

Some Things In Torment That Should Be In The Church

Intro: The title of this lesson may sound odd. Our initial reaction may be that nothing in torment should be in the church. However, that is not true as we will see. Let us look at the historical account of the rich man and Lazarus as recorded in Luke 16:19-31; ¹⁹ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: ²⁰ And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, ²¹ And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; ²³ And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. ²⁴ And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. ²⁵ But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. ²⁶ And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. ²⁷ Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: ²⁸ For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. ²⁹ Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. ³⁰ And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. ³¹ And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." There are two prominent characters. The rich man: whose earthly pilgrimage was characterized by an abundance of life's blessings. Lazarus whose life on this earth was a poor miserable existence.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

A. Some consider this to be a parable.

1. If it is a parable, it would still teach the same lessons.
2. Those lessons should be accepted by all.
3. It does not meet the criteria for being a parable.
 - a. Parable means "to lay along beside."
 - b. The parables of our Lord were taking a proven fact accepted by all and laying it along side of something He intends to prove true.
 - c. This account was not a proven fact accepted by all.
 - (1) It was greatly disputed in Jesus' day.
 - (2) Consider the Pharisees as opposed to the Sadducees.
 - (3) It was not accepted by all.

B. There are things indicating it is a true historical account.

1. Jesus says, "a certain rich man," which gives us an indication that it is a historical account.
2. Jesus mentions a specific name, Lazarus.
 - a. There are no parables that give a specific name of an individual.
 - b. Thus, this gives certain proof it is not a parable but a true historical account.

II. SOME LESSONS

A. Reality of hell or torment.

1. There are many today who teach there is no place of eternal punishment.
 - a. The skepticism of our day causes many to ridicule the Bible and its teachings.
 - (1) Many have lost the respect God demands for His Word.
 - (2) One of the most often attacked areas is that of hell, torment, or eternal punishment.
 - b. Some in the Lord's church are now teaching there is no eternal punishment of the wicked.
2. The rich man:
 - a. He found out that torment was not a myth or fairy tale.
 - b. Torment was very real, dreadfully real.
3. We need to learn the same lesson the rich man learned the hard way and escape the torment of hell.
 - a. Some of what the Bible says regarding it:
 - (1) Mat. 13:40-42 ⁴⁰As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. ⁴¹The 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; ⁴²And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
 - (2) Mark 9:43-50 ⁴³And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: ⁴⁴Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. ⁴⁵And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: ⁴⁶Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. ⁴⁷And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: ⁴⁸Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. ⁴⁹For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. ⁵⁰Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."
 - (3) 2 The. 1:6-9 ⁶Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; ⁷And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, ⁸In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: ⁹Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"
 - (4) Rev. 20:10 ¹⁰And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."
 - (5) Rev. 21:8 ⁸But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
 - b. We escape it by our obedience to the Law of Christ.
 - (1) Rom. 6:17-18 ¹⁷But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. ¹⁸Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - (2) 1 Pet. 1:22 ²²Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:"

B. Consciousness does not end with this life.

1. Neither Lazarus nor the rich man was in a state of “soul-sleeping” or annihilation.
2. This doctrine originally came as a result of trying to escape the Bible’s doctrine of an eternal torment.
 - a. Both were in a conscious state when they died.
 - b. The rich man could remember
 - (1) Luke 16:25 ^{“25} But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”
 - (2) Remembering is something only a conscious person can do.
 - (3) These people could remember and rehears what they had done in life; Mat. 7:22 ^{“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?”

C. Torment begins at death.

1. The rich man saw Lazarus being blessed and felt his own torment; Luke 16:23-25 ^{“23} And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. ²⁴ And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. ²⁵ But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”
2. This torment took place while his brothers were still alive on this earth; Luke 16:27-28 ^{“27} Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house: ²⁸ For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.”
3. “Why then a judgment?”
 - a. The judgment is often misunderstood.
 - b. Judgment is used in different ways:
 - (1) Condemnation or punishment that one receives.
 - (2) The trial that we undergo.
 - (a) The trial concerning the final judgment is going on now.
 - (b) The way we live our life is the trial.
 - (3) The passing of sentence.
 - (a) This is the way the Bible uses the term relating to the Second Coming of Christ.
 - (b) Mat. 25:31-46 ^{“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. ³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: ³⁶ Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. ³⁷ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? ³⁸ When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? ³⁹ Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? ⁴⁰ And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these

my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. 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: ⁴² For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: ⁴³ I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. ⁴⁴ Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? ⁴⁵ Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. ⁴⁶ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

- (i) A separation is made between the righteous and the unrighteous.
- (ii) Then the passing of sentence.
 - a) God tells the righteous to enter into eternal life of joy and bliss.
 - b) God tells those who are unrighteous to enter into eternal torment.

D. A child of God may be eternally lost.

1. The rich man was a child of God.
 - a. His reference to Abraham as “father Abraham”; Luke 16:24 ⁴²⁴ “And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”
 - b. The Law of Moses was for his father’s house.
 - (1) In response to the rich man’s plea to send Lazarus, Abraham says they have Moses and the prophets.
 - (2) Luke 16:29 ⁴²⁹ “Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.”
 - c. We can reasonably conclude the rich man was an Israelite (a child of God).
 - (1) Yet he was lost.
 - (2) Therefore, a child of God can so sin as to be eternally lost.
2. The possibility of apostasy is taught many other places.
 - a. Simon the sorcerer.
 - (1) Acts 8:12-24 ⁴¹² “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ⁴¹³ Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. ⁴¹⁴ Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: ⁴¹⁵ Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: ⁴¹⁶ (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) ⁴¹⁷ Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. ⁴¹⁸ And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, ⁴¹⁹ Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. ⁴²⁰ But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. ⁴²¹ Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. ⁴²² Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. ⁴²³ For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and *in* the bond of iniquity. ⁴²⁴ Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.”

- (2) He obeyed the Gospel: believing and being baptized for the remission of his sins; Acts 8:12-13 ¹²“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.”
 - (3) He then sinned.
 - (a) He tried to buy the power of passing on miraculous powers to others.
 - (b) Acts 8:20-23 ²⁰But Peter said unto him, Thy money **perish with thee**, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. ²¹Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for **thy heart is not right in the sight of God**. ²²Repent therefore of this **thy wickedness**, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. ²³For I perceive that **thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.**”
 - (4) No one could use any stronger language to depict one in a lost condition.
 - (5) Without repentance, Simon would have been eternally lost.
- b. Paul.
- (1) He had to buffet his body daily lest he should be a castaway;
 - (a) 1 Cor. 9:27 ²⁷“But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”
 - (b) Castaway is from the Greek word ἄδοκιμος (*adokimos*) meaning “not standing the test, then unqualified, worthless, base” (BDAG); Thayer adds, “not approved...unfit.”
 - (2) Example of the Jews in 1 Cor. 10.
 - (a) Their saved condition; 1 Cor. 10:1-4 ¹Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; ²And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; ³And did all eat the same spiritual meat; ⁴And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.”
 - (b) God was not pleased with them because of their sin; 1 Cor. 10:5-10 ⁵But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. ⁶Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. ⁷Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. ⁸Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. ⁹Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. ¹⁰Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.”
 - (3) They serve as an example for us.
 - (a) 1 Cor. 10:11 ¹¹“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”
 - (b) With a conclusion; 1 Cor. 10:12 ¹²Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”
- c. Galatian brethren:
- (1) They were going back into Judaism.
 - (2) Gal. 5:4 ⁴“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

- d. 2 Pet. 2:20-22 ²⁰For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. ²¹For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. ²²But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”
- e. The entirety of the books of 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter and Revelation stand as a testament to the possibility of apostasy.
- f. Every warning, every encouragement to faithfulness is given because of the possibility of apostasy.

E. Our destiny is decided before death.

- 1. Some teach (and many would like to think) there is a second chance.
- 2. There is no second chance after death.
- 3. When death comes, our destiny is decided.
 - a. All our pleas beyond the grave, all the prayers on earth after our departure will avail nothing.
 - b. There is no baptism for the dead that will change anything for a departed person— as Mormons teach.
 - c. Heb. 9:27 ²⁷And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”
- 4. The only time to prepare is now; 2 Cor. 6:2 ²(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)”

III. SOME COMPARISONS MADE

A. A distinct separation between righteousness and wickedness.

- 1. Abraham told the rich man there was a great gulf that existed between Lazarus and the rich man.
 - a. Luke 16:26 ²⁶And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.”
 - b. The great gulf separated the righteous from the wicked.
- 2. This distinction and separation belongs in the Lord’s church.
 - a. Many (both members and preachers) close their eyes to that separation the Lord demands.
 - b. Our Lord intends that separation to be here as well as the hereafter.
- 3. There are only two classes of people.
 - a. Man often blurs this distinction but God does not.
 - b. Mat. 7:13-14 ¹³Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”
 - (1) There are only two ways.
 - (2) There are only two destinies.
 - c. Eph. 2:1 ¹And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;”
 - (1) We are either one whom God has quickened (made alive)

- (2) Or we are dead in trespasses and sins.
- d. Ephesians places an emphasis on being “in Christ” and the blessings of being such.
 - (1) One is either “in Christ” or not “in Christ.”
 - (2) There is no way one can be partially in Christ and partially out of Christ.
- e. 1 John 5:19 ¹⁹ “And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”
 - (1) We are either “of God”
 - (2) Or we are “in wickedness.”
- 4. God demands that His people recognize this separation.
 - a. 2 Cor. 6:14-18 ¹⁴ “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ¹⁷ Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, ¹⁸ And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”
 - b. We must separate ourselves from any and every type of wickedness.
 - (1) Necessary if God is going to be our spiritual Father and us to be His children.
 - (2) Tit. 2:11-12 ¹¹ “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, ¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;”
 - (a) Salvation demands we separate ourselves from ungodliness and worldly lust.
 - (b) We must deny those things, so we can live soberly, righteously, and godly.
 - (c) We cannot mix the two ways of life.
 - c. To practice pure religion.
 - (1) Jam. 1:27 ²⁷ “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.”
 - (2) If we fail to keep ourselves unspotted from the world (separated from it), then we do not practice pure religion and are defiled.
 - d. Must keep separated so we will not be contaminated by sinful actions and deeds; 1 Cor. 15:33 ³³ “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”
- 5. Failure to keep this separation as God intends:
 - a. Makes one to commit spiritual adultery; Jam. 4:4 ⁴ “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”
 - b. It is love of the world and is separated from God’s love; 1 John 2:15-17 ¹⁵ “Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”
 - c. Separates one from God.
 - (1) 2 John 9 ⁹ “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”

- (2) In not keeping that separation and tries to mix God's Word with man's, does not have God.
6. Many preachers need to learn this lesson.
 - a. They continue to fellowship those who are teaching false doctrine.
 - b. They will appear on lectureships and invite false teachers to be involved in works they are involved in.
 - c. They do the faithful an injustice by allowing their names to be associated with wickedness and give the appearance of endorsement (fellowship) with those who they should be separated from.
7. The church must maintain that separation between righteousness and unrighteousness.
 - a. 1 Cor. 5
 - (1) A man in the church at Corinth had committed fornication.
 - (2) Paul commanded the church to withdraw from him.
 - (3) Failure to maintain that separation would result in the influencing of others to sin; 1 Cor. 5:6 "Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"
 - (4) They were to purge out the sin; 1 Cor. 5:7 "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:"
 - (5) The separation was so complete, Christians were not to eat with the withdrawn from brother; 1 Cor. 5:11 "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."
 - b. 2 The. 3:6, 14 "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.... ¹⁴And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."
 - (1) We are to withdraw ourselves.
 - (2) Those who "walketh disorderly" are those who are walking out of step with God's Word.
 - (3) We are to note (distinguish by marking) that man so we will not have any association with him.
 - c. Rom. 16:17 "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."
8. This principle also allies to a congregation's relationship with another congregation.
 - a. When one congregation no longer walks according to the Truth, then other congregations must withdraw their fellowship from it.
 - b. The passages already discussed apply whether speaking of one individual or a congregation of individuals.
 - c. When a congregation stops "walking in the light" then God no longer has fellowship with them and neither can we.
 - (1) 1 John 1:5-7 "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the

light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

- (2) The church at Ephesus; Rev. 2:4-5 “⁴ Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

B. Fervent Prayer

1. Rich man in torment pleaded and prayed to “Father Abraham.”
 - a. Luke 16:24, 27 “²⁴ And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. ²⁵ But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. ²⁶ And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. ²⁷ Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house:”
 - b. He made two petitions:
 - (1) Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue.
 - (2) Send Lazarus to his father’s house to warn his brothers.
 - c. These might have been the most fervent prayers he had ever prayed.
 - (1) They were too late.
 - (2) His prayers were rejected.
2. The time for prayer is now in this life.
 - a. Prayer should be a vital part of the Christian’s life.
 - b. Prayer is for the Christian.
 - (1) John 9:31 “³¹ Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”
 - (2) God’s ears are open to the Christian’s prayers.
 - (a) 1 Pet. 3:12 “¹² For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.”
 - (b) Jam. 5:16 “¹⁶ Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
 - (3) Answered prayer is a privilege the Christian possesses.
 - (a) Mark. 11:24 “²⁴ Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.”
 - (b) 1 John 3:22 “²² And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”
 - (c) 1 John 5:14-15 “¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: ¹⁵ And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”
 - (d) His prayer avails; Jam. 5:16 “¹⁶ Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
 - (4) The person in the world does not have God as his Father.
 - (a) They have Satan as their spiritual father; John 8:44 “⁴⁴ Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

- (b) Only the Christian has God as His spiritual Father; Rom. 8:14 “¹⁴ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”
- c. Christians should take advantage of the privilege of prayer:
 - (1) Acts 2:42 “⁴² And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
 - (2) Rom. 12:12 “¹² Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;”
 - (3) 1 The. 5:17 “¹⁷ Pray without ceasing.”

C. A personal concern for the lost.

1. The rich man in torment did not want others to come to that place.
 - a. Luke 16:27-28 “²⁷ Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house: ²⁸ For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.”
 - b. When alive, he could have exerted his influence on his brethren and others.
 - c. While alive, he was not even interested in his own soul or others.
 - d. Only after going into torment did he become concerned about the souls of others and in particular his brethren.
 - e. He did not want others to suffer the eternal consequences he was having to endure.
 - f. This type of interest is needed in the church today.
2. We must first have an interest in our own soul.
 - a. The value of our soul; Mat. 16:26 “²⁶ For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
 - b. This should lead us to be obedient to Christ’s laws.
 - (1) Faith
 - (a) John 14:1 “¹ Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”
 - (b) John 8:24 “²⁴ I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.”
 - (2) Repentance of sins
 - (a) Luke 24:46-47 “⁴⁶ And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: ⁴⁷ And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
 - (b) Acts 17:30 “³⁰ And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:”
 - (3) Confession of our faith
 - (a) Rom. 10:9-10 “⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
 - (b) Acts 8:37 “³⁷ And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”
 - (4) Immersion in water for salvation
 - (a) Mark 16:16 “¹⁶ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - (b) Acts 2:38 “³⁸ Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

- (5) We cannot honestly encourage others to do this if we have not done so.
- c. Do we have an interest in escaping eternal punishment?
 - (1) We must put God in His rightful place.
 - (2) Mat. 6:33 ³³ “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”
 - (3) Many have allowed God to slip from that place of preeminence.
 - (a) We become enamored with the world and the things of the world.
 - (b) Making a living, entertainment, recreation, and such like have crowded out our love for God and the doing of His will.
- d. We need to contemplate:
 - (1) This world will end and all the things in it.
 - (2) The eternal nature of our soul.
- e. Those who have been worldly need to repent; Rev. 2:5 ⁵ “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”
- 3. The work of the church is saving souls.
 - a. The Great Commission
 - (1) Mat. 28:19-20 ¹⁹ “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”
 - (2) Mark 16:15-16 ¹⁵ “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - (3) The church sent Paul on his missionary journeys
 - (a) Acts 13:1-3 ¹ “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ³ And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.”
 - (b) Acts 15:40 ⁴⁰ “And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren [a meeting of the church for this purpose] unto the grace of God.”
 - b. Matthew’s account places this commission upon each individual Christian.
 - (1) What we see today is that the work is being left to a select few.
 - (2) Many seem to think they “pay the preacher” (or “personal work director”) to teach the lost.
 - (3) Many have lost the principle of a personal responsibility in teaching others and will find excuses to avoid doing so.
 - (4) Song: You Never Mentioned Him To Me.

Stanza 1: When in the better land before the bar we stand, how deeply grieved our souls will be; If any lost one there should cry in deep despair, “You never mentioned Him to me,”

Chorus: “You never mentioned Him to me, You helped me not the light to see; You met me day by day and know I was a stray, Yet never mentioned Him to me.”

Stanza 2: O let us spread the word where-e'er it may be heard, Help groping souls the light to see, That yonder none may say, "You showed me not the way. You never mentioned Him to me."

Stanza 3: A few sweet words may guide a lost one to His side, Or turn sad eyes on Calvary; So work as days go by, that yonder none may cry, "You never mentioned Him to me."

(5) Each one has a personal responsibility to all those we meet to teach them the Gospel.

c. We have a responsibility to the entire world.

(1) We might not be able to go to certain locations, yet we can by our contribution send men to those areas.

(2) Philippi had fellowship with Paul by providing financial support to him as he preached the Gospel.

(a) Phi. 1:5 ⁴⁵ "For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;"

(b) Phi. 4:14-18 ¹⁴ "Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. ¹⁵ Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. ¹⁶ For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. ¹⁷ Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. ¹⁸ But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God."

(3) So many congregations are so interested in providing creature comforts to ourselves that those seeking to go into the mission fields are often turned away for lack of support.

D. Full recognition of the power and authority of God's Word.

1. Abraham taught the rich man that God's message to his brethren was through Moses and the prophets.

a. The rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his brothers.

b. Luke 16:29-31 ²⁹ "Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. ³⁰ And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. ³¹ And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

c. Salvation would come through the teachings of Moses and the prophets.

(1) They were living under the Mosaic Dispensation.

(2) They were subject to the Law of Moses.

d. If they would not hear Moses and the prophets, they would not be convinced by others.

(1) Lazarus coming back from the dead would not persuade them.

(2) Angels, the Holy Spirit coming directly into the heart of someone will not persuade them.

(3) The only way to persuade people is through the Scriptures.

2. God's message today is through Christ and His apostles.

a. Heb. 1:1-2 ¹ "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;"

- b. John 12:48-50 ⁴⁸He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. ⁴⁹For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. ⁵⁰And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.”
- c. The Father gave Jesus a message; Jesus gave that same message to the apostles.
- (1) John 17:8, 14 ⁸For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.... ¹⁴I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”
- (2) The Holy Spirit guided the apostles:
- (a) In what they said.
- (i) Mark 13:11 ¹¹But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.”
- (ii) 1 Cor. 2:9-16 ⁹But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. ¹⁰But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. ¹¹For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. ¹²Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. ¹³Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. ¹⁶For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”
- (b) In what they wrote.
- (i) Eph. 3:3-5 ³How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, ⁴Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) ⁵Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;”
- (ii) 2 The. 2:15 ¹⁵Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”
- (3) That word is revealed to man in the Scriptures; 2 Tim. 3:16-17 ¹⁶All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
3. God’s power to save is in that Word.
- a. Rom. 1:16-17 ¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
- b. Jam. 1:21 ²¹Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

- c. The ability to save is not in the preacher and his eloquent speech, or some fake *miracle* worker and his fake *miracles*.
- 4. It is man's responsibility to proclaim that Word.
 - a. God has always used man to teach His message to mankind.
 - (1) 2 Cor. 4:7 ^{“7} But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”
 - (2) 2 Cor. 5:11 ^{“11} Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”
 - (3) 2 Tim. 2:2 ^{“2} And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”
 - (4) Paul also instructed Timothy what to teach; 2 Tim. 4:2 ^{“2} Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
 - b. God will not use angels, the Holy Spirit, nor Jesus Himself appearing to man to deliver His message.
- 5. We see the power and authority of that Word by realizing that it is that Word which will judge us in the last day.
 - a. John 12:48 ^{“48} He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”
 - b. Rev. 20:12 ^{“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.”
 - c. Rom. 2:16 ^{“16} In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”
- 6. That Word of God is all-authoritative.

Conclusion: One outstanding lesson to all: all **must** prepare for death and the eternity that follows. All are going to die (except those alive when Christ comes again). Heb. 9:27 ^{“27} And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:” 2 Sam. 14:14 ^{“14} For we must needs die, and *are* as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect *any* person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.”

Thus, we must prepare. Psa. 90:10, 12 ^{“10} The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. ¹¹ Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, *so is* thy wrath. ¹² So teach *us* to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.” Amos 4:12 ^{“12} Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: *and* because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.”

Are you prepared? If not, prepare now. Heaven is too sweet, and hell is too awful. Prepare so that you can spend an eternity with God in heaven.