There Is Another Book

Revelation 20:11-15
11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.
14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Judgment Day
- In the 20th chapter of the Book of Revelation,
  - John describes a strange, unearthly scene.
- Heaven and earth flee from the Ancient of Days
  - as he ascends to his great white throne
  - and sits in judgment over the whole world.
- John’s apocalyptic language
  - and poetic imagery
  - have already told the story of the fading character of the world.
- Now the only reality that matters
  - is God seated on His throne of judgment.
- His verdict will be final.
  - His judgment will be holy and righteous.
- And the whole world,
  - every man, woman and child that ever lived,
  - is about to be judged.
- An immense parade of humanity
  - appears before the throne,
  - both the rich and the poor,
  - the great and the small,
  - the educated and the ignorant,
  - the elderly and the infant,
  - none are spared from this encounter
    - and no place of escape
    - can be found in all of creation.

There Is A Book

There Is Another Book
• As the dramatic scene unfolds
  o a moment of tension arrives.
• There is a book.
  o And in that final, cataclysmic, moment,
    ▪ the book is opened.
• That book is a fearful thing to contemplate,
  o for it contains the record
    ▪ of every person's life.
  o Every deed has been recorded.
    ▪ Nothing has escaped
      • the great record keeper.
  o Nothing is neglected
    ▪ and nothing is forgotten.
• It is sobering to ponder that truth
  o and to recognize that each of us
    ▪ will stand in that place,
      • on that day,
      ▪ before his great white throne,
  o and that book will be opened
    ▪ to the pages that contain
      • the record of our lives.
• Yes.
  o There is a chapter in that book
    ▪ with your name on it.
  o Everything you have done,
    ▪ every word you have spoken,
      • every self-justified action,
    ▪ your entire life will be opened up
      ▪ to the scrutiny and judgment
        o of the only one who can bear the title,
          ▪ The Holy One.

• What comes next is horrifying.
  o Men and women are judged
    ▪ on the basis of the works
      • that are recorded in that book.
• In the end, on that final day,
  o faith is measured,
    ▪ not by a confession
      • but by your actions,
    ▪ not by the faith you have professed,
      • but by the life that you have lived.
    ▪ This is that great day of wrath
      • that Paul talks about:
Romans 2:5-9

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

- There is no more sobering truth
  - in all of scripture
    - than the truth that one day
      - we will be judged
        - according to our deeds.

7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:
8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath;
9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

- Works are the unmistakable evidence
  - of the loyalty of the heart.
- They express either belief or unbelief,
  - faithfulness or unfaithfulness.
- Judgment will reveal,
  - through the record written in the book,
    - whether your faith in God
      - was genuine or not.
- The message of scripture
  - is consistent throughout.
    - John taught this.
    - Paul taught this.
      - Even Jesus taught this!
- There will come a day when your life
  - will be measured according to the book.
    - We are saved by grace,
      - but the Bible is clear in the fact
        - that we will be judged
          - by our works!

- John records that sobering scene
  - as those whose lives are found lacking
    - are thrown into a lake of fire.
- What an incredibly frightening image.
  - A lake that burns with fire.
    - It is a place of eternal damnation

There Is Another Book
• that was created for the devil
  o and all of his minions,
  ▪ but in eternity it will become
  • the final destination
  o of all those who rejected
    ▪ God’s great mercy.
• There they will suffer the wrath of God
  o along with the devil
    ▪ and all of his minions.
• I come to this pulpit this morning
  o to remind you that Hell is a real place.
• It is a place of everlasting horror
  o and unending terror.
• It is a place of torment
  o where the wrath of a Holy God
    ▪ is continually poured out,
      • a place where you are eternally
        o cut off from God.
• The scripture calls it the second death.
  o If men’s hearts fail
    ▪ at the though of the first death,
      • if death is the intimidating foe
        o that stalks the darkness of the night,
    ▪ how much more frightful
      • is the spectre of a second death?
• Only this second death
  o is not a death that comes quickly.
    ▪ No, it is eternal death
      • a continual and constant dying
        o but never reaching the end.
• It is all of the agony of death
  o without the release of death.
    ▪ Think about it.
• We are quick to point out that the Heavenly City
  o that John describes in the next chapter
    ▪ is far and away greater
      • than the description given,
  o we celebrate the fact
    ▪ that the half has never been told.
• But I want you to consider the truth this morning
  o that if Heaven is many degrees better
    ▪ than the image given in scripture,
  o then Hell, in all of its terror,
    ▪ is much worse

There Is Another Book
• than the simple word pictures
  ▪ that have been used to describe it.
    ▪ There really is a place called Hell.

• We don’t like to think about.
  o We don’t like to talk about it.
    ▪ It’s not something that we want to dwell on
      ▪ because the reality of Hell
        ▪ offends our sensibilities.
  o It is hard for us to understand,
    ▪ to comprehend,
      ▪ the terribleness of the wrath of God
        ▪ and the righteous justification
          ▪ for that wrath.
  o Let’s face it, if it was up to us,
    ▪ we’d find another way to write the end.
  o We’d find another way
    ▪ for God’s righteousness and justice
      ▪ to be satisfied.
  o But there is no other way.
    ▪ God has done everything that He can to save the world!
• The prophet Ezekiel asks a rhetorical question:

_Ezekiel 18:23_

23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

• God would rather that you turn from your ways
  o and live than that you should face eternal death.
• That’s why there was a cross!

• A couple of years ago
  o there was a controversy
    ▪ surrounding the lyrics of the song
      ▪ “In Christ Alone.”
• There was a group
  o that was compiling a hymnal
    ▪ and they wanted to use the song
  o but they wanted to remove a line in the song
    ▪ that declared, “the wrath of God was satisfied.”
• They felt that the love of God
  o was a much stronger message
    ▪ than the wrath of God,
  o so they proposed replacing

There Is Another Book
• the line with this phrase,
  • “the love of God was magnified.”

• It’s just a little change
  o with such a positive outcome,
    • the wrath of God is replaced
      • by the great love of God
        o and everyone goes home happy.

• What they didn’t understand,
  o and what we sometimes fail to grasp,
    • is that if we exalt the love of God
      • to the exclusion of God’s wrath,
  o we take the very meaning out of the cross
    • and we rob the gospel of its importance.

• If there was no wrath that needed to be satisfied,
  o if there was no hell
    • that must be avoided at all cost,
  o then there would be no need
    • for an old rugged cross,
  o there would be no need
    • for God to robe himself in flesh
      • and suffer and die
        o at the hands of cruel men.

• The horror of the cross
  o reflects the severity of Hell.
    • If God went to such lengths to save us,
      • if he endured such suffering on our behalf,
    • then there must be something horrible,
      • beyond our wildest imagination
        o that He was saving us from.

• The problem is that we live in a culture
  o that has idolized God’s love
    • to the extent that his other attributes
      • have been ignored.

• God is love,
  o and to the prevailing mindset of this generation,
    • that is all that God is
      • Love encompasses
        o the whole of God’s character,
          • it is His only attribute that matters.
  o However, the same scriptures
    • that testify of the great love of God
      • also testify of his absolute righteousness,
• No, the world says.
  o You’ve got it wrong.
    ▪ Jesus came in love,
      • he loved all people,
        o everywhere,
      • his whole message
        o was one of love.
• Jesus didn’t come to frighten folks into believing,
  o he didn’t come to intimidate folks into doing right,
    ▪ he came to love them
      • and through the great power
        o of his everlasting love,
          ▪ to show them a better way.
• To hear them tell it,
  o judgment, wrath, and condemnation,
    ▪ are not a part of the message of Jesus.
  o But those who hold such a view
    ▪ have ignored the Jesus of scripture.
• Jesus was a hell-fire preacher.
  o Jesus spoke more about hell
    ▪ than anybody else in the Bible.
• In fact, He spoke more about hell
  o than everybody else in the Bible combined.
• And He defined it as eternal punishment.
  o His message to all that would hear him
    ▪ was a warning to sinners
      • to escape hell at any cost
        ▪ because the reality of Hell is terrible.
• Hell is a horrific place of judgment
  o where God punishes people for their sins.
    ▪ Jesus believed that a horrific place of punishment
      • awaits the wicked on judgment day.
• The clearest example of this teaching
  o is found in Matthew 25:31–46,
    ▪ which contains the longest
      • and most detailed account
        o of judgment day
        o in the four gospels.
• Jesus begins by saying:
Matthew 25:31-33, 41 & 46
31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:
32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:
33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
...
41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:
...
46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

- Or consider Matthew 13,
  - where Jesus told the parable
    - of the enemy who came in
    - and sowed tares among the wheat.
- The master let them grow together,
  - tares and wheat in the same field,
    - side by side,
  - receiving the same water,
    - the same fertilizer,
    - the same tender care.
- But when harvest finally came,
  - the Lord commanded his servants
    - to separate the wheat from the tares,
      - much as the goats and the sheep
        - were separated in the previous passage,
      - and this is what Jesus says about the tares:

Matthew 13:40-42 & 49-50
40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.
41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;
42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
...
49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,
50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

- Make no mistake.
  - Jesus was not talking

There Is Another Book
There Is Another Book

• about sheep and goats
  • or wheat and tares,
    o he was talking about people!
• I remember when I was a kid,
  o back when it was more socially acceptable
    • to preach on a subject like hell.
• I’ll never forget it as long as I live.
  o When they preached hell,
    • they preached it with such ferocity,
      • with such fervor,
        o that it scared me to my core.
• I remember many nights lying in bed
  o and repenting with tears
    • because I was afraid
      • that Jesus might come back
        o and I wouldn’t be ready!
• Hell frightened me,
  o it terrified me
    • and, on many an occasion,
      • it brought me to a place of repentance.
• Over the years it has fallen out of fashion
  o to preach on Hell.
• As a preacher I can tell you
  o that we’ve been told
    • that nothing good ever comes
      • out of scaring folks into conviction.
• We’ve been told
  o that we should preach on the love of God,
    • the mercy of God
      • and the grace of God,
  o rather than confronting folks
    • with the absolute terror of Hell.
• But I’ve come to this pulpit
  o emboldened by the fact
    • that Jesus Christ was
      • a hellfire and brimstone preacher.
• He preached hell as hot as it gets.
  o He used graphic words pictures
    • of a terrible place
      • to get men and women to stop
        o and consider their ways.
• His preaching was often punctuated by this promise,
  o There shall be weeping
- and gnashing of teeth!

- Listen to just a few more texts:

**Matthew 8:11-12**
11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.
12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

**Matthew 22:13**
13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

**Matthew 25:30**
30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

- When Jesus’ disciples were confronted
  - by those who sought to kill them,
    - Jesus had this to say:

**Matthew 10:28**
28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

- Jesus said, Who are they
  - that you should fear them
    - more than you fear hell?
  - They can destroy your body,
    - they can take your life,
      - but God can destroy
        - both the body and the soul in hell.

- Talk about fear mongering,
  - The way Jesus told it,
    - it’s not a question of courage verses fear
      - but, rather, a question
        - of who will you fear more?
  - Man, who can take your life?
    - Or God, who holds power
      - over your very soul?

- Listen, this is how serious Jesus was about Hell:

**Matthew 18:8-9**

There Is Another Book
8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.
9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

- There is a real place called hell.
  - It’s not a figment of someone’s imagination,
    - not some fantasyland
      - that was dreamed up by a horror writer,
    - it is a very real place.
- And it is so bad
  - that Jesus said that it would be better
    - for you to suffer terrible agony in this life,
    - than to suffer for all of eternity in Hell!
- The very prospect of Hell should frighten us.
  - It should make us uncomfortable.
    - It should disturb us deeply.
- The sad truth, though,
  - is that we have become
    - dangerously comfortable with Hell.
- We’ve made it into something that it is not,
  - we’ve watered it down in our minds
    - and robbed it of its terror.
- The rock band AC/DC was once quoted as saying:
  - “Hell ain’t a bad place to be...
    - after all its where all of our friends are.”
- But can I tell you, on this Sunday afternoon,
  - that Hell is bad place to be.
    - It is not the never-ending party
      - that the world has made it out to be.
  - It is an unimaginable place
    - where an all consuming fire
      - burns in utter darkness,
    - where the worm never dies
      - and punishment never ends,
    - a place where there will be
      - weeping and gnashing of teeth.
- I read the results of a survey the other day.
  - That survey said
    - that 75% of Americans profess
      - that they believe in hell.
• They believe that there really will be
  o an eternal day of wrath,
    ▪ that there really is a place
  ▪ where an unquenchable fire burns.
• However, of those 75%
  o only 4% of those surveyed
    ▪ actually believed
      ▪ that there was any chance at all
        o that they could end up in hell.
• Think about it for a minute.
  o Three quarters of the American population
    ▪ believes that Hell is real
      ▪ but the vast majority of that group
        o thinks that they are safe
          ▪ from the everlasting terror of hell.
• That brings me to the most frightening story
  o that Jesus told about hell.

Matthew 7:21-23
21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?
23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

• The most horrific word in this passage isn’t hell;
  o it isn’t fire,
  o furnace,
  o everlasting,
  o gloom,
  o darkness,
  o worms,
  o or torment.
• In fact, none of these words occur in this passage.
  o The most frightening word is many.
• Jesus said, “Many will say to Me on that day,
  o ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name,
    ▪ and in Your name cast out demons,
      ▪ and in Your name perform many miracles?”
• This is judgment day.
  o This is the end.
    ▪ There are no second chances.

There Is Another Book
There is Another Book

This is the last peaceful breath
- that "many" will breathe
  - before they spend the rest of their life
    - in hell.

- Put yourself there for a second.
  - Fast-forward your life to that day.
    - Will you sound like the many
      - who call out in desperation,
        - "Lord, Lord, did I not do this and that
          - and some other thing in Your name?"

- How will Jesus respond to your laundry list
  - of Christian activities,
    - your Easter services,
    - Bible studies,
    - church potlucks,
    - financial giving
    - and summer-camp conversions?
  - Are you sure you're on the right side?
    - Are you sure that you are saved?
      - Is there any reservation at all in your life?

- Please understand my heart.
  - I am asking these questions
    - for the same reason
      - that Jesus gives the warning
        - It's the most loving thing I can do!

- "Many" will go to hell
  - even though they thought
    - they'd waltz into paradise.
      - Jesus will say,
        - "I never knew you; depart from me."
  - (The previous two paragraphs were copied from Francis Chan.)

- C.S. Lewis, said that there are
  - only two kinds of people in the end:
    - those who say to God,
      - "Thy will be done,'
    - and those to whom God says,
      - in the end,
        - "Thy will be done.'

- Understand this,
  - Hell is a terrible place,
    - but all who end up in Hell,
      - will ultimately have chosen to go there.

- They are the ones
  - who have rejected God's mercy,

There Is Another Book
who have spurned his great love,
  - who have, time after time,
    - turned a deaf ear to his earnest plea
      - and have ignored
        - the gentle voice of conviction
          - that speaks into their spirit
          - on a regular basis.
  - Those people will be cast
    - into the lake of fire.
      - And there will be no one to blame
        - But themselves.

CLOSE
  - However, that’s not the end of the story.
    - Thankfully, there is another book!
  - Beside the book that contains
    - the deeds of every man, woman and child,
      - God will open a second book,
        - the book that scripture calls
          - the book of life,
          - that great book of the Lamb.
  - That book contains the record
    - of the deeds of Heaven’s
      - only spotless lamb.
    - That book contains the record
      - of the only perfect, sinless, life
        - that was ever lived.
    - That book tells the story of how God,
      - forsaking his throne,
        - robed himself in flesh
          - and became a man.
    - How He faced the same
      - temptations that we face,
    - how He endured the same pain
      - and suffering that we endure
        - and how he emerged triumphant,
          - the Lamb who never yielded to sin.
  - Of all the records kept in God’s eternal book,
    - there is none that could escape
      - the judgment of Hell,
        - except this one perfect life.
  - But that is not all that this book contains.
    - Inscribed on the pages of that book
      - are the names of those
        - who are in Christ Jesus,

There Is Another Book
those who have shared
  • in his death, burial and resurrection,
  o those who belong to him.
• This is what scripture means
  o when it talks about being baptized
    • into Jesus Christ.
  o Our shady, tarnished past,
    • gets lost in the record
    o of his perfect sinless life.
    • Our deeds are washed away
      • by the blood of the Lamb.
  o Every repentent sin,
    • every thing that has been placed
      • under the blood of Jesus,
    • the whole record
      • is expunged by that blood
        o that washes whiter than snow.
• Thank God, there is another book.
  o The book of the lamb.
    • The book that declares
      • the incredible power of the blood of Jesus,
        o that precious blood
          • that covers a multitude of sins.
• Listen to me, this afternoon,
  o because I am quickly coming to a close.
• There is only one way
  o to escape the terror of hell.
• You can’t make yourself good enough,
  o you can’t expunge the record of your life.
• You may justify in your own mind,
  o you may reason it out
    • and convince yourself
      • that your reasons are good enough.
• But on that day
  o all the excuses in the world
    • will make no difference.
  o On that day, only one thing is going to matter:
    • Is your name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life?
• That’s a question you need
  o to answer for yourself this afternoon.
    • Before you walk out of this place,
      • you need to consider yourself.
• Is your name written in his book?

There Is Another Book
If not, let me admonish you,
  • just as Jesus admonished all
    • who would listen to him,

whatever it takes,
  • you must escape hell.

Let me tell you what it takes:
  • You must repent of your sins.
    • In the action of repentance
      • you share in the death of the lamb.
  • You must be baptized in Jesus name.
    • The scripture is plain,
      • when we are buried with him in baptism
        • we are baptized INTO Jesus Christ.
  • Finally, you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,
    • with the evidence of speaking in tongues,
      • just like the Bible says!

There is no other way!