

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

www.unholycharade.com (blog)

www.lightfordarktimes.com (blog)

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

The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment (Part 8)

April 12, 2026

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

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25

We are looking at this amazing account, given to us by the Lord Jesus Himself, this account of the Rich Man and Lazarus. And we have been carefully hearing the Lord's words because we need to be very clear on the biblical

doctrine of eternal punishment.
Why?

1. Because there is a renewed wave among so-called evangelicals right now of denying this truth. Some saying that when the wicked die, that's it – God merely annihilates them into non-existence. Others are claiming that God's love and mercy prohibits Him from sending people into an eternity in hell – that it is only temporary. And still others insist that in the end, everyone will be in heaven – the so-called

doctrine of universalism. And therefore, lest we be deceived, we have been giving careful attention to the Lord's teaching here.

2. It is also important – even vital – that we hear this doctrine, and it cause us to fear lest we be careless and pass out of this life apart from Christ. Fear produced in the sinner by the truth of God's Word is a necessary step in coming to saving faith in Christ.

We need to hear about hell and all the biblical truth connected with it. How many of us who know Christ can recall a time when, perhaps laying in bed at night, experienced a fear, even a terror, because we heard what the Bible says about hell, such as:

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.'

Mat 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

Mat 25:46 "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Mat 3:12 "His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Mat 13:40-42 "So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. (41) "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, (42) and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Rev 20:13-15 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. (14) Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. (15) And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Listen once more to our Lord tell us about these two very real men:

Luk 16:19-31 "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.' (25) "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.' (27) "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.' (29) "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!' (31) "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen

to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead."

We saw last time that Moses and the Prophets – that is, the Bible – is God’s appointed and fully sufficient means of awakening us from the slumber of death, as we might call it, opening our eyes to the glory of Jesus Christ and our need of Him for salvation – for deliverance from Hell and His wrath. As Bunyan puts it:

“See how justly and fairly God deals with us. He give us *the best means* of awakening and reclaiming us from our sins; better than if He had sent someone from the dead to warn us. He gives us those means which are the most suited to our nature and He gives sinners abundant warning before He punishes them. What could He have done more than what He has done? There is no means of warning us which is better than that which the Lord has given us – His sufficient and powerful Word.”

We think of that old hymn – How Firm a Foundation-

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in God's excellent Word!
What more can be said than to you God hath said, to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?”

No Soul Sleep

Some of the cults teach this false doctrine called “soul sleep.” In our community we are surrounded by one of them – Seventh Day Adventism. Don’t be deceived when you go to the hospital or clinic here and see Bible verses all over the walls. Adventists also hold to a defective doctrine of Christ’s atonement and still regard Ellen G. White as a prophetess.

This doctrine then of soul sleep says this:

“Seventh-day Adventists believe that "soul sleep" (or conditional immortality) is the unconscious state of the dead between death and the final resurrection. They hold that humans are an indivisible unity

of body, mind, and spirit, so the soul cannot exist consciously apart from the body after death.” [AI summary of SA doctrine]

Now, clearly the Bible repeatedly exposes this as a false doctrine. You have it right here in the account of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Both of them are immediately in either heaven or hell and they are very conscious. Their bodies lie in the grave, but their soul – which is who we really are – is wide awake.

Soul sleep cannot be reconciled with numbers of other Scriptures:

Mat 17:1-3 Six days later Jesus *took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and *led them up on a high mountain by themselves. (2) And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. (3) And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

2Co 5:6-8 Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— (7) for we walk by faith, not by sight— (8) we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

Php 1:21-24 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. (22) But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. (23) But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; (24) yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

NOTE: When the New Testament speaks of death as “sleep”, two things are always true: 1) The person is a Christian, and 2) “sleep” refers to *the body in the grave*. Not to the person themselves. See 1 Cor 11:30; 1 Cor 15:51; And most clearly:

1Th 4:13-18 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are **asleep**, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him **those who have fallen asleep in Jesus**. (15) For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede **those who have fallen asleep**. (16) For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words.

As the Tree Falls, So it Lays Forever

Now, here is the vital point to see –

When we die, our soul – the real us – immediately goes either to heaven or hell. There we await the resurrection of our body at the time of Christ's return, but the torments of hell begin immediately as do the blessings of heaven. And both are forever. That's it.

You have the finality of it all in that other great parable of the ten virgins we read earlier. Listen again:

Mat 25:10-12 "And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. (11) "Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' (12) "But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'

The door was shut. Finally and forever. Shut out of Christ's presence and they ended in hell. Oh, they appeared to be like the other 5, but they were not, just like so many people today who claim to be Christians, but they are not born

again. They have no oil in their lamps.

You cannot borrow oil (ie, saving grace worked by the Holy Spirit) from someone else. Each of us must stand before the Lord alone.

You Cannot Coast into Heaven

We have repeated this often these past few weeks:

You do not need to do anything to end up in hell. Just take the easy way, Broadway, join the crowd, go along with the world, and you will end where Broadway always ends – hell. Torment. The Lake of Fire.

But the Lord Jesus tells us to *strive*:

Luk 13:22-30 And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem. (23) **And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?"**

And He said to them, (24) **"Strive to enter through the narrow**

door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

(25) **"Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.'** (26) **"Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets'; (27) and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.'** (28) **"In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out. (29) "And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. (30) "And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last."**

Similarly-

Mat 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. (14) "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and **there are few who find it.**

We will plan to more closely examine this Scripture about the narrow way and Broadway next time, but consider for now this main point. The question put to Jesus-

And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?"

This is the correct question to ask. It is the question to which everyone is led who correctly hears God's Word. "Lord, in light of what you have been teaching us, are you saying that there are just a few who are being saved?" That is the conclusion to which those with ears to hear will be led.

And how did Jesus answer? Did He rebuke and correct the questioner?

No, in his answer He said, "that is correct. There are just a few who are being saved."

Hear it again:

Mat 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. (14) "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and **there are few who find it.**

And He said to them, (24) "**Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.**

Right now, at this moment, *there are few who find that narrow door which leads to life. MANY enter via the broad way that leads to hell.*

If you are a Christian – consider now what Jesus' words necessarily mean – *if you are a Christian, then you have found the narrow way that leads to life. You have been found by Christ and, Like Christian in Pilgrim's Progress, you entered*

by that Gate, which is Christ and faith alone in Him alone. What then is your experience in this Narrow Way road to life?

You look around. Are there crowds of fellow travelers? The majority of preachers and so-called churches today are telling us that there are. And in fact, they are saying, that if there are not throngs of people on the way with you, then something is wrong – that you had better check your map because you are on the wrong road. That is what we are being told.

NOTE: Picture inserted here of John Bunyan's treatise cover, *The Strait Gate or The Great Difficulty of Going to Heaven*.

But what does Jesus say we are to expect if we are on that Narrow Way? *Few are they who find it*. Often times a real Christian is going to find themselves *alone-*

2Ti 4:9-17 Make every effort to come to me soon; (10) for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to

Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. (11) Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. (12) But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. (13) When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. (14) Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. (15) Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching. (16) At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. (17) But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.

Few are they who find it. Furthermore, it is a *strait* – as the KJV has it. Listen to it in the wording Bunyan had:

Mat 7:13-14 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: (14) Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Strait. Narrow. Few. Life.

Wide, broad, many,
destruction.

Strait. Not *straight*, but an old English word meaning narrow. Listen to these definitions from the Greek Lexicon (dictionary) –

“A narrow entrance so that it would be difficult for even a relatively small man to pass through without some distress. A narrow, rough path not readily passable for a large group. A way that is characterized by stressful circumstances, difficulty, and trouble.”

Why in the world would anyone choose such a path? *Because Christ has given them eyes to see Him and the destination to which this path*

leads. Because Jesus says to us “follow Me” and then He turns and walks ahead on that Narrow Way which is difficult, stressful, and full of trouble.

I want you all to think very carefully about this – resolve to be honest. Satan is constantly telling us that this church is a failure, that God’s blessing is not upon us, that there once were many people here and now there are just a few. Some of you listening online have been thrown out of a church where perhaps you once enjoyed the company of lots of people, a big choir, and all the rest. And now you are alone. You used to have this:

[Picture inserted here of a full, ornate church sanctuary from Babylon Bee – God declares that people who go to church two days per year can go to heaven two days per year.]

And now you have this:

[Picture inserted here of our own CRC upstairs sanctuary and pews, all empty which were once filled]

that it is an easy way? Does God's Word say this:

Mat 7:22-23 "**Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'** (23) "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'**"

Of course it does.

And therefore each of us has a decision to make. YOU must make it yourself – no one can make it for you. *Will you travel on the Narrow Way, that difficult, hard way full of cost and trouble, or will you cave and follow the crowd and opt for Broadway to hell?*

Right now, this very day, you have heard the Word of God. Like the rich young ruler, Jesus is telling you – give up the world, stop craving the praise and friendship of Broadway people, and follow Jesus to life. Today. Now. This is the day

Now, here is where ruthless honesty must be exercised. YOU have been “gaslighted” by so much of what claims to speak for the Lord. By gaslighted we mean that you have been taught that YOU cannot trust yourself and your own understanding of God's Word. That if your conclusions from Scripture differ from what the prevailing winds of “Christianity” are saying, then it is because your own senses cannot be trusted. You didn't read what you read. You have not seen what you saw.

But what have WE seen? What do WE see right here in front of us in God's own Word? This-

for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. (14) "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and **there are few who find it.**"

Does God's Word say that or not? Of course it does. Does God's Word say that MANY are traveling on the popular highway to hell and

of salvation, tomorrow may well be too late.