

PLAYING WITH FIRE

Luke 16:19-31

December 21, 2008 pm

INTRODUCTION

- A. A recent survey showed that 89% of Americans believe there is a place called heaven. And 73% believe there's a place called hell. 76% say they are going to heaven but only 2% say they are bound for hell.
- B. One of Jesus' parables is about heaven and hell.
 - 1. Its called "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus".
 - 2. Its found in Luke 16:19-31.
 - 3. Some don't consider this a parable because it's the only one of Jesus' parables that mentions a real person ("Abraham").

I. WHAT DO WE SEE IN THIS PARABLE?

- A. First, we see the men's situations in life.
 - 1. The rich man was very "rich"--19
 - 2. Lazarus was very "poor"—20-21
- B. Second, we see the men's situations in death.
 - 1. They both, regardless of their situations, died—22.
 - 2. Lazarus went to "heaven"—v.22a.
 - 3. The rich man went to "hell"—23.
 - a. The rich man pleaded for relief—24-26.
 - b. The rich man also pleaded for his family—27-31.
 - c. The word "hell" is literally "hades" in Greek.
 - i. Some think hades is where all the dead go.
 - ii. Some think hades has two divisions....
"Paradise" for Christians.
"Torments" (KJV of verse 23) for the Lost.
 - iii. Some think following Jesus' Ascension, all Christians go to heaven, while the lost remain in "Torments" until judgment (Paul—"Absent from the body, present with the Lord").

II. WHAT DOES THIS PARABLE SAY TO US TODAY?

- A. First, it says that no one has an excuse for not being saved—v.29.
Romans 1:19-20 ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.
- B. Second, it says we all have ample evidence that the gospel is true—v.31.
- C. Third, it says that riches or the lack of riches are no indication of one's relationship with God.
- D. Fourth, it says that death is no respecter of persons.
Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 ¹ There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: ² a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,
- E. Fifth, it says Christians need not fear death—v.22a.
John 14:1-4 ¹ "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

- F. Sixth, it says that hell is a real place.
 - 1. Those there are conscious-v.23.
 - 2. Those there recognize others-v.24.
 - 3. Those there are concerned about others-v.28.

CONCLUSION

- A. Do you believe there is a heaven and a hell?
- B. If we truly believe this we should want everyone to go to heaven and no one to go to hell.