

Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. (Luk 13:23-24)

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com (blog)

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The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment (Part 12)

*Man Hears of Hell, but Flatters
Himself that He Shall Escape it*

May 24, 2026

Sermon Text: Luke 13:22-30

Scripture Reading: Luke 16:19-31

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."

Here is Jonathan Edwards in his sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*-

"The unseen, unthought of ways and means of persons going suddenly out of this world are innumerable and inconceivable. Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen. The arrows of death fly unseen at noon-day; the sharpest sight cannot discern them.

God has so many different unsearchable ways of taking wicked men out of the world and sending them to hell, that there is nothing to make it appear, that God had need to be at the expense of a

miracle, or go out of the ordinary course of his providence, to destroy any wicked man, at any moment.

Natural men's prudence and care to preserve their own lives, or the care of others to preserve them, do not secure them for a moment.

All wicked men's pains and contrivance which they use to escape hell, while they continue to reject Christ, and so remain wicked men, do not secure them from hell one moment. *Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do. Every one lays out matters in his own mind how he shall avoid damnation, and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes will not fail.*

They hear indeed that there are but few saved, and that the greater part of men that have died heretofore are gone to hell; but each one imagines that *he* lays out matters

better for his own escape than others have done.

He does not intend to come to that place of torment; he says within himself, that he intends to take effectual care, and to order matters so for himself as not to fail. But the foolish children of men miserably delude themselves in their own schemes, and in confidence in their own strength and wisdom; they trust to nothing but a shadow.

The greater part of those who heretofore have lived under the same means of grace, and are now dead, are undoubtedly gone to hell; and it was not because they were not as wise as those who are now alive: it was not because they did not lay out matters as well for themselves to secure their own escape. If we could speak with them, and inquire of them, one by one, whether they expected, when alive, and when they used to hear about hell, ever to be the subjects of misery: *we doubtless, should hear one and another reply, "No, I never intended to come here: I had laid out matters otherwise in my mind; I thought I should contrive*

well for myself: I thought my scheme good. I intended to take effectual care; but it came upon me unexpected; I did not look for it at that time, and in that manner; it came as a thief: Death outwitted me: God's wrath was too quick for me. Oh, my cursed foolishness! I was flattering myself, and pleasing myself with vain dreams of what I would do hereafter; and when I was saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction came upon me."

Edwards, Jonathan. The Works of Jonathan Edwards: Volume I & II . Candid Publishing. Kindle Edition.

We have been giving close attention these past weeks to the biblical doctrine of eternal destruction, the doctrine of hell. And we have been doing so because increasingly we have professing Christians in various forms such as social media, denying these truths. Claims that God simply annihilates the wicked or that in the end everyone will be saved are not difficult to find. All of these are deceiving lies authored

by the devil in order to lead the masses down that wide highway to hell. It is vital therefore that we hear God's truth very clearly.

Hear Edwards again – this is worth repeating:

Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do. Every one lays out matters in his own mind how he shall avoid damnation, and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes will not fail.

And so it was with that rich man in the account the Lord Jesus gave in response to that question – *are there few who are saved?*”

"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. "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far

away and Lazarus in his bosom. "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.' (Luk 16:22-24)

Let's consider still another warning the Lord Jesus gave concerning those who expect to be welcomed into heaven but will find it otherwise. These specifically are people who profess to be Christians, but are under a blinding delusion:

Mat 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. (22) "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.'

And again-

Luk 13:26-27 "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.'

Everyone Expects They will Enter Heaven

While most people now and through history have scoffed at the last judgment to come, on that day when Christ appears to judge the world, *everyone will insist to be let through that narrow gate*. MANY will seek to enter. That entrance into heaven will be the desire of all the world. You see it in the words of that Rich Man as he was in torment yet looked into Paradise where Lazarus was.

Many wicked people today boast to their companions – *I will see you in hell!* As if that eternal fire were a kind of party. Those who now mock and despise Christ will, on that day (and even now when they

pass out of this world) insist upon being granted passage into heaven.

When a wicked person dies even in this present day, the moment they pass out of this world – and if anyone here is still outside of Christ, deceiving themselves about being saved, it will be true of you as well – the moment the wicked leave this world they will *see*. And what will they see? This:

1. They will see how glorious and beautiful heaven is and how blessed its citizens are. Just as the rich man saw Lazarus and Abraham in paradise.
2. They will then see clearly what hell is, this place they thought they would party with their evil companions. They will see that fire, the devil, the demons, and so many other terrors.
3. Whatever horrors the Bible represented with such terms as hell fire, everlasting fire, devouring fire that shall never be quenched, they will see and feel clearly.

4. They will see clearly and understand what the words “forever” and “everlasting” mean.

But too late. All too late. They expected heaven, but ended in hell.

The large majority of people who claim to be Christians will join the rest of the unregenerate population of the world in hell. These are the clear and plain and oft-repeated warnings of none other than the Lord Jesus Himself.

Luk 13:24 "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

On What Basis will they Demand Entrance into Heaven

Our Lord also tells us what reasons these deceived ones will offer as to why they should be welcomed into heaven.

Luk 13:26 "Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your

presence, and You taught in our streets';

Tit 1:16 They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

Mat 7:22 "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?'

See it? They will point to their own works. They will call attention to their so-called religion. They will claim that their works were done in Christ's name. Do NOT miss this! Obviously these are people who claim to be Christians. These are the ones most deceived, *and the churches today are filled with them.*

Recently I saw a very typical example of this on Youtube. In fact there are a number of such examples. In this case a church called The Church of Eleven 22 in

Florida covered a beach with some 2500 people who they then baptized in the ocean. The lead pastor (I don't like that title) said that "we do this every year."

Comments on the channel were overwhelmingly "All to the glory of God," "Praise God," "Awesome."

Not to be outdone by the East Coast, there is another group called "Baptize California." Today, Pentecost Sunday, some 300 churches have banded together to baptize people. You can even go to their main website and sign up to be baptized. They boast about the thousands who they are saving.

Now, how does this line up with Scripture? Well, in this way – the vast majority of such people are not born again, but they will be deceived into believing that when they stand before the Lord He is certainly going to grant them entrance into heaven and their "ticket" will be that they said some magic words and were baptized.

These things are being applauded by the majority of churches and professing Christians, and anyone who calls it all into question in the light of God's Word will be labeled schismatic and just, well, a terrible person.

But the Lord sees through it all.

Listen to Jonathan Edwards once more as he addresses the question, "*How will these people seek to enter into heaven?*" –

1. "They will put on all the confidence they can, they will trick and trim up their profession of Christ, and adorn it with whatever bravery they can. The bridegroom however will not be fooled by these kind and will shut the door to them.
2. They will seek to enter in by crowding themselves in among the godly. Thus you have that man without the wedding garment:

Mat 22:11-13 "But when the king came in to look over the dinner

guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes, (12) and he *said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' And the man was speechless. (13) "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

“This counterfeit went to the wedding, gets himself into the wedding chamber, sits himself close among the guests, and then, without doubt, concluded that he escaped damnation. But, you know, one black sheep is soon seen though it be among 100 white ones.”

3. They will seek to enter in by arguing their profession of faith and their admittance to the Lord's table and baptism. We have eaten and drunk in your church; we sat at your table, we frequented sermons and Christian assemblies, we were well thought of in your

church....Lord, Lord, open to us.”

But all of their pleas, arguments, and excuses will do nothing. The Lord never knew them. They will resort to weeping and gnashing of teeth when they see that the gate to the Lord's kingdom is closed to them forever.

For many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

Next week I want to show you that God's Word is quite plain on this – His true church is and always has been a *remnant*. A few.

Why Did our Lord Speak so Much on this Subject?

Why? And why have faithful preachers always announced these sober warnings? Because they enjoy threatening and scaring people. Some kind of spiritual sadism? Of course not.

The reason for the warnings is that they WARN! And they are given because *there is need for people to be warned*. When there is great

danger, it is not an act of love to refuse to issue a warning.

In addition, Christ showed us these things in order to reveal to us how great is His love for His people. How great was His sacrifice for us and how great our salvation in Him is. Look at what He has saved us from!

1Jn 4:9-10 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. (10) In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Heb 2:14-15 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, (15) and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

Do not be deceived. Examine yourself closely. Hear this:

“Hypocrites may go a great way. There is such a thing as an “almost Christian.” Such may pass through the first and second watch, namely, may be approved of Christians and local churches. But what will they do when they come to this iron gate that leads to God’s City? There the counterfeit is discovered, and *there they are cast down and shall not be able to rise.*” (Psalm 36:12) [ibid]

“We call them ‘holiday Christians,’ because they do with religion just as so many people do with their best apparel – hang it against the wall all week and put it on for Sunday...they save their religion until they go to church or until they meet with some godly person. O poor professor! What will you do on that Day of trial and judgment.”

Psa 1:5-6 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. (6) For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish.

What is the peak of foolishness, the height of stupidity? It is this – to be unholy, to love the world, to not be born again, and yet lay claim to the kingdom of heaven. These kind are like people who would lay claim to ownership of a house or a farm, yet without any right to do so. The fool says this in his heart and yet his only inheritance is found in his conceit. He has no legal birthright to heaven, and there are MANY just like this.

“Salvation is not obtained by a dream. It is not a trivial business. If we would have a right to the kingdom, we must strive now to enter it. We must follow Christ down that narrow way, ready to die to ourselves, to put the world behind us, and to suffer with Him.”

The Time is Coming

For every person here right now. For every person in this community and in all the world, an appointed time, a set day and hour and minute is coming when all will submit their claim to the King for a right to enter heaven. For a right to have

the inheritance. But very few of them will ever receive it. MANY will say to Him on that day....

You Say Lord, Lord...But does He Know You?

2Ti 3:1-5 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. (2) For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, (3) unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, (4) treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, (5) holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

2Ti 4:1-4 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: (2) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. (3) For the time will come when

they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, (4) and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

We are in those days. Difficult times are upon us. Notice VERY soberly that the people Paul is warning Timothy about here are people *who profess to be Christians*.

- Holding to a form of godliness
- They accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires and will turn away from the truth

See it? Plainly these kind are the ones around us who claim to be of Christ. They are church members. But you will not find them in local churches where Christ is truly preached, oh no. You will find them in “happening” places where the preacher tailors his preaching to their lusts, all wrapped up in a few

Bible words. They want to hear a message that is “relatable,” that “meets them where they are,” that “addresses their felt needs,” – this is what the Apostle Paul is warning us about.

Do you hear the Lord’s warnings? Have you turned from the world because He has said whoever loves the world will perish with the world? What is the focus of your life, of your thinking, of your affections?

What has your claim to be a Christian cost you? Anything? Has your profession to belong to Christ ever resulted in your being hated, in being rejected by friends, or cast away by earthly family? What has your claim to be a Christian ever cost you?

Be sure of it. If you are truly born again, you are a stranger and an alien to this world. You are a fool to the world. In your family, in your workplace, in your acquaintances. And yes, in most all of the “churches” in the world today.

