"WHAT JESUS TAUGHT US ABOUT HELL"

Luke 16:19-31

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him 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. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

I. There is tremendous pain. (Verses 23-25)

II. People in hell want mercy. (Verse 24)

III. There will be consciousness and memory. (Verse 25)

IV. There are no visitors in hell. (Verse 26)

V. You can't get out once you are there. (Verse 26)

VI. You don't want anyone else to go there. (Verses 27-28)

When you begin to talk about hell today, there will always be those who scoff in disbelief. There will be some who even laugh. But you can laugh your way into hell, but you can never laugh your way out. You may not believe in hell, but disbelief in hell, has never kept anybody from ending up in hell and it will never keep anybody out of the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:10
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.
I love this verse because it tells the end of the one who is responsible for all the heartache, all the sorrow, all the suffering, all the difficulty, all the trouble, all the war, all the famine, and all the poverty in this world. His name is Satan or the devil.

Probably none of us like to think about Hell. Thinking about the idea of a place where folks will stay forever, where they will be tormented forever, where they will burn forever, where they will be separated forever, is like thinking about the idea of cancer. I am not in favor of cancer, I didn't vote on that either, but I want to tell, whether I like cancer or not, does not do away with its reality. And you may not believe in hell, but it does not do away with its reality.

One time, **Abraham Lincoln** who had a great sense of humor, saw a little boy and he said son let me ask you a question. If a dog has four legs and you call his tail a leg, how many legs does he have? The little boy said, well I guess he would have five legs. He said, no, a tail is a tail, it doesn't matter what you call it.

And I want to tell you, hell is hell, it doesn't matter what you call it. You can explain it away, you can say it doesn't exist, you can shut it out of your mind, you can say I am not going to believe in it, but the Bible teaches that hell is a reality.

I believe ladies and gentlemen that we need more preaching on the subject of hell. And I want you to know that across this nation there are many preachers who will not preach on this topic.

Maybe one of the reasons today we have so much liberalism in our religious community in America one of the reasons we have so much ungodliness one of the reasons we have so much false profession of faith and hypocrisy is that preachers have ceased to preach that there is a place of eternal punishment for those who have never been born again by the grace of God in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must come to really understand and believe that there are only two destinies for man for eternity; Heaven or Hell. Every person who has ever lived will end up in one of those two places for eternity.

It is a very sobering thought to think that you will never cease to exist. The Bible says, "**It is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment.**" And following judgment is our eternal state.

You see death is nothing more than a transition between this life and the next life. Once you die physically and are judged according to what you did with Jesus, you will be consigned to either Heaven or Hell for eternity. It is fixed and it is final forever. Some people say that preaching on Hell is just a scare tactic to use in getting saved. I disagree!

I think preaching the truth of Hell shows great love and concern for those who are listening.
It is like warning people when a bridge is out or a sailor warning the captain when another ship is in their path.

I have heard and read of a number of people who on their deathbed have seemingly approached that terrible place called Hell.

I stood by the bed of a man in Hamilton Medical Center in Dalton, Georgia, who was dying and was lost. His last words were these, "All my life I have never believed in Heaven or Hell, but at this moment, I know I am damned to an everlasting place of punishment."

**Voltaire, that atheist of France**, with his dying breath, turned to his doctor and said, "Doctor, I am abandoned by God and by man. I am destined to an eternal Hell. • Give me 6 months more to live and I'll give you my wealth, O Christ! 0 Jesus!" And he went out into eternity.

Listen to **Napoleon**, the great one of the European continents as he lies upon his deathbed and says, "I die before my time and my body goes to the earth and my Soul goes to Hell, such is the fate of Napoleon, the Great!"

I am sure Hell will be full of people who are eternally sorry they went to a church that didn't teach the Bible truth that Jesus is the only way to Heaven. It is Jesus, Himself, who taught us about Hell. In fact, He has already told us that most people who breathe the breath of life will go to Hell.

Remember what He taught in Matthew 7:13,

"Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at." So, Jesus said, "FEW will go to Heaven but MANY will go to Hell."

It may be that the reason we have so much hell in America, so much hell in our homes and on the streets is because there is so little Hell preached from the pulpit today. We must warn a man of his way and his destiny apart from Christ.

Years ago, General Booth founded the Salvation Army. He had developed an excellent training course on teaching people how to witness and the need to be concerned about lost souls. Someone said to him in an interview, "Sir, we understand that your training course is the best possible course to teach a person how to be concerned for souls." He looked at the reporter and said, "That is not true." He said," My 15-week course may be the best available course for teaching folks to win souls, but it is not the best possible. He said, "The best possible training would be a 5-minute course. If all my people could spend 5 minutes in Hell, they would all be soul winners and would never need any other motivation.

I’ll never forget watching the Tonight Show hosted by Johnny Carson many years ago now when I heard that Billy Graham was going to be his guest. Billy Graham was in Los Angeles preaching a crusade and Johnny Carson said this to him, "Billy, I heard you
preach on Hell and frankly, I was disturbed by it. I dislike, I hate the idea of Hell." He said, I don't like to hear about things like that."

Billy Graham said, "Johnny, I hate the idea of cancer but it still exists and we are trying to find a cure. He said, 'I preach about Hell because it does exist, but I then let people know there IS a cure for it. There is a way to avoid it.' Johnny then said, 'Well, I just think it is cruel for a person to preach about Hell.' Billy Graham responded perfectly, 'Johnny, is it cruel for people down at Miami Beach to put up a sign near the water that says, Warning! Shark infested!' when they know sharks are there?''

"Johnny/ is it cruel for a manufacturer to put on a bottle of poison a skull and cross bones to warn parents who have little children about the danger?"

If a man is blind and walking down the street about to go over an open manhole-it is wrong for someone to go up and warn him before he has a disaster?" Johnny Carson said, “No.” Billy Graham said: " Neither is it cruel for a man of God to stand up and to preach that Jesus is the only way to get to Heaven and apart from Jesus, there is eternal judgment and Hell."

As we look at this Bible passage today, we realize that Jesus is the one who told us this true story. He identified Lazarus. Lazarus was named. When giving a parable, Jesus never named a character - not even once. In fact, He never said that this was a parable. The first thing I notice, here is that

I. THEIR LIFE WAS DIFFERENT VERSES 19-21

Lazarus was named while the rich man w nameless. Lazarus was known by God, but the rich man didn't know God. The very name "Lazarus" means "God is my help." He trusted God to look after him. He wanted the blessings of Heaven, not the blessings of earth. The rich man was wealthy-Lazarus was poor. It is important to note that the sin of the rich man here would not be looked at as a sin in the eyes of most societies. There is no record of a vicious, glaring, vulgar or public sin. He wasn't cruel-he never ordered Lazarus from his gate or refused Lazarus the crumbs from his table. Apparently, the rich man was socially responsible, an upright citizen, respected and well liked.

No earthly court would convict him of anything here. He was honored and highly esteemed in society.

Well, then, what is his sin here? The word "sumptuously" means he was flamboyant, displaying his wealth in materialistic ways.

•The GATE was a large gate indicating he lived in a mansion.

•The PURPLE AND FINE LINEN shows that he had the latest styles and the ultimate in luxury.
•The words EVERY DAY shows that he feasted every day.

His sin was:

1. self-indulgence
2. comfort
3. ease
4. luxury
5. extravagant living

He sought the things and pleasures of the world. He had all this money stored up while there were needs all around him-right at his gate. The scriptures speak about this: It would be good to jot these 2 verses down on your outline:

Matthew 25:43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

I John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

These two men were so different in life:

The rich man was healthy/ Lazarus was disabled.

Lazarus was full of ulcerated sores and unable to work and earn a living. He would go and lie at the rich man's gate to survive. You see, in that day, the rich would use large pieces of bread to wipe their hands and then throw the hunks away. It was this bread that Lazarus waited for.

II. BUT THEN, THEIR DEATH WAS DIFFERENT (Verse 22)

The rich man died and was buried in the finest clothes and in the very best grave in the very best cemetery. It would have been an impressive funeral / attended by the upper class of his community. He had some impressive pallbearers. It says, however, about Lazarus,

"He died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom."

Abraham's Bosom refers to Paradise. It expressed the happiness that believers could expect to experience upon death. It had the idea of sitting down and feasting with Abraham in Paradise. The bosom of Abraham was referred to because he was the father of the Jewish nation.

I. Their life was different.
II. Their death and burial was different, but most importantly;

III. THEIR ETERNITY WAS DIFFERENT

*The rich man was in hell –Lazarus was in Paradise.

*The rich man saw glory-Lazarus experienced glory.

*The rich man was painfully alone-Lazarus had companionship.

*The rich man had a burning sensation-Lazarus had water.

*The rich man was in torment-Lazarus was comforted.

*The rich man agonized for loved ones--- Lazarus was settled in eternity.

*The rich man begged for another chance-Lazarus was at peace.

*The rich man was unable to intercede for his family-Lazarus rested in God's presence

So, let's go back and look at 6 things we find here to be facts about Hell.

1. Jesus said people in Hell are in tormentous pain.

Verses 23- 25 uses the word "torment." For me to try to describe this to you would be very offensive. They were in flames. The Book of Revelation says, "The lake of fire and brimstone." My friend, the words fire and brimstone did not come from country preachers-they came from the Word of God! And the Bible says if your name isn't in the Book of Life, YOU will be cast into that fire

Now pain is a difficult thing to endure. There was a man who had an accident several years ago-. He was riding a horse and a car struck him. His leg was caught between the bumper of the car and the side of the horse.

It threw him up in the air and he came down with that mutilated leg and fell to the street. They got an ambulance and got him to the hospital just in time so that he didn’t bleed to death. He said, Preacher, that is the worst pain one could go through." He said, "I screamed out in my pain, 'I want to die!'"

He said that he would rather have died than go through that pain. He has an artificial leg today. He said the only way he endured it was that he knew in an hour that he would be either be dead or in a hospital with medication to ease the pain.

Think of the worst pain a person could have, but then imagine that you would have that kind of pain for a year, five years, 100 years, 1000 years, 100 billion years; imagine it for an eternity. Can you imagine it? No, you can't but the Bible says if you go to Hell, you will be in that kind of pain and worse for an eternity. No way to ease the pain. TORMENTOUS PAIN!
Right this moment, there are those on earth in horrible pain.

A lady who was my tape ministry in Brownsville, Tennessee, said to me, "Brother Glenn, why won't God let me die?" She said, "I hurt all the time—why won't death come? Why won't God let me die and take me out of this world? "She had extremely painful arthritis. I couldn't even shake her hand the way we shake hands.

I'll tell you - everybody in Hell wishes they could die. Here we are on earth, trying to extend our years with physical fitness and good eating and everybody in Hell is wishing they could die. They wish they could die and escape this TORMENTOUS pain. It says,

"He lifted up his eyes in torments."

That’s interesting Because Jesus said in another passage, "It's better for a man to pluck his eyes out than to go whole into Hell." You see, when a man goes to Hell, he takes his eyes with him. The eyes fit into a head that has to fit onto a body, so don't think you will just be some spirit in Hell. He lifted up his eyes-the whole body will be in torment.

Then in Revelation 20:14-15 it says

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The Bible says in Revelation 21:8

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Those verses help us understand what Jesus meant when He said it is better that you cut off your right hand than enter into everlasting fire. Jesus was obviously not saying we have to cut off our right hand to enter into heaven. I mean the left hand is as capable of sin as the right hand. But the hands only do what the brain says to do.

Here is what Jesus was saying – Whatever price you pay, miss Hell. Don’t go to hell/whatever the cost. It is better to be a maimed saint on the way to heaven than to be a healthy sinner on the way to hell.

2. Let me tell you another thing. It says in verse 24 that they want mercy.

"And he cried, father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

One time a group of people came to Jesus and said, "Jesus, what IS Hell like?" He told them it was like Gehenna, which was the garbage pit at the southeast corner of Jerusalem. And Gehenna was where they came and dumped all their smelly, stinky garbage. And the worms would be in that garbage and they set it on fire.
Now just as that fire was beginning to go out and the worms were about to die, someone else would come and put some more garbage on the pile. Jesus said that is what hell is like. Hell is like Gehenna; Hell is like the place where the worm never died and the fire is never quenched. There is continuous burning and continuous life in this pain. It is impossible for Hell to go out because it is always fueled with those who have rejected Christ.

The valley of Gehenna was called the Valley of Lamentations after the god of Molek. Now the god of Molek was a god made of brass with outstretched arms and they would heat that god inside. They would put wood inside it. You can imagine how hot his arms of brass became and the people who worshiped the pagan god of Molek would come and lay their little children inside of that hot burning metal and sacrifice them. Those children would scream for mercy and the Bible says that is exactly what Hell is like. Jesus says it is just like those in the valley of Molek - they scream out for mercy but there is no mercy.

3. Something else, not only are they in torment, not only do they want mercy, but verse 25 says they will remember. "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented."

He remembered and his conscience was getting to him. I tell you, some people will remember the day someone tried to tell them how to be saved. Some will remember the time a preacher stood and preached and they scorned it. Some may remember how a preacher who loves you stood before you and told you that you can be saved, you can have life. But you ignored it and walked out of the door Hell-bound instead of Heaven bound.

I'm telling you that you're going to remember that opportunity and if you leave today lost, it may haunt you for eternity. The fact that you had a chance to be saved, but you weren't. The Bible says the horrible anxiety about Hell is

• that you will remember.

Some have had wives or husbands who prayed for their lost spouse daily. You've got a mother that wishes you would accept Christ, but you say, "Mother, you are just too old fashioned."

Preacher, you don't know what it is to live in our day, the pressure of my business." My friend, there is NO EXCUSE FOR SIN! I have had men say to me, "Preacher, you don't know the pressures I'm under. You don't know what is expected of me." My friend, anything that needs to be done can be done by a child of God. It can be done by a Christian. The Bible says when you get to Hell, you will remember and remember and remember the opportunities you had to be saved and you didn't.

You know that God is under no obligation at all for you to hear the gospel again.
Why should I beg and plead for you to be saved when there are millions of people who have never heard one sermon and so many have heard 100’s. I have preached 3 places in the world where someone through a translator said to me they had never heard the Gospel message. In 2 of those places they indicated they had never heard the name of Jesus. God is under no obligation for you to ever have another opportunity to know Christ.

So, Jesus taught us that people in Hell have consciousness and memory.

4. Then another thing I see in this passage. There will be no visitors in Hell.

LUKE 16:26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

No sympathizers, no people to come and cheer you up. Nobody to encourage you.

A group of witnesses went to a door one day and on the door was a sign that said, "No peddlers, no salesmen, and no preachers either." But I promise you that in Hell today there is one type of person that everyone would like to see and that's a gospel preacher.

If you let the people out of Hell today for 5 minutes, and they had five minutes to do anything they wanted to do, do you think they would go to a nightclub or a baseball game? Do you think they'd find a TV set and catch up on the latest bachelor or American Idol? Do you think they would find a liquor bottle?

If you let Hell loose today for 5 minutes there wouldn't be enough churches in the world to hold them!

They'd come and try their best to give their heart and life to Christ in order that they may not have to return.

The Bible says they get no visitors in Hell. Some people have resented it when someone has tried to visit them and tell them about Christ, but there are no smart alecks in Hell! There are no jokes about Hell in Hell! There is nobody giving cocky answers. There is nobody slamming the door in the face of a gospel preacher. There is nobody turning their back on those who would like to help them because, frankly, there IS nobody there to help them.

5. Verse 26 says they can't get out at all. Now, claustrophobia is a horrible thing.

Some people can't stand it in an elevator because they feel closed up. So, People have a fear of closed-in places.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, a bomb came right down the stack of the ship Arizona. And when that bomb came down in that ship, it literally made a metal
tomb for hundreds of young men who were aboard. And one of those men, when the bomb exploded, wrapped a piece of metal around his body as did hundreds of them. When he was finally pried out, this young man was dead, but he had taken a sliver of metal and marked seventeen days on the side of his metal tomb where he had lived and suffered and starved to death-seventeen days!

Oh, my friend, can you imagine being closed up, and closed up, and closed up for an eternity? And not being able to get out-can you just imagine it? The Bible says there is NO escape.

Just think how long eternity is and nobody has ever escaped it. You go places and you see signs on doors that say, "Enter here" or "Exit here" but friend, Hell has one sign which says "ENTER" and there is no way for you to get out.

6. Another thing that is clear from what Jesus said here is that those in hell don’t want anybody else to come there

Luke 16: 27-28 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him 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 can go a lot of places and hear someone saying, "You go to Hell!" You hear the word "Hell" a lot today. But my friend, if those people who tell others to go to Hell really knew what Hell was, they'd never tell anybody that again. NOBODY in Hell wants anyone else there, besides the devil.

In Hell, he said, "Go tell my brothers." Abraham said they have heard preaching. He said, "Oh yes, father Abraham, they have heard preaching but if someone would come up from the dead and tell them they - would believe. Listen to me, folks, Jesus said that Abraham responded by saying

31. And he said unto them, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither. will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

You know that is true because Jesus arose from the dead and many didn't believe Him. They don't believe Jesus and the prophets.

I've heard them doubt Isaiah, doubt Jeremiah, doubt what Ezekiel said and what the prophets said.

And if they won't believe the prophets and Jesus, they won't believe someone who has come back from the dead.

For Jesus came back and said, "No man comes to the Father except by ME." That is what He said. My friend, Jesus Christ is not the best way to get to heaven, He is the only way to get to Heaven.
Eternity is always consistent with life. Always!

It said the rich man had all the material things he could want but the poor man lived for good and what was right. When a man accepts Jesus on earth, he goes to Heaven and when he rejects Jesus on earth, He goes to hell.

Eternity is always consistent with life. I have had people come up to me after their relatives have lived a life for Satan for 50 years and they say, "Oh, Brother Glenn, don't you think he was alright? Don't you think he went to heaven? I know he was a good man, he helped others, even though he didn't get excited about church and God."

Please hear me – It’s not like our life is weighed on the scales and if the good outweighs the bad we go to Heaven. Being good doesn’t get you to Heaven. A man dies the way he lives.

But you know, all those things we have seen about Hell still are not the worst things about Hell. Oh yes, the punishment, the torment, the pain is awful and terrible. In fact, I couldn't make them sound as bad as they are.

We are finished in Luke but as I close, let me show you a Bible verse that tells us I believe the worst thing about hell. It is II Thessalonians 1:9

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

That is what makes Hell so bad; the Absence of God.

Think about it. The Joy of Heaven is the presence of God. Oh, I know we like to talk about the Gates of Pearl, streets of gold and all that; but without Jesus there – there wouldn’t be heaven.

The worse things about hell is the absence of God.

You see, God is Light. In Hell, there is no light – it is called the place of outer darkness.

God is Love. There is no love in Hell.

Friend, listen, not 10,000 worlds like this world are worth it to cause you to say “No” to Jesus Christ.

I know most folks will say my God is who I am here worshipping today, but let me tell you the truth -

Your God is what is # 1 in your life.

If it's your pleasure, satisfying your eyes or your taste-buds, your sensual pleasure - that is your God. But if the joy of your life is to satisfy Jesus, to honor God, and bring Glory to God, then and only then is He your God.
I want to ask you right now, "What or who is your God?"

Don't you want to escape this terrible place called Hell?

This true story fits today as we know what is happening in Hawaii right now. There was a mandatory evacuation; “You are on your own if you stay”.

A volcano erupted in Hawaii some years ago. There were several responses to the news that it was beginning to erupt.

• Some people got angry and said, "That stupid fool waking me up at night."

• The second crowd laughed about it. They laughed and said “that guy must be crazy. It hasn't erupted in 75 years.”

• Some just slept on, ignoring it.

• Others heeded the warning and ran.

The only ones who lived were the ones who heeded the warning and ran.

Those that reacted in the other 3 ways are dead. My friend, *you can be angry at what Jesus said,

*you can laugh at this message or

*sleep through it,

but all those responses lead to Hell.

What will your response be?

What would you think of a man who saw his neighbor's house on fire and yet he didn't go and warn those people on the inside. Well, there are many Christians who can’t imagine that and yet neighbors and friends and co-workers will die and spend eternity in Hell and they have never spoken a word to them about the Gospel.

Christian brothers and sisters, are you really concerned that so many around you are on their way to Hell? Oh, I pray that God would break our hearts again and burden us for the lost.

Would you ask God to burden your heart for those who are lost?

If you are here and lost today, I don't believe you can come to Christ simply as an easy ticket out of Hell. Salvation is free, but it is not cheap. It means putting your all on the altar for God, dying to self, living for God, repenting of your sin and asking Jesus to save you. Won’t you do that right now?