

# Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

**“When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. (Pro 16:7)**

**Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,  
(2Ti 1:9)**

[www.sermonaudio.com/crc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/crc)

[www.unholycharade.com](http://www.unholycharade.com) (blog)

[www.lightfordarktimes.com](http://www.lightfordarktimes.com) (blog)

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## *The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment (Part 5)*

### *The Sinner Does not Need More Evidence – God Has Spoken in His Son*

*March 15, 2026*

**Sermon Text:** Luke 16:23-31  
(The Rich Man and Lazarus)

**Scripture Reading:** John 5:30-47

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.'

We continue this morning with our study of the biblical doctrine of eternal punishment by returning once more to the Lord Jesus' account of the Rich Man and Lazarus. This truth has always been under attack by those who would deny God's own Word, even though it is spoken by none other than the Son of God Himself. And we see a recurrence of these heresies at the present time among those who claim to be evangelical Christians.

Listen to these introductory words from a book published in 2007 entitled, *Hell Under Fire*, Chapter One, by Al Mohler:

"At some point in the nineteen-sixties, Hell disappeared. No one could say for certain when this happened. First it was there, then it wasn't. Different people became aware of the disappearance of Hell at different times. Some realized that they had been living for years

as though Hell did not exist, without having consciously registered its disappearance. Others realized that they had been behaving, out of habit, as though Hell were still there, though in fact they had ceased to believe in its existence long ago... On the whole, the disappearance of Hell was a great relief, though it brought new problems." [David Lodge, *Souls and Bodies*]

A fixture of Christian theology for over sixteen centuries, hell went away in a hurry. The abandonment of the traditional doctrine of hell came swiftly, with centuries of Christian conviction quickly swept away in a rush of modern thought and doctrinal transformation. Historian Martin Marty reduced the situation down to this:

"Hell disappeared. No one noticed."

The traditional doctrine of hell now bears the mark of odium theologium—a doctrine retained only by the most stalwart defenders of conservative theology, Catholic and Protestant. Its defenders are

seemingly few. The doctrine is routinely dismissed as an embarrassing artifact from an ancient age—a reminder of Christianity’s rejected worldview.

The sudden disappearance of hell amounts to a theological mystery of sorts. How did a doctrine so centrally enshrined in the system of theology suffer such a wholesale abandonment? What can explain this radical reordering of Christian theology? The answer to this mystery reveals much about the fate of Christianity in the modern world and warns of greater theological compromises on the horizon, for, as the church has continually been reminded, no doctrine stands alone. Each doctrine is embedded in a system of theological conviction and expression. *Take out the doctrine of hell, and the entire shape of Christian theology is inevitably altered.*

Zondervan. Hell Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents Eternal Punishment (pp. 18-19).

Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

We know why this fundamental biblical truth has “disappeared” – as Paul puts it in Romans chapter one –

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, (Rom 1:18)

YOU are surrounded by people in this world who are pressuring you to join this crowd of deniers of God’s Word. The pressure is on you from without and within. Your sinful flesh reacts against it. The devil would have you deny it. And the world calls you a fool if you believe it.

***But it is those who deny the truth of eternal punishment who will join the ranks of the Rich Man in the very place they refuse to admit awaits them.***

“*And in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes...*”. He saw

what he had denied. But it was too late. Too late.

## **The Rich Man was in Hades – and He is Still There**

What we have before us here in this account of two men who died, is a pulling back of the curtain so that we can see on the other side. It is an absolutely *supernatural* truth. The Son of God is telling us – showing us – what awaits – either a yawning chasm of that place of eternal torment, or the beauty of heaven and eternal joy. Eternal death. Or eternal life.

Let me attempt to focus your thinking *above* (super-) the *natural*. Think back in your life as far as you can think – as far as you can remember. What is your earliest memory? Now, *what came before that memory?* You would have to rely upon people who were older than you at that time to tell you of, perhaps, the first 2 years of your life.

But let's go back even further. To the day of your birth. And then let's continue into your past – but wait,

*you have no past beyond that day.* You did not exist. Then how did this all happen? Ultimately you are driven back to a Creator. Someone who had no beginning and imparted life to you. And so, here you are.

Now, let's think about the other end of human life. The day of your death. *That same Creator, the Lord Jesus Christ, is telling YOU what lies beyond that curtain.* He has not told us that we will cease to exist – that we will be annihilated into non-existence. [That idea is impossible to conceive of by the way]. No, what He has told us is that *eternal existence is the truth of the matter.* That every human being He has created, *exists forever.*

And if, at this point, you are still regarding these things as just, well, too hard to believe, then you are waaaayyy too wrapped up in this present world, in this present life, in school, in work, in houses and cars and money and people and....

The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (1Jn 2:17)

THINK! Here are two men. They died. And you have known people who have died. Look around. Where are they? They aren't here. WHERE are they? They are, you might say, the elephant in the room that no one in the world wants to think about. They were here. Now they aren't. They didn't used to be, then they were born, now they have died. They were not, they were, now they are not – *here*.

And so it is and will be with YOU.

God Himself is trying to get YOUR attention here! Two men. Lived their lives. Born, lived, died, gone. Where? Jesus answers this question – *one is in hell, the other is in heaven*. Two men. Two destinations. Broadway. The Narrow Way.

***Right now, at this moment, God Himself is either encouraging you OR terrorizing you. Because YOU***

***are one of these two men. Your eternal residence is one of these two places. And right now, even at this present moment, counts forever.***

All you need to do to end in hell is *nothing*. Just keep on keeping on. Get up in the morning, eat breakfast, think about the day, busy yourself with typical tasks, think about what you will do this afternoon or tomorrow, just coast along and drift along, and guess what? *You are on Broadway that leads to hell*. Its easy. The crowd is there. It's Vanity Fair with all kinds of enjoyments and popularity. But...

*And in Hades, being in torment, ALL such people will lift up their eyes and see...but it will be too late.*

### **The Rich Man was in Hades – and He is Still There**

Look back once more at vss 23-24:

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.'

What do you suppose the Rich Man was thinking at that moment – when he saw that he was in hell being in torment and agony? I suspect it was something like this:

*“What is this? I don’t belong here. This must be some kind of mistake. Abraham is my father, I am one of the chosen ones. God blessed me with money and ease all my life. And there is Lazarus over there – that is where I am supposed to be.”*

This is what we call *a mindset of entitlement*. What about you? Does anyone think that somehow they are different than others? Better than others? God’s “special” one? That hell is for the other guy but surely not me? *That is the very attitude this Rich Man had all his life.*

*Many, many, many people over these past many years who have left this church have been of that very mentality. I am better. I am special. I have gone to church my whole life and I am going to find a place where people recognize this.*

One of the chief reasons God has told us so plainly and so often about hell *is to shake us like the Israelites shook at the thunderings of Mt. Sinai. To make us fear. To wake us up out of this slumber that leads to the pit, and drive us to cry out for mercy to Christ to save us.*

### **A Divide Which is Impossible to Cross**

Luk 16:25-26 "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. (26) 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will

not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.'

No second chance. The thing is fixed. The moment we pass out of this present life, we enter what is forever and ever and ever. One side of that chasm or the other. There are no bridges. No way to leap over. Man in his ingenuity has ways of crossing even the Grand Canyon. Mountain climbers can get across deep crevasses. But not this chasm. It has been *fixed* by God's decree.

In this present life, those who are on Broadway can, by faith in Christ, cross over onto the Narrow Way. But once any of these travelers meet that end of the road, there is no more crossing over. This is great security and comfort for those in heaven, but a terror to those in hell.

### **Surely if Someone Comes Back from the Dead...**

Luk 16:27-28 "And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house— (28) for I

have five brothers—in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

The Rich Man's sin and evil mindset continues to evidence itself here. He still sees Lazarus as below him, someone who is his servant – *send Lazarus to my father's house*.

John Bunyan concluded that there was no good motive in the Rich Man's request, but simply that he knew that his own evil example to his brothers would lead them to hell as well. And then they would blame him for leading them in wickedness, thus being an additional source of torment for him. Whatever his motive, it is a sinful and selfish one.

Consider – in his earthly life, the Rich Man had many opportunities to be a source of good to others. He knew the Scriptures – Moses and the Prophets. But not only did he refuse to obey God's Word, he promoted sin in others.

How many people who claim to be Christians and yet live for the world and self, lead others AWAY from Christ? Many! How many parents who claim to be Christians are hypocrites who lead their children down Broadway? Many!

Now, in hell, this man claims he wants to help his brothers avoid eternal torment. But it is too late.

***Once in hell, opportunity to do good for others is lost forever. How many hypocrites open their eyes in hell and realize that their children and their friends and others are soon to join them in eternal fire?***

My paternal grandfather was a wicked man. I never knew my grandmother as she died before I was born, but I did have some years of contact with my grandfather. He came out to Oregon from Tennessee when he was 18, married, and had 10 children – one of whom died at an early age from poison he found somewhere. Of the remaining 9 children only one, perhaps, came to faith in Christ –

though I am not certain. All the rest departed this life dead in sin.

Now, what do you suppose my grandfather (who died before any of the 9 sons and daughters) thought when he lifted up his eyes in hell? He would have known that his children were all about to join him, and that he had led them there. And there was no way to stop it – the train was rolling. And it keeps right on rolling because now there are grandchildren and great grandchildren going right down that same path.

NOTE: The Rich Man probably had children as did his brothers. AND, do not forget, he was a Jew. He was a religious hypocrite.

Here is John Bunyan on this:

“I believe there is no such love in any of the damned in Hell, as really to desire the salvation of any. But in that there is any desire in those who are damned, that their friends and relations should not come into that place of torment — it appears

to me to be rather for their own ease than for their neighbor's good.

For it would aggravate their grief and horror — to see their ungodly neighbors in the like destruction with them. For where the ungodly live and die, and descend into the pit together, the one is rather a vexation and torment to the other, and not any comfort at all. And it must needs be so, because there are no ungodly people who live ungodly together, but they do learn bad examples one of another, as thus:

If there lives one in the town who is very shady in business practices — why the rest who are of the same mind with him, they will labor to imitate and follow his steps: this is commonly seen. Again, if there is one given to drunkenness, others of the town, through his means, run the more into that sin with him, because of his enticing them, and also by setting such a bad example before them. And so, if there be any addicted to pride, and must needs be in all the newest fashions — how do their example provoke others to love and follow the same

vanity; spending that upon their lusts — which should relieve their own and others' wants.

Also, if there are any given to jesting, scoffing, lying, whoring, backbiting, secret wickedness, wantonness, or any other sin — then those who are most expert in these things, oftentimes entangle others, who perhaps would not have been so vile as now they are, had they not had such an example, and hence they are called corrupters (Isa. 1:4).

Now these will, by their doings, exceedingly aggravate the condemnation of one another. He who set his neighbor a sinful example, and thereby caused him to walk in sin — he will be found one cause of his friend's destruction, insomuch that he will have to answer for his own sins — AND for a great part of his neighbor's too, which will add to his destruction! As that scripture in Ezekiel shows, where, speaking of the watchman that should give the people warning, if he did not, though the man did die in his sins

— yet his blood shall be required at the watchman's hand! (Ezek. 33).

So here let me tell you, that if you should be such a one, as by your conversation and practices shall be a trap and a stumbling-block to cause your neighbor to fall into eternal ruin though he be damned for his own sins — yet God will charge you as being guilty of his blood, in that you were not content to keep from Heaven yourself — but did also, by your filthy conversation, keep away others, and cause them to fall with you! O, therefore, will not this aggravate your torment!

Yes, if you should die and go to Hell before your neighbor or companions, besides the guilt of your own sins — you would be so laden with the fear of the damnation of others to be laid to your charge, that you would cry out: O send one from the dead to this companion and that companion with whom I had society in my lifetime — for I see my cursed behavior will be one cause of his condemnation! I left him living in foul and heinous sins;

but I was one of the first instruments to bring him to them. O! I shall be guilty both of my own — and his damnation too! O that he might be kept out hence — lest my torment be aggravated by his coming hither!

For where ungodly people dwell together, they being a snare and stumbling-block one to another by their wicked practices — they must needs be a torment one to another, and an aggravation of each other's damnation! “O, cursed be your face!” says one, “that ever I set my eyes on you! It was you who enticed me and ensnared me. It was your filthy conversation that was a stumbling-block to me. It was your covetousness, it was your pride, your haunting the ale-house, your gaming and whoring. It was because of you — that I fell short of eternal life! If you had set me a good example, as you did set me a sinful one — it may be I might not have come to this dreadful Hell;

Bunyan, John. A FEW SIGHS FROM HELL: The Groans of a Damned Soul (pp. 86-88).

**God's Own Word isn't Enough for  
the Wicked**

Luk 16:29-30 "But Abraham \*said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' (30) "But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!'

Those doors being closed, the Rich Man attempts still another. He really is claiming here that God has not done enough. That if someone had come back from the dead and warned him, he would not be in the fix he was in now. In other words, he continued to despise God's Word.

"No, No. God's Word isn't enough. People need more evidence – like someone rising from the dead."

But Abraham responds with sobering truth – *if someone refuses to believe God's Word, neither will they be convinced to believe even if*

*someone returns from the dead to tell them.*

And so it is. Someone HAS come back from the dead. The Son of God Himself. He has given us His Word – that is what we are looking at right now. He is telling us what lies beyond this present life. He has risen. But what is man's response? What is your response?