good enough to get into heaven that you will go to purgatory and if your family gives enough money you will eventually get out and be permitted to go to heaven. Then there are those who believe that when we die we are going to be annihilated and we will just cease to exist. There are those who teach there is no hell. So what is a person supposed to believe?

Today we are going to step into Luke 16 where Jesus is going to give a parable that will show the absolute Truth concerning heaven and hell.

➤ **The Background**

In Luke 16 Jesus told a story of a rich man and his steward. The steward had wasted his master's goods and money and he was caught and would be held accountable for what he had done.

**Notice Luke 16:1-8**

The man was going to lose his job and he knew it, so he treated those who owed money to his master graciously by reducing the debt which they owed. The man's lord/master commended him for what he had done because he was wise.

Jesus told this story to basically say to His disciples, "Look at how the unrighteous live and how they will go to great extremes to secure their future on earth. People should have this much zeal about securing their future in eternity!" But Jesus also warned about the deception of money.

**Notice Luke 16:13**

Now this conversation touched on the subject of money and there were standing close enough to hear a group of Pharisees who did not like what Jesus said.

**Notice Luke 16:14**

They derided Jesus because they were lovers of money. Because they we listening and had been deceived by wealth Jesus now gives a story about two men. One very wealthy and one very poor.

**"The Rich Man and Lazarus"**

This is a story of two lives, two deaths, and two destinies.

**1. Their lives.**

**Notice Luke 16:19**

Here we are introduced to 2 men.

➤ **The Rich Man**

One is a rich man who is clothed in royalty and fine linen. This man is very wealthy, and he feasted sumptuously every day which means that he ate well. This man had everything money could buy. To the Pharisees he was the model man. He was Jewish and he had the money to really enjoy life on the earth. But the main thing the religious leaders would have seen in the man was they believed he was highly favored with God. You see, they believed that wealth was a sign of God's delight with people. They believed the more wealth you had the more God's favor was bestowed upon you.

**Notice Luke 16:20-21**

➤ **Lazarus**

Lazarus was a beggar. He was laid at the rich man's gate and ate the crumbs from the rich man's table. This man was covered in sores and the dogs would come by and lick his sores. This man was crippled or paralyzed, and the sores were from laying on the cot every day. This man would have been despised by the religious leaders because they would have believed that some sin in his life or his parents life brought all of this upon him.

**John 9:1-3**

*And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.*

<sup>2</sup> *And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*

<sup>3</sup> *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

The disciples reflect the teaching of their day and how the people viewed those who were physically challenged.

**2. Their deaths and their destinies.**

**Notice Luke 16:22a**

When Lazarus died, he was carried by the angels into what was know as Abraham's Bosom. This was the place when the souls of the saved went before the death of Jesus Christ. All the Old Testament saints would have been there. These souls were held here until their sin debt was paid by Jesus on the cross. Today when a believer dies, he or she goes directly into the presence of the Lord.

**2 Corinthians 5:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

<sup>7</sup> *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

<sup>8</sup> *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

**Notice Luke 16:22b.**

Here we see that the rich man also died, and he was buried. Apparently, there was a funeral for this man but with Lazarus we are not told of any funeral.

**Application:**

Just a reminder here that whether rich or poor we will all die, death is inescapable.

**Ecclesiastes 2:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> *Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.*

<sup>14</sup> *The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.*

<sup>15</sup> *Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.*

**Job 14:1-2, 5**

*Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.*

<sup>2</sup> *He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.*

<sup>5</sup> Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

**Ecclesiastes 8:8**

<sup>8</sup> There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

Back to Luke, Jesus paused for a moment after he mentioned the death of the rich man and then he spoke Words that would have shocked the religious leaders.

**Notice Luke 16:23-24**

The rich man went directly to hell! The alarming thing is that he was a religious Jew and we know this because he referred to Abraham as his father.

**Application:**

Religion will not get you into heaven. Hell is full of religious people. Religion is people trying to come to God on their terms and salvation is man coming to God on His terms. Religion will not wash away your sins. You can attend church all your life and if you are not saved you will go to hell when you die.

**Let us notice some details about hell.**

Hell is where the souls of the unsaved go today when they die. They will remain there until the Great White Throne Judgment and then they will be brought out to be united with their bodies and they will be judged.

**Revelation 20:11-12**

<sup>11</sup> And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

At this judgment you will be judged for every sin you have ever committed.

**Romans 2:16**

<sup>16</sup> In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Notice Luke 16:23-24 again.

In hell the unsaved will suffer real torment from the flames of judgment. They will have all their senses. **They will feel the flames, see around them, taste the lack of water, hear the screams, smell the brimstone.** The flames are not make believe but they are real.

Revelation 9:1-3

*And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*

<sup>2</sup> *And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.*

<sup>3</sup> *And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*

This is a literal fire as we can see because it will darken the sun and the air. Hell is also full of the demons that are released here.

Notice Luke 16:25

Here is something else that will be a great torment in hell, it is the memory. This rich man could remember back to what he had while on earth.

**Application:**

One of the worst things that the unsaved will experience in hell is the memory of this life and the opportunities that they allowed to get away. The opportunities to be saved. The times they heard the Gospel and experienced the conviction of the Holy Spirit. They were so close, but they allowed it to get away and now they have the memory.

Notice Luke 16:26

Here we see the finality of hell. There is no way to escape. There was a great gulf between Paradise and hell and no one could cross the gulf. Those in hell are there until the Great White Throne Judgment. This means if you died in your sins this week you would go to hell and you would be there for at least 1007 years. There are yet 7 years of Tribulation and 1000 years of the coming Kingdom. Then if the Lord tarries that is adding to the time in hell. But the Lake of Fire will be no better.

**Revelation 20:10**

<sup>10</sup> And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

**Notice Luke 16:27-28**

Here we see that the rich man wanted Lazarus sent back to warn his brothers. Here is the concern of the religious rich man. He had family. He was not concerned if they had money, he was not concerned if they had the opportunity to enjoy life. He did not want them to end up in hell and feel the torment that he was feeling.

**Application:**

Can you imagine being in hell and thinking about your children still on the earth? Can you imagine knowing if you had gotten saved that maybe you could have led them to the Lord but now you are not there? The thought of dying and going to hell and your children following you there would be the very worst torment a man could ever experience.

**Notice Luke 16:29-31**

The rich man's thinking was if someone would rise from the dead, they would believe but we know that ONE did rise from the dead and they still did not believe. Miracles will not make people turn to God. The unsaved will always explain them away.

**Conclusion:**

You had better be sure that you are saved. If you die in your sins you will go to the same hell this man is in. Hell is a real place.

Jesus died for you because you needed a Saviour.

**1 Corinthians 15:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

<sup>4</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

**Hebrews 9:22**

<sup>22</sup> And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

**John 14:6**

*<sup>6</sup> Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*