

The reason we are spending time talking about what happens after we die and eternity is that:

**WHAT YOU BELIEVE ABOUT ETERNITY  
WILL DETERMINE HOW YOU LIVE TODAY!**

If you believe you are an accident of birth with no destiny or don't believe in God and eternity; you will just live for the pleasures of what this present world offers. But if you believe you were created by a good God and are alive for His glory, it will change the way you live in this present life and eternity.

Last week we talked about the soul & spirit separating from the body at death of both the Christian believer and the un-believer.

**For the believer in Christ** – separation from the body means to be in the presence of the Lord – 2Cor. 5:6, 8 “So we always have confidence. We know that while we live in this body, we are away from the Lord.

We really want to be away from this body and be at home with the Lord.”

**For the un-believer in Christ** – separation from the body means to be assigned to a region the Bible calls **Sheol** in the Hebrew Old Covenant and **Hades/Gehenna** in the New Covenant.

- **Sheol** – Psa. 16:10 “For You will not abandon me to **Sheol**, You will not let Your faithful One see the **Abyss/Pit**.”
- **Hades/Gehenna** – Acts 2:27 “You will not leave Me in the place of death [**Hades**], You will not let the body of Your Holy One rot in the grave.”

Today – I will be talking about the **Righteousness of a Holy God** and the **Indescribable Horrors of Hell**.

We have to talk about hell because if we don't accept the reality of hell, we will never appreciate the glory of the Gospel and the goodness of God revealed to us through Jesus Christ.

Barna Research survey stats reveal that 74% of Americans believe in **heaven**; but only 4 in 10 [nearly half] believe that those who do not know Christ as Lord will spend eternity in a place called hell.

## Who's going to hell?

- If you ask the general public, only ½ of 1% say that they are likely going to hell.
- This is saying that most people believe the only people that will go to hell are the really, really, really bad people: Murderers, child pedophiles, rapists, terrorists who kill in cold blood and such; but not me the average citizen or person.
- The general public believes hell is just for the very few, and most of us will be OK

Jesus said something about that view that implies otherwise:

Matt. 7:13-14 “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that **leads to destruction**, and **many enter through it**. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life **and only a few find it.**”

The devils strategy is:

- To attempt to convince people there is no hell.
- If there is, don't take it so seriously, and think that most folks would not be going there.
- Therefore, people would live however they wanted to, they would justify their sin, they would reject Christ, and they would live with no real fear of God.

If you are a follower of Christ, the devil would like to convince you there is no hell:

- So you would live a selfish life, idolize comfort and fall in love with this world, reject sacrifice for the sake of the Kingdom and avoid persecution, you would live for now and most likely not share your faith with people and have no real sense of spiritual urgency. **MUCH THE WAY SO MANY OF US LIVE TODAY!**

When hell is talked about, it always raises the question as to **Why Does Hell Exist?**

There are many answers to this question, but today, I'm going to give you two reasons Scripture says why hell exists:

### **1. Hell exists for God to deal righteously with satan:**

- The devil is not the harmless creature pictured in a red outfit, with horns, a pointed tail and jabbing folks with a pitchfork.

Scripture describes satan as the embodiment of all-evil:

- Behind every addiction is this spiritual enemy
- Behind all abuse
- Every type of fear
- All pain, all shame – it all comes from the prince of darkness and his cohorts – demons
- Jesus called him: the destroyer, the thief, the murderer – John 10:10.

- He is called the deceiver, the destroyer, the dark angel, your adversary/enemy, the tempter, the wicked one, the father of lies, the prince of darkness, the angel of the Abyss.
- He comes to steal your joy, to kill your faith, to destroy your health, to ruin you financially, to obliterate your marriage, to destroy and hurt your children.

Hell exists for God to deal righteously with the devil!

Rev. 20:10 “the devil who deceived them, was thrown into **the lake of burning sulfur**, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. **They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**”

## 2. Hell exists for God to deal righteously with un-believers:

Hell was never created for people in the beginning, because people were created to live with God without sin. But we know that story and how it went down.

Isa. 5:14 “Therefore hell has enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoices shall descend into it.”

Here is where the discussion of who goes to hell gets difficult for folks:

- People state that it’s not fair if good people go to hell!
  - My neighbor or work associate or family member is not a believer, but they are good people. They make me brownies, help take out my trash, they look out for me and do good things for others.
  - God couldn’t send good people to hell!

Have you ever considered that almost every person who is against the idea of a person going to hell gets indignant any time there is an injustice on earth?

They believe when there is an injustice, “**somebody should pay for it.**”

If someone is hurt, then someone should pay for that injustice!

Yet, the same people who are defenders of justice on earth often argue for a God of love, mercy, and grace without any justice!

**People today want to remake God in their own image to justify their own lifestyles.**

- They feel since God is love; He’s just going to give a little wink towards sin.
- Sure, He’s Holy and Righteous, but He understands my heart. Sure, He has standards, but He’s cool with my life as it is. He just looks the other way.

- Psa. 94:7 “While they say, “Yahweh does not see, and The God of Jacob does not pay attention.”

People have so distorted truth that they have failed to understand:

**IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO BE HOLY WITHOUT HIM BEING JUST!**

2Thess. 1:8-9 “**He [God] will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord.**”

**A New Covenant insight of what hell is like is found in the words of Jesus Himself:**

Another look at Luke 16:19-31

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day.

- Jesus’ audience understood this in a way we don’t today –
  - “This guy was Kardashian rich.”
  - Purple implied royalty – you had to be wealthy to afford clothing infused in purple dye. It was linen and it is said that one outfit in purple linen could have supported a person for one year.
- v. 20 “At his gate was a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and **longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table.**”
  - When you were as rich as this man was, you could afford to wipe the food from your hands using a loaf of bread.
  - The breadcrumbs were then gathered by the servants & tossed out for the dogs to eat as an act of generosity or mercy.
  - Lazarus is there asking to eat of the crumbs used to clean the rich man’s hands.

They both die:

v. 22 “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side/bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.”

v. 23 “In **Hades, where he was in torment**, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.”

- What is Hades? **Sheol** is Old Covenant; **Hades** is New Covenant term for the temporary place for the unrighteous dead after life on earth, but before the judgement received. It is not hell.
  - Rev. 20:14 “Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second/final death.”

## **In Hades, in torment:**

- There is some kind of chasm or gap that is un-crossable from either side.
- Abraham's bosom or side is the pleasant place to be, Hades is a place of torment.
- Rich man can **communicate** and calls out – "Send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool my tongue, **because I am in agony in this fire.**" There is pain.
- For the Christian, to be absent from the body was to be in Christ's presence of joy. **To be absent from the body for the unbeliever is the beginning of suffering.**
- **Hell is called:** the fiery furnace, burning sulfur, a place described where there is weeping, and gnashing of teeth **by Jesus** – Matt. 13:41-42 "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; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping/wailing and gnashing of teeth."
- Matt. 8:12, Matt 13:50; Matt 22:13; Matt 24:51; Matt 25:30; Luke 13:28 all mention Jesus' words on this tormenting place.

## **People joke about being in hell with all their friends and having one big eternal party time!**

Not so, according to Jesus words:

Although hell may be populated, it won't be a place where you have a social life.

- Rom. 2:8-9 "Woe to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, **indignation** and **wrath**, **tribulation** and **anguish**, upon every soul of man that does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."
- "**Wrath**" indicates the settle mind of God towards the persistently wicked.
- Indignation will come on the Day of Judgment.
- Tribulation is severe affliction – Matt. 13:21
- Anguish is the torturing confinement in a place without relief.

Matt. 25: 41, 46 Jesus said these words: "Then shall He say to them on the left hand, depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

Mark 9: 43-50 "...it is better for you to lose part of your body and have eternal life than to have two hands and go to hell. There the fire never stops. If your foot makes you sin, cut it off. It is better for you to lose part of your body and have eternal life than to have two feet and be thrown into hell... the worms that eat the people in hell never die. The fire there is never stopped."

Hell is **isolation/outer darkness** – no light, no people, no hope.

Matt. 8:12; Matt 22:13; Matt 25:30 – "bound and cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Hell is not a place of annihilation, but of eternal suffering, punishment and torment:

- The Bible and Jesus' words call it Eternal, everlasting.
- If it is eternal and everlasting for the righteous, it is also that for the wicked and deserving.
- Fairness demands that we make the joy of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked both be qualified by the same word – ETERNAL.

Rev. 14:10-11 Those who reject the Lord and His Christ

“...they too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of His wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night...”

**Hell is a non-stop, eternal fire, with tortuous suffering and un-ending pain!**

- Bible commentators call it: “The land of no more good.”  
No more beauty, no more laughter, no more peace, no more friendship, no more joy, no more hope, no more second chances.

vv. 27-28 This is why the rich man cries out to Abraham-

“I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so **that they will not come to this place of torment.**”

- Please do something to reach those who are still alive on earth, I love them and don't want them to come to this place of torment.

**There are four lessons from this story Jesus told from the other side:**

1. **The rich man was fully conscious and aware** – he had a memory of what was happening on earth, of what he did and didn't do.  
He was experiencing real – physical pain.  
The worst pain was beyond physical, it was the pain of regret; he couldn't go back and make it right.
2. **The rich man's eternal destiny was irrevocably fixed** –  
There was nothing he could do to change it.  
He didn't ask for it, he couldn't reverse anything, he just recognized what his eternity was going to be like for him.
3. **The rich man knew that his suffering was just** –

He complained about the pain, but he didn't complain about the justice.  
He said: "This hurts and its bad, but he didn't say it wasn't fair or just."

**4. The rich man begged and pleaded for someone to help his brothers know Jesus -**

"Please send someone to know the grace, the beauty, the mercy of God that is there for them so they won't have to suffer this place.

I thought I was ok in life and doing good, but I missed the real meaning and purpose of why I was alive.

I realize now I had the wrong perspective and I want others to know to change while they have the chance so they won't come to this place of suffering.

**Why are we talking about such a difficult – hard subject as hell?**

**BECAUSE WHAT YOU BELIEVE ABOUT ETERNITY  
IMPACTS HOW YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE TODAY**

The devil is convincing many that hell is not real, or not that big of a deal to worry about, nobody's really going there, we're all ok. Don't worry about hell.

**If he can convince you to believe that;**

- Then you will just easily live for today and not eternity.
- You will do whatever you want to do with no thought or restraints in your life and seek comfort and reject any sacrifice in life.
- You will justify your sin, reject Christ and His ways for your life.
- You will have no real fear of God.
- You would avoid persecution and fall in love with this world and believe this life is all that really matters. It's all about you and your happiness.
- You won't feel the urgency to share your faith in Christ with others.

Many believers and others today don't know if they want to serve a God that would send good people to hell.

- That is probably the fundamental breakdown of where our society is today.
- This is the number one root problem about our nature and God – God doesn't send good people to hell.

We have to understand:

- Inherently by nature, we are not good.

Rom. 3:23 "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.'

1John 1:10 "For if we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

- Well, I have a good heart!

No, we all have an evil heart - Jer. 17:9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

- We’ve all lied, cheated, stolen, hurt, gossiped, wounded others.

This goes against all our culture says about us today.

If we stood before a Holy God, we would fall on our faces in repentance and crying out for His mercy. We have all inherited an evil, sinful nature.

You don’t have to give your toddler to sin:

“Today we’re going to have selfish lessons. I’m going to take something from you and I want you to scream **MINE!**” No its our nature.

God is HOLY and Just and He can’t be Holy without being Just.

But, He must punish wrongdoing.

But – God is not just JUST, He is also LOVE - Love is not what He does, it is WHO HE IS!

John 3:16, 17 hear these scriptures from a Just and Holy and Loving God:

“For God so loved the world that He sent His only Begotten Son, that whoever believes on Him would not perish but have everlasting life.

God did not send Him to Judge the world guilty, but to save the world through Him.”

Rom. 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but **the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”

Rom. 5:8-9 “God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us **while we were still sinners.** And since we have been made right in God’s sight by the blood of Christ, He will certainly save us from God’s condemnation.”

Jesus’ sacrificial death paid the price for our rebellion against God, it satisfied God’s Justice while displaying His amazing grace so that we can now be His children, sons and Daughters.

He leaves the 99 to come after the one lost –

**HE’S COMING AFTER YOU NOT IN JUDGMENT, BUT IN LOVE!**

Jesus didn’t come for the perfect, but for the sinner; not the whole, but for the sick.

Not to just escape us from the horrors of hell, but to know the grace & love of God in this life and eternity.