

## Hell Is Real

I am writing these words while at Camp Chautauqua in Miamisburg, OH. As a rule, young people see death far, far away. It is my duty as a preacher of the Gospel to preach the Word of God and bring life's vital decisions to the forefront. There can be no more important decision than that of receiving Christ. Pilate asked the question in the trial of Jesus, "...*What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?*" (Matthew 27:22). This is a question we all must answer. Part of my burden at a camp like this and the one our youth just attended is that young people will decide early to commit to and follow Christ. Two basic reasons loom in my mind: 1) They have the rest of their life to live the abundant life that Christ has provided, which will be so much richer and better than wasting and experimenting with sin. 2) There is an eternity. The short time we have on earth is called a mere "vapor" in James 4:14, barely a proverbial blip on the radar screen of eternity. Eternity is forever! If one does not decide for Christ in this lifetime, eternity for him is called "Hell."

We rely on the inerrant Word of God to give us a description of what Hell will be like.

### I. Hell is a real place.

After the rich man died, Jesus said, "*And in hell he lift up his eyes...*" (Luke 16:23). This is not a parable; real names of real people are given. Often times when our Lord would speak metaphorically, He would identify it by saying something like this: "*But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets...*" (Matthew 11:16). "*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls*" (Matthew 13:45).

"*The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son*" (Matthew 22:2). Instead of figurative language, we see the dogmatic statement, "*And in Hell...*", not "a place like unto," but Jesus said the rich man is literally in a real place called Hell.

In other places we read words like, "*Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.*" (Isaiah 5:14). Here the prophet is talking about Hell, a place whose perimeters actually enlarge to make room for condemned people. Later, Isaiah said, "*Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming...*" (Isaiah 14:9). There is a place called Hell that gives her residents a sorrowful welcome when a Christ-less life has ended. "*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*" (Matthew 10:28). As one of the most harrowing reminders of just how literal this place is, Christ declares that soul and body - personality and physical presence - will be in this real place.

Hell is just as real a place as Houston, Texas, Chicago, Illinois, New York City or Los Angeles, California.

## II. Hell is a place of torments.

Jesus said, *“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments...”* (Luke 16:23). We notice the word “torment” is in plural form, meaning more than one. We understand the torments biblically described are:

### 1) The experience of fire.

*“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”* (Luke 16:24). This is not an isolated reference. The Word of God declares: *“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”* (Revelation 20:14, 15). *“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”* (Revelation 21:8). Three times in Mark 9, Jesus spoke of this torment with these words, *“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched”* (Mark 9:44, 46, 48).

### 2) Suffocating darkness.

In Mathew 8:12, 22:13 and 25:30, the Lord spoke of Hell being, *“outer darkness.”* In speaking of the judgment to come of the fallen angels or demonic powers, the Bible says, *“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness...”* (II Peter 2:4).

*“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day”* (Jude 1:6). Of the unbelieving apostate, the Bible says of their doom, *“...to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever”* (II Peter 2:17).

*“Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever”* (Jude 1:13).

### 3) Unpleasant sounds.

In Matthew 8:12, 22:13; 24:51; and 25:30, Jesus said Hell is a place where, *“...there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”* (Matthew 8:12). In Matthew 13:42 and 50 Jesus declares there *“...shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”* For those presuming there will one big party in Hell, you are mistaken. You will have no sweet fellowship or pretty music...it is bedlam! The sounds of Hell are weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth.

### 4) Unforgettable memories.

The rich man in Hell was told, *“...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”* (Luke 16:25). A man found guilty of unspeakable atrocities was being prepared to go to the gas chamber for his hideous and murderous crimes and was asked by Dr. Robert G. Lee, “If you had one wish, what would it be?” The criminal’s response was, “That God Almighty would wipe away all my memories.” The sad thing is, when one goes to Hell, his memories of his past life stay in tact. The Bible declares: *“He that is unjust, let him be unjust*

*still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11). In Hell the drunkard will have his thirst for alcohol, the dope addict will still have his urge for another hit, the sex pervert will have his ungodly desire, but in Hell there will be no fulfillment of those desires.*

### **III. Hell is a place of no escape.**

Once a person is there, there are no exits out of Hell. It was told to the rich man, *“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” (Luke 16:26).* One of the most horrific promises in the Bible is found in Revelation 14:11, where it reads, *“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night....”*

### **Conclusion: There is One way out now!**

In contrast of the two destinies Jesus said, *“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Matthew 25:46).* During the pioneer days of America, a father and his young son were marooned to their property. The prairie they lived on was on fire with flames reaching high into the sky. There was no way out. The father took his son and went to acreage near the house and burned the surrounding prairie grass, foliage and trees. Then the father and son went to the center of the burned portion of ground. The son, still afraid inquired, “Papa, what are we going to do?” The father assured his son, “We’re going to stand safe in this burned portion of the field; the fire won’t touch us here, it’s already been burned.” The beautiful truth is that Christ took our Hell on the cross. If we repent and put our trust in Him, we are declared righteous. We are standing on Christ, who took our Hell for us. We are saved forevermore! The apostle John said, *“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (I John 5:12).* *“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 3:36).*

For those who may be reading these words now and do not have the peace of God that comes through salvation in Christ, I admonish you - put your trust in Christ now by calling on Him to save you now! *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13).*

-Pastor Pope-