

September 28 & October 1, 2023



## **Confronting Christianity - Week #3 Isn't Hell an Outdated Concept?**

Luke 16:19–31 (NIV)

*“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. <sup>20</sup> At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. <sup>22</sup> “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup> So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ <sup>25</sup> “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ <sup>27</sup> “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ <sup>29</sup> “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ <sup>30</sup> “No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes*

*to them, they will repent.’<sup>31</sup> “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”*

## **1. Why is there a literal hell?**

- God’s justice demands it.

Matthew 25:41 (NIV)

*“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*

Hebrews 10:29 (NIV)

*How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?*

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 (NIV)

*He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.<sup>9</sup> They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might*

Our failure to recognize the justice of Hell  
is a direct result of our failure to see our  
sin for what it is and a Holy God for who He is.

## **2. What hell is like?**

- Hell is not a divinely produced eternal torture chamber; it is the absence of the presence of God!
- Hell is an eternal place that exists outside the presence of God.

Matthew 8:12 (NIV)

*But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

- In the absence of light there is only darkness.

Genesis 1:2 (NIV)

*Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*

- In the absence of comfort, there is only pain.
- In the absence of relationship, there is only loneliness.
- In the absence of peace, there is only torment.

### **3. Why think about a subject as horrible as hell?**

- To remind us of the depths of God's grace.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

- Denying hell makes a mockery of the cross.
- If we don't accept the realities of hell, we will never fully appreciate the glory of the Gospel!
- Thinking on the doctrine of hell should give us a renewed passion for the lost!