

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

“Let’s not fall into the fallacy of thinking that unless we are big, we are going to be ineffective. One with God is a majority. So often God has done some of the most amazing things in the whole history of the church through remnants.” (Lloyd Jones)

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com (blog)

www.lightfordarktimes.com (blog)

Christ Reformation Church – YouTube Channel (Light for Dark Times)

The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment (Part 2)

In Hell His Eyes Were Opened

February 22, 2026

Sermon Text: Luke 16:19-31
(The Rich Man and Lazarus)

Scripture Reading: Revelation
20

We are living in times of increasing apostasy. To a degree even that we must wonder if this time is not rapidly approaching:

2Th 2:3-4 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come

unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, (4) who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

The apostasy. That coming time of great deception:

2Th 2:9-12 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, (10) and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, **because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.** (11) For this reason God will send

upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, (12) in order that they all may be judged **who did not believe the truth**, but took pleasure in wickedness.

Rome has very plainly launched into a renewed program of deception, putting herself off as the Christian church. And hordes of people are being deceived because they do not love the truth. As I have warned you before – Turning Point USA is a chief front man in this country for Rome. And so is Fox News. In addition we are seeing video claims that hundreds of young people are professing Christ on campuses, when in fact these so-called revivals have all the appearance of a rock concert and shallow emotionalism. The Lord Jesus warned us:

Mat 13:20-21 "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; (21) yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution

arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.

It is all a false gospel and false fruit. Be warned. Do not be deceived. Hunger for the truth, lest anyone be swept away by the lie.

Man in his sin is willfully blind to God's truth. He is of the darkness and hates the light. Satan also promotes this blindness so that the sinner cannot see the glory of Christ (2 Cor 4).

As we continue to hear the Lord Jesus' own words in this story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, we are going to learn more about this intentional blindness, this lifelong suppression of the truth which arouses the wrath of God (see Romans 1). We will see it in the fate of the Rich Man whose eyes were eventually opened, but too late, too late.

Luk 16:19-24 "Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day. (20) "And a poor man named Lazarus

was laid at his gate, covered with sores, (21) and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores.

(22) "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried.

(23) **"In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.** (24) "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'

Last time we considered the great and common error of judging by outward appearances. By such criteria the Rich Man was the blessed one while Lazarus was regarded as cursed by God.

But that fateful and appointed day came for each of them – for the rich

and the poor. *The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried.*

What do we learn here?

There is an Appointed Day

Heb 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

Through Adam, death entered the world by sin and ever since, each of us must die – we must leave this world. Before the resurrection the body lies in the grave, but the soul leaves this world behind, either to be with the Lord or to immediately enter into torment in Hades.

In this single verse (22) the Lord Jesus shows us the great difference between the Christian and the man without Christ. Both men died, but Lazarus was met by the angels and escorted into heaven, while the rich man died alone.

On the surface of course, according to outward appearances, we can accurately speculate that the rich man, even in his death, was regarded by the world as blessed. We can be sure that his funeral was one of pomp and circumstance, of feasting, of division of his wealth, perhaps of placing some monument to his memory.

But what of Lazarus? No doubt it was good riddance to him – that offensive beggar with the sores – thrown into the pauper’s field with no grave marker at all.

So much, however, for outward appearances.

In fact, here was the reality – it was the poor man who was given a glorious day. Angels were sent by the Lord to specifically give Lazarus a royal escort into heaven. It was Lazarus whose time of suffering was over and whose eternity of blessing began. The rejoicing and feasting and trumpet announcements infinitely exceeded anything which characterized the rich man’s memorial.

The day of a man’s departure from this world is a day of radical change – either to torment or to joy. In either case, it is eternal. Forever.

Another aspect of the increasing deception we are seeing now is this renewed promotion of *annihilationism*. That is, the heresy that God will merely annihilate the wicked into non-existence and that the teaching about eternity in hell is simply not true. But this is, as I said, a heresy and outright denial of Jesus’ own words. Here is John Bunyan on this:

“When it is said that men, women, or children die; for there is to them something else to be said, more than merely going out of the world. For if when unregenerate men and women die, that was the end of them, not only in this world but also in the world to come — they would be happy. But when ungodly men and women die, there is that to come after death that will be very terrible to them, namely, to be carried by the angels of darkness from their death-beds unto Hades

— there to be reserved to the judgment of the great day, when both body and soul shall meet and be united together again, and made capable to undergo the uttermost vengeance of the Almighty to all eternity.

Bunyan, John. A FEW SIGHS FROM HELL: The Groans of a Damned Soul (p. 26). MAGNA GRATIA Ministries. Kindle Edition.

“The dying day of Lazarus was his best day. The dying day of the Rich Man was the beginning of his worst, forever, night.”

“The dying day of the Christian is his best day. It is his or her day of promotion to glory unspeakable.”

But the emphasis in this story which the Lord makes is primarily upon the fate of the rich man, so as to warn everyone of where Broadway leads, and to powerfully press each man to seek, find, and travel upon that Narrow Way which leads to life.

Why is Abraham Prominent in this Story?

To be “in Abraham’s bosom” is simply a phrase which means that Lazarus was indeed a child of Abraham, an heir “according to promise.” Abraham was the one to whom the Lord made the promise (essentially synonymous with “the gospel”). *Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness*” (Romans 4). All who turn to Christ in faith, all who believe the gospel, become children of Abraham, the seed of Abraham because by faith, when we are born again, we are joined to Christ, we are in Christ, and Christ is that promised Seed of Abraham by whom salvation has come.

In other words, this rich man (let’s call him “Dives” which means “rich” in Latin I believe) no doubt regarded himself and was regarded by his friends as a real Jew. A real child of Abraham. And you see this in vs 24 where he cries out and says “Father Abraham, have mercy on me.”

Likewise, the Jews of Jesus' day had no doubt (and yet it was a lie) that they were surely the children of Abraham:

John 8:39 They answered and said to Him, "**Abraham is our father.**" Jesus *said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.

But it is the poor man, Lazarus, who is carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom. That is, not only to the presence of Abraham, but to the place of the promise, to receive his inheritance, to be honored as a child of the King and to see the Messiah face to face. It is Lazarus, along with everyone who is born again by faith alone in Christ alone, who is heir of the new heavens and earth.

Verse 22 then is the true perspective of the day of death for each of these men. Insert your name into it. Where will your name be? *In the space of the poor man or in that of the rich man?* Because we must all be one or the other. Will you, if you departed this world

this very night, be *carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom?* Or as Bunyan put it, *escorted captive by the devil's angels into the torment of Hades, awaiting that day of being cast into Hell?*

The Doctrine of Everlasting Punishment is a Merciful Warning to us

Here is our friend John Bunyan once more:

"Now if this one truth, *that men must die and depart this world, and either enter into eternal joy or else into the infernal prison, to be reserved to the day of judgment, were believed* — we would not have so many wantons [ie, sexually unrestrained person] walk up and down the streets as they do, at least it would put a mighty check to their filthy behaviors, so that they would not, could not walk so basely and sinfully as they do.

Belshazzar, even though he was so far from the fear of God as he was — yet when he did but see that God was offended and threatened him

for his wickedness, it made him hang down his head and knock his knees together (Dan. 5:5,6). If you read the verses before you will find he was careless, and satisfying his lusts in drinking and playing the adulterer with his concubines. But so soon as he did perceive the finger of a hand-writing on the wall, “then,” says the scripture, “the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.”

And when Paul told Felix of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come — it made him tremble.

And let me tell you, soul, whoever you are, that *if you did but truly believe that you must die and come into the judgment* — it would make you turn over a new leaf.

But this is the misery, the devil labors by all means as to keep out other things that are good, so to keep out of the heart, as much as in him lies, the thoughts of passing from this life into another world;

for he (the devil) knows, if he can but keep men from the serious thoughts of death, he shall the more easily keep them in their sins, and so from closing in faith with Jesus Christ.

As Job says, “Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.” Which makes them say to God, “Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of your ways” (Job 21:14). Because there is no fear of death and judgment to come, therefore they put off God and his ways, and spend their days in their sins, and in a moment, that is, before they are aware — they go down to the grave (Job 21:17).

And thus it fared also with the man spoken of in Luke 12:20. The man, instead of thinking of death, he thought how he might make his barns bigger. But, in the midst of his business in the world, he lost his soul before he was aware, supposing that death had been many years off. But God said unto him, “You fool,” you trouble yourself about things of this life, you put off the thoughts of departing this world, when this

night your soul shall be taken from you; or, this night, they, that is, the devil, will fetch away your soul from you!

And here it comes to pass, men not being exercised (concerned) with the thoughts of departing this life, that they are, so unexpectedly to themselves and their neighbors, taken away from the pleasures and profits, yes, and all the enjoyments they busy themselves with while they live in this world.

And hence it is again, that you have some [many?] people in your towns and cities that are so suddenly taken away, some from haunting the ale-houses, others from haunting the whore-houses, others from playing and gaming, others from the cares and covetous desires after this world, taking heed to this matter of death, either by themselves or their companions.

It is because they do so little consider both the transitoriness of themselves and their neighbors. For had they but their thoughts well concerned about the shortness of this life, and the danger that will

befall such as do miss of the Lord Jesus Christ — it would make them more wary and sober, and spend more time in the service of God, and be more delighted and diligent in inquiring after the Lord Jesus, who is the deliverer “from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1:10).

For, as I said before, it is evident, that those who live after the flesh in the lusts thereof, **do not really and seriously think on death, and the judgment that follows after:** neither do they indeed endeavor so to do; for did they, it would make them say with holy Job, “All the days of my appointed time, will I wait until my change comes” (Job 14:14).

Ibid, (pp. 26-28).

Look around you in our own community. What do we see? Do we see a majority of people giving serious thought to the shortness of their earthly life? The cemeteries are here – but do they cause the inhabitants of the town to pause and consider that one day their name will be on one of those

tombstones? There is the hospital and next to it the funeral home. We are surrounded by these witnesses to the brevity of life and the approaching day on which each of us shall depart this world. Yet how many *even this Lord's Day*, are giving thought to these things? How many pulpits in the churches in this town are, this morning, announcing these warnings to their congregations? Few. And even fewer as the years go by.

The prevailing message in the churches, and increasingly so, is that everyone who professes to be a Christian will surely end in heaven. Roman Catholic, Mormon, Adventist, even the atheist or agnostic, will finish well. And yet the Son of God has told us and shown us plainly that such teaching is a lie. That there is only a remnant. That the way is narrow, and few are they who find it. Do NOT be caught up in these lies!

But on that Day, Blindness will turn to sight

In this present world, the sinner, as we have noted, willfully suppresses

the truth and turns a blind eye to God's Word. The devil also works to blind people to the glory of Christ.

BUT – the moment the sinner departs this life (without Christ), those days of blindness end. Dives' eyes were opened to the horrible truth in an instant. He "lifted up his eyes and saw" -

Luk 16:23-24 "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. (24) "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'

Every single, man, woman, or child who turned a blind eye to Christ in this life will, if they die in their sins, *see*. But it will be too late. There will be no second chance. No more opportunity to repent. The "Today of salvation" will be forever past.

Do you remember the man in the cage in Pilgrim's Progress? Bunyan there was illustrating the reprobate, that is, the person in this life who has become an Esau for whom repentance is impossible. And yet the man in the iron cage also provides us with a sober warning in respect to this Dives in Hades:

“But can't you repent and turn from this despicable condition?” The man shook his head slowly. “No, for God has denied me repentance....His Word gives me no encouragement to repent. Yes, he is the one who has shut me up in this iron cage. Even if all the men in the world tried to let me out, they would not be able. “Remember this man's misery,” the Interpreter warned Christian. “And let his sorry state be an everlasting warning to you.”

Bunyan, John. Pilgrim's Progress (Parts 1 & 2): Updated, Modern English. More than 100 Illustrations. (Bunyan Updated Classics) (p. 37). Aneko Press. Kindle Edition.

And so it is here in the Lord Jesus' own words of warning to us. Hear it again:

Luk 16:23-24 "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. (24) "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'

But too late. Too late. A great gulf divides heaven and hell which cannot be crossed. Unless we turn in repentance and faith to Christ and are born again by His hand *now*, it will be too late *then*.

Christian, a final word to you. If you are born again, if you are in Christ, do you understand just how great the Lord's mercy has been to you? Do you comprehend the fact that the vast majority of people around us – in our families, in our community, and yes *even in the visible churches* – are on Broadway and will end in hell? But you,

Christian, why are you not traveling with them? Why? Here is the answer:

Eph 2:4-5 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, (5) even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

By His unmerited favor to undeserving sinners, we will see Lazarus, and we will not join Dives.