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THE FIVE "Cs" OF HELL
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1
THE CERTAINTY OF HELL

"And it came to pass, that the rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lift up his
eyes, being in torments." Luke 16:22, 23.

I realize that the subject of hell is not at all popular nor pleasant to think about. For this reason many have tried to push all thoughts of hell out of their minds and we seldom hear anything said about it, except as the word is used by men who are given to profanity.

I am not preaching on hell because the subject is especially appealing to me; neither am I preaching on it just to be preaching something different. For some time I have felt that the Spirit of God was leading me to deliver a series of messages on this subject. I am preaching these messages, then, because I have felt the urge of the Spirit to do so. Secondly, because the Bible is very explicit as to the reality of hell. And thirdly, because men need to be warned of the wrath to come, and pointed to Christ as their only means of escape from a devil's hell.

If I am called and commissioned of God to preach His Word and then treat only that which is pleasant and cheerful, and fail to proclaim the whole counsel of God, I can expect to be found wanting in the day of reckoning. By the help of God it is my purpose to be true and faithful to both God and men.

My parents live in the country and I remember the time when the house was set on fire by sparks from the chimney. My parents knew nothing of the burning roof, which was soon to destroy the whole house, until some passers-by saw the burning roof, rushed to the door, and very excitedly and emphatically informed my parents that the house was on fire. Needless to say, there was some hurried activity in a short time and in a few minutes three or four people had the fire under control. I am sure my parents would not have appreciated it if those people who saw the house afire had come to the door and talked about unimportant matters and then finally said, "Now, we do not want to cause you any undue excitement, but if we are not mistaken, the operation of combustion is in the process of possible destruction on the roof of your house." Such a manner and method of informing you that your house is on fire would be ridiculous.

The Bible declares that all men are lost and bound for hell and unless saved by the precious blood of Christ, they are as sure of hell as the devil. In Revelation 20 we read that the devil is to be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever . . . and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:10, 15.

In view of the fact that there is a literal, burning, tormenting and eternal devil's hell into which men are to be cast if they are not saved; and in view of the fact that Christ died to save men from sin and hell, surely we would be very unfair to lost humanity if we failed to warn them of this truth and point them to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world and is able to save for both time and eternity.

SCRIPTURALLY

First, I assert on the authority of God's Word that there is a hell. If the Bible doesn't teach there is a hell, it doesn't teach anything. In the final analysis, it isn't what you or I think or say, but it is what God says. As for me, I prefer to believe the Bible with a simple faith, rather than accept the cunningly devised speculations of human ingenuity. I fear that most people who are attempting to set aside heaven's authority and heaven's revelation are doing so just because it does not voice

the sentiment of degraded human reasoning and because it does not permit free indulgence of sinful propensities. Any man, whoever he may be, who attempts to transcend the authority of God's Word, is going to get himself into a heap of trouble on the Judgment Day.

It is said that a student listened to his professor, with his penknife in his hand. Every time the professor said, "This does not belong to the original"; or something like that, he cut it out, and after about a year's instruction he walked over to the professor's house and handed him the two covers of the Bible and with the faith which was the result of a pious father's and mother's instruction said, "If I would have listened to you this is all I would have left." Thank God for the man, who in the face of unbelief, can say, "I know that my Redeemer lives," and who is convinced that Jesus knew what He was talking about when He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." I am going to ignore the infidel, the atheist, the agnostic, the skeptic, the modernist, the false cults, the free thinkers and take you directly to God's Word. Here is what it has to say about the certainty of hell -- "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Ps. 9:17.

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isaiah 33:14.

"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." Matt. 10:28.

This last verse which has been given to us by Jesus is a clear statement of the fact that even though we may suffer death at the hands of violent men, yet the soul survives that death. Accordingly, then, the destruction of the body is a matter of small importance in comparison with the casting of the soul into hell.

Again Jesus says, "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 wailing and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 13:41-42.

"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: And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25:41, 46.

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." II Thess. 1:7-9.

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." Rev. 14:10-11.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:14-15.

"But 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." Rev. 21:8.

This, my friend, is the Word of God, and as such, you must believe it. It may not correspond with your opinions but your opinions don't mean a thing when we come face to face with the unerring, unmistakable, unchangeable, declaration of the Holy Spirit.

Some may not care for a message of this type, but let me remind you, my dear friend, that you will care still less for the actual realities of hell. The only way for you to escape those realities is to confess your sins to Christ and ask Him to come into your life and make you His child.

Quite some time ago I preached a message on the subject of hell and someone sent me a letter stating that my conception of hell was entirely inconceivable and that they had to turn the radio off before I had completed the message. I want to say that I hate the thought of hell just as badly as any of you. I also hate the devil for ever having made it necessary, but my dislikes and hatreds can never argue hell and the devil out of existence. I can go further and say that I hate the thought of penitentiaries, and the electric chair; I hate the thought of adultery, theft, cruelty, murder and all the defiling, ruining and damning sins that send men to hell, but these are all hideous realities in spite of my hatred.

I say again that I know God has directed me to preach these messages and if the Holy Spirit can use them to awaken some of you and save you from a devil's hell, I will have been amply rewarded for obeying the leadings of the Spirit.

JUSTICE

In the second place, I want to say that justice declares the certainty of hell. Just as sure as the laws of our land demand punishment for a law-breaking, society-menacing criminal, just so, the law of God demands punishment for man's sin. Our government cannot be just and at the same time permit criminals to go on unpunished. Neither can God be just and permit God-hating, sin-loving, licentious and devil-obeying men to go to heaven. If God permitted such a thing, heaven would immediately be transformed into a hell.

As I have already stated, I would be glad if hell was not a necessity. I am sure that God wishes the same thing, for Peter says, "The Lord is longsuffering to us-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." II Peter 3:9. R. V.

God has made man in His own image, with a moral nature, with a capacity for self-determination, and the power of choice. Men can, if they so choose, take the endowments of God and choose sin instead of holiness; darkness instead of light; the devil instead of God; and

hell instead of heaven. The man, however, who chooses sin, Satan and hell, deliberately places himself on the debit side of God's ledger and forces justice to testify to him of the certainty of hell.

Sinner friend -- backslider friend, I plead with you today -- do not choose to reject the One who was wounded for your transgressions and bruised for your iniquities; and upon whom the chastisement of your peace was laid. I would be willing to die to save you if I could, but that is both impossible and unnecessary. The Lord Jesus did die to save you and if you will plead His blood and the mercy of God, you can be saved from your sins and from hell.

Justice, then, speaks loudly of the certainty of hell, because the righteous who have quit sin and obeyed the Gospel of Jesus Christ deserve to be separated from all that is sinful and unholy. There are, no doubt, some people you do not invite into your homes because you don't consider them fit associates for your virtuous wife and your pure daughter.

Just a few weeks ago a beggar came to our door begging a few coins and stayed by the outer railing of the porch and said, "Do not come near me; I have a terrible disease." I felt very peculiar and of course did not invite the man into the house to associate with my wife and three children. As a result of that incident, the truth was again forcibly impressed upon me that not only will the justice of God prohibit vile, unholy, sinful and reprobate men who have defied Him and despised the atonement and mocked decency, from going to heaven, but such individuals themselves will not want to go to heaven. They wouldn't feel at home in a holy and sinless atmosphere. Unredeemed, unregenerate, and sin-defiled characters in heaven would be a sin against justice and an insult to honor; consequently hell is a certainty.

TESTIMONY

The certainty of hell is unquestionably established by the testimony of the rich man and others. Jesus definitely states of the rich man that "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 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." Luke 16:23, 24.

If we cannot rely on the words of Jesus, then He was the greatest deceiver the world has ever known; but everyone of you will, without hesitation, accept the words of Jesus. Having accepted His words, we then unquestionably accept what He tells us concerning the state and testimony of the rich man.

Jesus says of this rich man that "he is in hell" and that in hell "he is tormented." .

The rich man cries for mercy; he calls for Lazarus that he may cool his parched tongue with a drop of water. And finally he wants his five brethren warned lest they also come into the same place of torment.

The testimony of Jesus and of this rich man should be sufficient to convince any man of the certainty of hell. It should also be ample warning to cause every sinner to flee from the wrath to come and accept Christ as his only hope of salvation.

Added to this, however, is the testimony of devils. Jesus in coming into the country of Gergesenes was met by two who were possessed with devils. The devils immediately recognized Jesus and began to cry out, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"

This is definite and unmistakable testimony from the devils that for them there is reserved an eternal and tormenting hell.

From the testimony of men, and especially dying men who have rejected God and the salvation of His Son, there is ample testimony of the certainty of hell.

The noted infidel Voltaire was met by one of his friends who said, "Well Voltaire, I have succeeded in getting rid of the idea of a hell." Voltaire immediately congratulated him and said, "My friend, you have succeeded where I have failed!"

D. L. Moody told of his being called to pray with a prominent business man. The man said, "I have thrown away my opportunity. I am lost and going to hell." And that afternoon the man sank lower and lower and kept repeating, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended and I am not saved." Again and again those standing around his bed heard him repeat those words. As the sun was sinking into the western sky his soul slipped out of his body into a dark, hopeless and irrecoverable eternity. As he was dying his loved ones heard him whispering and leaning over his body and listening carefully they heard him whisper, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

A young man who had stubbornly and despitefully rejected Christ and made light of the Bible and Christianity lay dying and cried out, "O, mother, save me! The devils are after me. The fires of hell are burning me. Mother, take me into your arms, and don't let them have me!" His mother placed her arms around her wayward son and tried to comfort him and point him to Christ, but all in vain. His spirit finally took its flight-however, not like that of Lazarus, which was borne on the wings of a convoy of angels into Abraham's bosom, but dragged by the fiends of hell to meet his fearful and eternal doom.

Listen, my friend, you can talk glibly about hell now, but I plead with you not to treat it as a light matter. You will regret it eternally if you do.

Everyone of you who are outside of Christ need to remember that this is the acceptable year of the Lord and a day of great mercy. Never was there a period when God employed so many means to bring men to salvation. I plead with you to accept Christ as your Saviour and escape the wrath of Almighty God.

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"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." Luke 16:23.

Last Sunday in preaching to you on the Certainty of Hell, I stated that the Bible is one indisputable fact of the Certainty of Hell.

Today as we speak to you on the Character of Hell, it will be important for us to again go to the Bible to learn what it has to say. All we know is what the Bible tells us and I am sure this is sufficient. All reasoning about the future outside of what the Bible has to say is mere guessing and is a waste of time. We know nothing about heaven, except what we find in the Bible; and we know nothing about hell but what the Bible tells us. When we come to deal with a subject like this, an ounce of God's revelation is worth tons of man's speculation.

There are some people who seemingly have been willing to accept only that part of the Bible which is the direct word of Jesus as He spoke while here on earth. Then, when it comes to the subject of hell, these people want to reject what Jesus has to say about that, but accept the remainder of His teachings.

It certainly is a peculiar thing, isn't it, that men have such a difficult time believing the Bible? The whole trouble is -- when the Bible touches and Uncovers man's sin, then he tries to get rid of, or argue around, God's truth instead of coming clean-cut to God and getting rid of his sin.

Having established the certainty of hell we now want to note its character.

A LITERAL HELL

What sort of a place is it? Is it a place of actual, literal, burning, tormenting, consuming, blazing fire? I believe it is! Because God says fire, I believe it to be fire.

Some have spent a lot of time arguing whether the narrative on the rich man and Lazarus was a parable. We must conclude that it is either history or a parable. If it is history, then it actually occurred; if a parable, then it will occur, for parables are intended to teach truth by illuminating it so that all may understand. Jesus does not state that it was a parable and I am sure it was not, for Jesus uses proper names and places which was not His practice in speaking parables.

The rich man was selfish in his living and planning; he was no doubt quite orthodox and very highly respected; he no doubt was envied by many in the community and made for himself a great name; but he neglected the all-important matter of his soul's salvation. He forgot God, prayer and the meditation of the Word, and lost his soul. According to Jesus' word he went to a literal, burning hell.

In other passages, Jesus affirms that hell is a place of literal torment. In Matt. 5:22 He says: "But I say unto you, that everyone who is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire." Revised Version.

In Mark 9:45-48 we again read where Jesus said: "And if thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is good for thee to enter into life halt, rather than having thy two feet to be cast into hell. And if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out: it is good for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Some will argue that here again the words of Jesus are figurative, but there is not the slightest suggestion that such is the case.

Dr. T_____ says, "If there is no literal hell, then our Lord Jesus was either a fool or a fraud. He certainly meant to convey the impression that there was a literal hell. There can be no doubt of that, if we go to His words to find the natural meaning of them. If there is no literal hell, then either Jesus thought there was one when there was not, in which case He was a fool; or else He knew that there was not, but tried to make men think that there was, in which case He. was a fraud."

I agree with Dr. Torrey that there is no other alternative, but either to believe that there is a literal hell, or else believe that Jesus of Nazareth, our Lord and Saviour, was a fool or a fraud. I want to testify personally that I know Jesus was not a fool or a fraud. I know that He is of God and has given us the very truth of the Father; therefore, there is a literal hell, for He said so.

LITERAL PUNISHMENT

Punishment in hell is going to be as literal as the act of sin. God permits earth pain, fire pain and disease pain to teach man that even though He is a loving, merciful God, yet He must mete out justice. Because of the sin of man, God is permitting sorrow, suffering, despair and brutal degeneracy to teach men that the same thing will be true in an intensified manner throughout eternity if there is failure to accept and serve Him in this life. What man has brought on himself here in this earth, the loving, merciful God is trying to avert and has made provisions to avert in eternity, but instead of man accepting God's provisions of salvation and His means of escape from the awful "second death" of "weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth," he goes right on in his own way and even blasphemes God.

There will be in hell the consciousness of personal soul lostness. Jesus said: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul."

The word lost carries indescribable horrors of thought. It is said that a man who was on the sinking Titanic fully expected to be left behind with the great vessel that was rapidly going to the bottom. He decided to take the chance of leaping into the icy water with his life preserver on and was finally picked up, almost frozen to death. He said the words kept ringing in his mind: "I am lost, O God, I am lost." He told how all the sins of his entire life seemed to sweep before him as a flash.

A child is lost in a dense forest and the entire neighborhood turns out for the search. An aviator is lost at sea and the agencies of the entire nation are enlisted in the search. A boy is lost in a cave and a half million dollars are spent trying to rescue him. O, how that word lost chills the heart. The poet says:

"As I near the shores of night,
Strange scenes come trembling on my sight --
A dreadful gulf, a lake of fire,
The essence of Jehovah's ire.
I'm LOST! How long my spirit cries?
A thunder from the pit replies --
To all eternity."

The thought of an actual, literal and fearfully conscious separation is also clearly revealed in Luke 16:23. Here it is definitely stated of the rich man that "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

In Matthew 25:31-33 Jesus very clearly sets forth the thought of eternal separation: "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: 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: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."

For all who reject God, it will mean to be separated from all that makes life worth living. Some of the things that add to our happiness and make life worthwhile are -- home, loved ones, music, friends, flowers, books, birds, forests and all that is lovely and beautiful, but in hell these will all be taken away. Hell will be characterized by gloom, hatred, darkness, remorse and punishment. Human relationships will be gone. Ties of love will be broken. Parents and children, husbands and wives, neighbors, and in some instances fellow churchmen, will meet in hell who have been deceived and seduced, and hatred in the extreme will rise up in every heart.

An active memory with its functions doubled and trebled will add to the awful torment of hell. Memory is unfathomable. We forget nothing. The deeds and words of life are stored away in the deep recesses of memory. When the voice of Abraham answered from heaven and said, "Son, remember," we can see that remembering will be one of the torments of hell. The rich man has been "remembering" in hell for nearly two thousand years. He remembers every sin he committed; his base ingratitude to God; and the opportunities of which he failed to take advantage. If many of you, listening to me, fail to accept Christ, you too will remember your sins, the beautiful songs you heard, your mother's prayers, your wife's tears, your pastor's entreaties and the messages which you have heard by means of the radio. Without a doubt some of you would sacrifice a great deal if you could forget some things which have taken place in your life. Your crooked business deals, your illegitimate business, your drunkenness, your gambling, your double and fast living, your lying, your hypocrisy -- all of the things of which you are guilty are goading your memory.

Listen, my friend, if you don't get your sins covered by the blood of Christ, they will haunt and torment you throughout the ceaseless ages and cycles of eternity. Hell is a place where men are conscious and are in full possession of their faculties of mind, memory and conscience.

Conscience will stir, accuse, blast and torment like a thousand vampires, leeches and scorpions. The howling, scenting and discerning hounds of the yesterdays will be on the track of

every sinner in hell. Remorse often drives men mad, insane or to suicide. The conscience can be smothered here, but not in hell. There will be no relief, no respite, no rest from the everlasting reminder of unforgiven sins and from the thought of rejecting Christ and dragging the blood of Jesus in the dirt. An awakened, quickened and outraged conscience will torment on and on and on.

All who go to hell will be intruders and usurpers. The devil and demons will have eternal contempt for them. They will know that all who come to the regions of the lost are blood-rejecters and mercy-insulters. We read that "some will be resurrected to shame and everlasting contempt." Shame means that a mistake has been made-a sin has been committed-and no word in our language is so withering as contempt. This means that there will be everlasting contempt of hissing, mocking and tormenting devils.

The character of hell as I have pictured it to you on the authority of God's Word may not be pleasing to the ear but no one need worry about hell if he accepts Christ and His blood for the atonement of sin. In every way our conception of hell should be controlled by the Bible. However, I want to remind you that practically every false religion has its hell and many of them are certainly hideous and horrible conceptions of punishment.

The old Jewish conception of hell as we get it from the Talmud tells us that there are seven abodes in hell; in each of these abodes there are 7,000 caverns; in each of these caverns there are 7,000 clefts; in each cleft there are 7,000 scorpions; each scorpion has 7,000 limbs; and each limb has 7,000 barrels of gall. You can imagine how this combination could be used to torture the damned. Seven rivers of such rank poison run through this hell that if one should touch one drop of water he would immediately burst. As I have said, there are almost as many unimaginable conceptions of hell as there are religions. Our only course of safety and sanity is to keep implicit faith in God's Word.

I have heard criticism of the way John Wesley, Charles Finney, Jonathan Edwards and other like men preached on hell, but I am sure that some of that old-fashioned, Holy Ghost-directed, and Bible-centered preaching on hell would be of great value to us in this refined and religiously mediocre generation. Men need to come once more to a vivid realization of the certainty of hell, if they reject the Lord Jesus Christ. They also need to know something of the horrible characteristics of this place where the devil, demons, fallen angels and Christ-rejecting men will spend eternity.

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

Finally, let me say that Jesus Christ not only told us that there is a literal hell where men will experience literal punishment, but He told us that this conscious, indescribable suffering of the impenitent will be endless. There are many who deny this. Some admit that suffering in hell may endure for a considerable period of time, but they hold that it will finally come to an end and that all men will ultimately come to repentance.

Again, I want to say that this question is too weighty and souls are too valuable to be fooling around with the opinions of men. We need to know the exact truth.

In Matthew 25:46 R. V. Jesus said: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life."

Here Jesus is speaking of the blessedness of the righteous and the punishment of wicked men. He uses the same word in conveying to our minds the duration of the eternal estate of both the righteous and the wicked. No one questions the endlessness of the Christian's estate in eternity.. Therefore, if we are to deal honestly with the words of Jesus, we must admit that He taught that the punishment of the unsaved is to be endless.

This would be sufficient to prove that punishment in hell is eternal, but let me call your attention to another passage or two. Turn to Revelation 14:9-11 where we read: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

Here we have the expression, "for ever and ever." This is also used in other passages and literally means, "Unto the ages of the ages." This represents not only years tumbling upon years, nor centuries tumbling upon centuries, but ages tumbling upon ages in endless procession. Greek scholars tell us that it is the strongest possible form of expression for absolute endlessness. The question is thus decisively settled that the conscious suffering of the persistently impenitent is absolutely endless.

In conclusion, permit me to call your attention to one more passage found in II Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Here we are told that the punishment of those that know not God and obey not the Gospel is "everlasting destruction." This carries the thought that the inhabitants of the lake of fire will consciously suffer without cessation for ever and ever.

My dear listener, in view of the fearful character of hell, I urge you to right now confess your sins to Christ and let Him come into your heart. Remember that "It is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment."

Once you lose your soul there is no way out of hell. God, Christ, The Holy Spirit, prayers, tears, time, or eternity will be unable to pluck your doomed soul from the depths of that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

Forever and ever will be the unceasing wail of that restless sea of fire. After you have been there ten million years and then look out toward the future, you will see eternity stretching on and on and on with absolutely no hope. Oh, my dear friend, away from Christ, why take such a risk

for one moment? Hell is too awful to take any chances on going there. There is only one sensible thing for you to do and that is accept Christ and do it now! May God help you to do it right now.

* * * * *

3

THE CROWDS OF HELL

"But 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." Rev. 21:8.

Without a doubt there will be multitudes of people who are planning to go to heaven, but will never make it. Instead, they will go to a hell of torment. It is sad, nevertheless true, that thousands of good people, moral people, church members, even church workers; yea, even prophets, priests and preachers, will find themselves in hell instead of heaven because they rejected the only means of salvation.

Our text gives us the answer as to who is going to be in hell. Regardless of race, standing, condition, or any other thing, those whose names are not written in the Book of Life are candidates and subjects for a devil's hell. Regardless of the opinion you have of yourself; regardless of the opinion of others; regardless of your social, financial, political or religious standing, you will find yourself in the abyss of eternal destruction unless the penetrating eye of God approves the condition and actions of your heart and life.

Here in this chapter from which we have taken our text, the Holy Spirit directed John to speak of the new heaven and the new earth. Some of the characteristics of the new heaven and new earth are then depicted. God will dwell with the redeemed; every tear will be wiped away by God.

The world today is being bathed in tears. Human power and interest come far short of binding up broken hearts, but there is a day coming when God will turn tears and trials into triumphs. Many of you have had to say good-bye to your sons, husbands and sweethearts, and you have shed many tears. Some of you have had death rob your home of a precious loved one, but God says here, that there shall be no more death. Our church yards and highways are lined with cemeteries and depositories for the dead. Everywhere the stone-cutter is kept busy chiseling epitaphs. Death is everywhere, and even we ourselves are only waiting, not knowing what day or hour the death angel will rap at our door, but God says there is a world where there will be no more death. "It will be swallowed up in victory." No more death-bed scenes! No more graves shall be dug!

He states further that sorrow and crying will have passed away. God will see to it that everything which causes sorrow and crying will be banished. The killing, wilting frosts of a sinful and sinning world will nevermore be able to settle on the growing plants and blooming flowers of Christian experience and human peace. The cries of pain and passion, fear and strife, wrong and oppression, want and hunger, harm and danger; the cry of blasted hopes and of death-in fact, all of

the varied and countless numbers of cries and distresses will be forever banished. The victorious triumphs and the heavenly hallelujahs will forever silence the woes of a past, sinful world.

Finally, he says there will be no more pain. All internal pain, weariness, trouble and woe, and all the outward things which make up the mighty mountains of human misery will have passed away. As John says, "the former things have passed away."

And now notice the wonderful words which the Holy Spirit directs him to write: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

What wonderful, strengthening and cheering words these are. Every sinner should be grateful that it is possible to be saved and be an overcomer. Every saint should gladly and freely take advantage of the provisions God has made for us to be overcomers. To those who overcome, the Almighty declares that He will be their God and they shall be His sons. I am sure no higher privilege could ever be offered or granted to any human being. To you who know God, I want to encourage you to press on-ultimate and complete victory will come to every child of God. The promises of God are sufficiently full and complete to tide you over every difficulty and every trial.

We now come to our text which is a striking contrast to all that God has said in the first seven verses of this chapter. Even though God loves men and has made such wonderful provisions for overcoming sin and Satan, He at the same time never foregoes His character as Judge of evil and of evil men. Here God specifies eight classes "who will have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."

FEARFUL

First, He mentions the fearful. They were afraid to confess Christ and identify themselves with the Gospel. Many today are ashamed to take a stand for Christ. Because of school chums and buddies, because of business associates, because of social affiliations, because of ungodly, sneering and worldly-minded neighbors or church members, many do not accept Christ, and many others who at one time accepted Him have failed to maintain faith in God and in Christ.

When God, by the instrumentality of Gideon, was selecting an army to defeat Israel's foes, He said to Gideon: "Go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return, and depart early from Mount Gilead: and there returned of the people twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand." Judges 7:3.

Israel's enemy had one hundred and thirty-five thousand men and here God reduces Israel's army to ten thousand, simply because there were many who were fearful. The presence of faint-hearted men in army is a source of weakness. Not only are the faint-hearted useless, but they cause others to become fearful.

There have been many people who have stood on the Lord's side, but who later have been discovered to be ashamed of Christ and the Gospel. They had not counted the cost. I wonder how many of you, through fear of losing your life, your property, your popularity, your ministerial

position, your illegitimate business, or your social standing, have failed to live for God and be true to His cause? If this is true, I want to remind you that God is grieved with your cowardice and states in the text that your lot will be with those who will be cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. I fear that many so-called Christian professors today are classified with those described in John 12:42, 43: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

It is sad, nevertheless true, that there are a great number who can be thus classified today as loving the praise of men more than the praise of God. It would be well for such people to give thoughtful consideration to the words of Jesus when He says: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." Mark 8:38.

If many of you ever expect to get to heaven and have Jesus say to you, "Well done thou good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," it will be necessary for you to be able to say with Peter: "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." I Peter 3:14, 15.

UNBELIEVING

The second class mentioned in the text that will be cast into the lake of fire is the unbelieving. This group is the most numerous of any, and found among all classes and ranks of men. They set at naught the testimonies of God's Word, they scorn and neglect the matter of trusting Christ for their salvation. Full proof has been given that there is no other way to be saved except by repentance and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, but unbelievers continue to resist in spite of God's manifestations and revelations.

God has conditioned salvation upon faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." We are to believe, not in a preacher, not in a church, not in a denomination, but in a Person. This person is our prophet, priest and king. He is possessed of saving and keeping power. He knows the sinner's needs, the sinner's state and the sinner's danger. He is the sinner's only hope and way of salvation. It is this Christ of God upon whom you are to believe. It is His promises you are to accept. It is His power upon which you must rely. If He had ever failed one person, you would have a right to question His power and ability to meet your need, but He has never failed to meet the needs of those who have come to Him.

God has made the plan of salvation as simple as possible. Man is born a sinner; his heart is wrong; he cannot save himself; he is already condemned. The thing he must do is simply trust the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not mean simply believing there is a God or a Saviour. Devils believe and tremble. You must believe His Word, that unless you repent, you will perish. Then, you must depend upon Him, risk Him, trust Him to save you and when you do, I can guarantee that your need will be met. Since this is true, and there is no other way to be saved, our text is right when it says all unbelievers will be cast into -the lake of fire.

ABOMINABLE

God also says that the abominable will be banished from His presence. They have been morally, religiously, and physically filthy. They have degraded themselves with their uncleanness, beastiality, and abominations. They have permitted their sinful propensities and lusts to control them and have lived only in the realm of the physical.

We are certainly living in a day of vile imaginations and abominations. Multitudes are morally vile and degraded. Free-love advocates and the prevalence of divorces are defiling, weakening and damning millions, and blasting thousands of homes. Paul said of some in his day: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus 1:16.

As to entering heaven God says: "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Rev. 21:27.

MURDERERS

Murderers who have not repented will be cast into hell. Jesus has reminded us that a man is not only a murderer by outward act, but also by inward malice. It is a serious thing to meddle with that which God only can give -- namely, human life. John has told us explicitly that: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." I John 3:15.

Eternal life is the result of the great God of love dwelling in our hearts. If there is hatred and malice in the heart, this is indisputable evidence that God is not in the heart and such a one can never inhabit heaven unless changed and transformed by the power of God.

As a pastor I have found some people who would throw up their hands in horror at cold-blooded murder, but at the same time their hearts were filled with envy, jealousy and hatred because of a disagreement with a neighbor, fellow business man and sometimes a fellow church member. If some people want to go to heaven, they will do well to get on their knees and ask God to search and cleanse their hearts.

WHOREMONGERS

Unrepentant whoremongers will also have to endure the pangs and torments of a hot, sweltering and eternal devil's hell. Here in this world they gave themselves to the blasting of lives, homes, communities and nations, but they will have eternity to remember and regret their awful deeds and to be indescribably punished for the same.

Fornication and adultery has come to be tragically prevalent. The ruin of virtue is regarded lightly, and fornicators are received into society, even though their sin is known, while the poor victims are outcasts from respectability. But God in our text reverses the judgment of man, and

fornicators shall be irrecoverably consigned by the God of righteousness to the lake of fire. May God help all who are disregarding and breaking God's law to repent before it is eternally too late.

SORCERERS

Next in line to be cast in hell are the scorcerers. This is the class who profess intercourse with spirits and those who are practitioners in the black arts, conjurers, necromancers, and seekers and exercisers of powers, such as God has forbidden. Death was the appointed penalty under the law for those who practiced intercourse with spirits. The lake of fire is God's appointed doom for all who practice the various forms of sorcery.

IDOLATERS

Idolators will not escape the hell where there is weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. Countless millions of heathen in the past, present and future who have bowed down to idol gods and have failed to worship and serve the God of the universe and the God of Calvary, will be turned over to eternal judgment. May God somehow speed the day when not only the pagan worshippers of darkened lands will worship Christ, but when the pagan and idol worshippers of America will be brought in loving admiration and in heart worship before the Christ of God.

We have also witnessed increasing numbers of people becoming worshippers of pleasure, mammon, selfishness and covetousness. Money, pleasure, position, fame, popularity, and countless other things are occupying the place God should have in the heart. Paul describes them as "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God," and states that their prevalence will be one evidence of the last days.

LIARS

The last class mentioned in the text to have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone are the liars. He says nothing about white or black lies. He does not distinguish or make any allowance for what is sometimes called social lies, political lies or religious lies. He just says all liars. The statement is very inclusive and all will do well to ponder it carefully.

A lie, of course, is to speak contrary to the truth when the truth is known. There have also been cases where the truth has been spoken in such a way that deception was intended. If you are successful in causing someone to believe that a thing is different from what it really is, God looks upon you as a liar.

I repeat that liars of every kind, degree, and character have their avenging answer in that eternal abode of misery to which everything and everyone contrary to the character of God is consigned.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me say that if you will study these eight classes carefully, you will find that they include everything in the catalogue of sin.

All who are sinners, thus guilty of transgressing God's law, and who have not been born again, will be "Cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Rev. 20:10.

I want you to note when the devil and sinners are mentioned here that "fire and brimstone" are added. Then God adds that "This is the second death." The lake of fire in its never-ending agony, then, is the second death.

My friends, I have preached you God's message. warn you to turn to Christ and flee the wrath to come. If you are not a child of God, you are in danger, mortal, terrible, eternal danger. While the gates of mercy are ajar, while the arms of Christ are outstretched, and while the blood still avails, I entreat you to come to Christ. May God bless and help you.

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4

THE CRIES OF HELL

"He cried." Luke 16:24.

I have always been forcefully impressed with the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:13, 14 where He says: "Enter 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: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."

It is sad, nevertheless true, that far more people die unsaved and go to hell than there are Christians who die and go to heaven. Jesus is unmistakably clear on this point in the verses which I have just given you.

The gate to hell is wide. The road to hell is broad. Many go in thereat! The gate of life is strait, that is, tight, and the way is narrow; and Jesus says there are few that find it! We naturally conclude, then, that a majority of people are being deceived by Satan and are going to hell. This ought to stir every sinner and backslider and cause him to turn from sin and accept Christ.

I am sure that most people in hell did not expect to go there. I am sure the rich man didn't expect to go there. He seemed to be surprised to find himself wrapped in an eternally unquenchable flame. I want to remind you, my friend, that your good intentions or resolutions will never get you to heaven. If you reject Christ and refuse to repent and have His blood applied to your heart, you need not be surprised if, one of these days, you wake up in hell.

It is to be noted that the torments in hell are evidently one of the principal points of this sixteenth chapter of Luke. The rich man states that he is "tormented in this flame," and then we hear his cries which are indeed sad, but unavailing.

CRY FOR MERCY

First, we hear him cry, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me." While in this world, he lived a self-centered life. Now we see him in hell, not enjoying the comforts that earthly riches can bring to him, but enduring the tortures of the regions of the lost. His own pain is now so frightful that if he could only get a bit of relief it would seem like heaven.

This rich man is not calling upon God for mercy, but he is appealing to Father Abraham. He realizes the uselessness of calling upon God for mercy. During his life here upon this earth God repeatedly offered him mercy, but he refused it.

Mercy's door is ajar and God has been striving with many of you who are listening to me, but you are spurning and disregarding God and His love. I warn you -- there is a time coming when you would give much if you had heeded the Spirit's wooings! Today mercy's door is ajar and you can be saved, but there is a time when it will be irrevocable justice.

Nearly two thousand years ago God sent forth His Son to suffer and die in the place of poor, wretched, vile and lost sinners. He was mocked, ridiculed, scorned, despised, persecuted, beaten, spit upon and crucified. All of this that you and I might be saved and escape the wrath of an angry God. Jesus took our sins and bare them in His own body on the cruel tree. He was buried, but thank God, He rose again and has been demonstrating His ability to save to the uttermost all who will come unto Him. In never a case has He failed! He gives grace for sin, fullness for poverty, peace for turmoil, power for weakness, health for disease, good measure, pressed down, running over, He constantly bestows upon those who by faith claim Him as their Savior. This blood-stained, buried, resurrected and ascended Savior now offers mercy to every sinner; however, for the rich man and all who die unsaved, there is no mercy. It is, and will continue to be, unspotted justice. In hell the hour for prayer, penitence, faith, conversion, and grace will be past. Someone says, "If I can get justice, that is all I want."

No, my friend, you are absolutely and dreadfully wrong. You do not want justice. God save us from that! What you and I want is mercy and all we can get. Were any of us to obtain justice, the endless torments of a devil's hell would be our due and our portion. Justice is wrath, death and damnation. Mercy is our hope, our plea and our prayer; but when you have crossed the line of worlds there will be no more opportunity to make adjustments with God. The Bible says: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

I call upon you to let Christ come into your heart. Let His blood wash away your sins. Let Him write your name in the book of life. Accept His love and mercy now and He will be your advocate at the bar of eternity. Remember, there is no mercy in hell. No father or mother, brother or sister, friend or neighbor, pastor or missionary; and not even the Christ of God will be able to extend mercy to you.

CRY FOR WATER

Secondly, we hear this rich man crying for water. "He cried and said, Father Abraham send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Luke 16:24.

While this rich man was here in this world he no doubt had costly wines-the very best that was available. By pushing a button he no doubt could call a servant who would bring him a cool, fresh, sparkling glass of water. Now the tables are turned and in hell he is calling for only one drop of water, but this is refused him. He is not asking for a cup of water but only for a drop. God, the church and Christians are despised, but there is a time coming when any sinner, regardless of his station or position in life, would be only too glad to get a drop of water from the tip of a beggar's finger. Hell will be filled with souls crying for relief from their awful tortures, but their cries will all be in vain.

They tell us that ninety per cent of the human body is water. It is a well-known fact that we can do without food for many days, but it is also well-known that we can get along without water for only a few days.

During the first world war an English Lieutenant wrote an account of the battle of the Dardanelles. The title of the article in the American Magazine was, "A Thousand Dollars for a Drop." He stated that after the great English dreadnoughts opened fire upon the Turkish forts, they returned the fire. On the opposite side of the battleships from the forts, the English let down their men in life boats and in this way they reached shore. As soon as a sufficient force had landed, they undertook to storm the forts, but the Turks were so well entrenched, they mowed them down like grass. The English saw that it was futile to sacrifice their men in this way and attempted to call them back. But by that time the Turks were enraged and had such good aim that these marines were unable to reach their ships in safety. It was only a little while until their canteens were dry, and now they tried to slake their thirst by drinking sea water. This they could not endure. They prostrated themselves on the ground and put their parched tongues upon the damp sand, but this also had too much salt. They bit their wrists and sucked their own blood. Some chewed their shoe leather for a little moisture. The one great and important cry was: "Water! Water! Water! Give me a drop! A thousand dollars for a drop!"

Many of them went mad and blew their brains out. Others called for water until they fainted. Those who still had a few drops left, in order to show their generosity, permitted their fellow comrades each to place his tongue upon the mouth of the canteen and get one drop. When one had but a few drops left, he dared not trust his half-crazed brother, but would put his own finger upon the mouth of his canteen, and with a little moisture, touch the parched tongue.

This correspondent, though not a Christian, said that the sight and groans were so awful that if hell could be worse, "Good Lord, save me from hell!"

I realize that these horrors of war are terrible to think about, but these things are very mild in comparison to what men will be called upon to endure in a devil's hell.

We have no right to deny or discredit the words of Jesus. Hell is a place where Christ-rejecters will be placed for all eternity and is a place of literal, actual pain of soul, mind

and body. According to Jesus' words, they are in literal fire and call for water. You may call this a parable, and symbolic and mythical, but Jesus is no myth, nor symbol or parable. He is the Judge of all the earth. In speaking to us concerning eternal realities, He has used clear, plain words such as hell, fire, flame, etc., and we will do well to take heed to His message to us.

Many today are doing as this rich man-striving to secure and enjoy the good things of earth. Many set their hearts on these things and they get them. For forty, sixty, eighty years they live only for the present and in the realm of the physical, and then take hell as their eternal choice. Here in this world God, Christian love, and duty and holiness are forgotten. Card parties, movies, prize-fights, cocktail parties, etc., take their time for the present, but eternity will be spent in weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth and calling for relief. No popular and sweet singing modernistic preachers will be able to smooth the rough and horrid pangs of memory over your sins. The lives you have degraded and wrecked, the virtue you have robbed, the victims you have cheated, the Sabbaths you have desecrated, the sins you have covered and the hypocritical life you have lived will all rise to torment your poor lost, Christ rejecting soul.

The torment of hell's unslaked thirst, unsatisfied lust and hungry hatred will burn on forever. Hell is fever, and fever is fire, and fire is torment, and the torment is forever. Men are dying every day with sin's fiery fever and they will burn with rage, lust, hatred, war, liquor and all manner of sin throughout the ceaseless ages and eons of eternity.

With such a hell facing sinners, do you wonder that we are doing all we can to warn men to flee from the wrath to come? By God's help, and through your prayers, I want to do all I can to convince men of the horrors of hell, the beauties of heaven and the love of Christ that is shed abroad for their salvation.

How profoundly moved every Christian ought to be when he thinks of hell and the millions who go there. I don't wonder that modern Christians and churches have lost their burden and passion for souls and that old-fashioned revivals are considered nonessential. They have forgotten the Bible teaching on hell. Preachers have tried to explain away the torments of the damned! Surely there should be an irresistible, compelling motive for prayer, preaching and soulwinning, when we know that every responsible human being who leaves this world without a definite change of heart immediately lifts his eyes in hell, tormented in an unquenchable flame.

This motive of saving sinners from hell moved Paul. He was troubled because his kinsmen were in danger of hell. He realized the doom of a soul. It never left him. Day after day he toiled, worked, prayed, wept and preached. The gospel he had was the same as ours, but I am fearful that our concern for the souls of men is not as great as his—at least not as great as it should be. May God help everyone of us as Christians to have a holy fear concerning hell and do our best to rescue souls from this eternal night of despair.

CRY OF WARNING

Third, there is the cry of warning that comes from those who are eternally lost. The rich man pleads that Lazarus be sent to warn his five brethren. Hear him as he says: "I pray thee

therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Luke 16:27, 28.

This, as I have already stated, should be a warning to every Christian to not only live a holy, consistent Christian life, but also to work, pray and sacrifice in order to warn poor, lost sinners of their desperate plight and their fearful destiny.

Some might feel that if it were possible to release sinners from hell, they would be the most effective evangelists, but it is too late. They have missed their chance to be saved and to help their friends find God. While he was here upon this earth with his brothers about him was the time for the rich man to have been concerned about their souls.

I am sure the words spoken to this rich man were very true: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them ... If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16: 29, 31. I have had people say to me that if some outstanding miracle would be performed, they would believe, but I am sure such is not the case. I know of several who promised God, on what seemed to be a deathbed, that if He would spare them and raise them up, they would serve Him, but after they were restored they failed to keep their vows.

There are too many people yet today who only want to follow Jesus for the loaves and fishes. What is needed is a real regeneration of heart and a thorough conversion of life and conduct. That in itself will be a miracle of the highest magnitude and I know God will perform it for you if you will permit Him to do so.

If God's Word as we now have it; if the convicting power of the Holy Spirit; if the preaching of the Word, the singing of beautiful songs; if the incidents of providence and the prayers of godly fathers and mothers and of the saints of the ages do not bring you to Christ, then I know of nothing that will move you. My prayer is that God will use this as another warning and that you will immediately and wholeheartedly turn to the Christ who loves you and wants to save you for time and eternity.

Many of you are treading on the thin, rotten boards of life that any minute may crack and plunge you into the horror of an irrecoverable eternity. You are suspended, as it were, over the very brink of hell on the brittle thread of uncertainty. You are standing on the shores of eternal damnation about to be engulfed by the awful and bottomless gulf of despair. You are in awful, mortal, terrible and eternal danger and I warn you with all of my powers to flee to Christ while the gates of mercy are ajar; while the arms of Christ are still outstretched; and while the blood still avails to wash your sins away.

This rich man had things very comfortable in this life. He was no doubt quite well respected. His pastor no doubt preached a beautiful sermon which was full of poetry, flowers and flattery. The organist played beautiful music and the singers sang beautiful songs, but all the while Jesus tells us that he was in hell crying for mercy, water, and for his five brothers to be warned lest they too should land in hell.

My friend, I plead with you -- do not go on without Christ. You can never say that you were not warned of eternal wrath. Once more, as God has helped me, I have placed the red lantern across your pathway on your downward road to hell. You will stand in the presence of Christ, speechless. If the blood is not applied to your soul He will say of you as He said to the man who came to the marriage of the king's son without the wedding garment: "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." Matt. 22:13.

In closing, I wish to call your attention to what the poet has to say about hell.

HELL! the prison house of despair,
Here are some things that will not be there:
No flowers will bloom on the, banks of HELL,
No beauties of nature, we love so well;
No comforts of home, music and song,
No friendship or joy will be found in that throng:
No children to brighten that long dreary night;
No love or peace, not one ray of light;
No blood-washed soul with face beaming bright;
No loving smile in that region of night;
No mercy, no pity, pardon, nor grace,
No water, O God, what a terrible place!
The pangs of the lost no human can tell,
Not one moment's ease, there is no rest in HELL!
HELL! the prison house of despair,
Here are some things that will be there:
Fire and brimstone are there, we know,
For God in His Word hath told us so;
Memory, remorse, suffering and pain,
Weeping and wailing, but all in vain;
Blasphemers, swearers, haters of God,
Sinners, who refused to be washed in the Blood;
Lovers of pleasure more than of God,
Christ-rejecters while here on earth trod;
Murderers, gamblers, drunkards and liars,
Will have their part in the lake of fire;
The filthy, the vile, the cruel and mean,
What a horrible mob in Hell will be seen!
Yea, more than humans on earth can tell,
Are the torments and woes of ETERNAL HELL!

May God help you to realize that it is your own character that will seal your eternal destiny. You make your own character, for good or for evil, and forever!

* * * * *

CHRIST SAVES FROM HELL

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."
I Thess. 5:9.

For the past four weeks I have been speaking to you on the subject of hell. I have tried to be sane, sound and scriptural. I want to thank God for His .direction, inspiration and instruction that He has given. I am also thankful for your interest and for praying that God would bless His Word.

I am sure we all realize that we have been dealing with the inescapable, unalterable teaching of God's Word. We have found that all who go out of this world without having accepted Jesus Christ, will spend eternity in hell-in a hell of unutterable, conscious anguish.

When we come to see the appalling nature of sin, and the appalling sinfulness of God-rejecting men in trampling under foot God's mercy and rejecting God's glorious Son, we begin to realize that the Bible conception of sin is reasonable.

I am sure it is the shallow views of sin, of God's holiness and of the unspeakable sacrifice of Christ that lie at the bottom of the weak theories of the doom of impenitent sinners. When men see sin in all its hideousness and enormity; when they see the holiness of God in its perfection; and when they begin to have proper conceptions of Jesus Christ, nothing but justice will be satisfactory. When we have proper conceptions of God, the Holy Spirit and the Son; when we have proper conceptions of sin, Satan and the forces of evil, it is very easy to understand why those who persist in the choice of sin, who love darkness rather than light and who persist in the rejection of the Son of God, shall endure everlasting anguish.

We know that men have sinned and are sinners. We also know that in spite of all this, God has extended mercy in the gift of His Son whereby men can be saved. If, in spite of this, men still reject and despise God's mercy and trample God's Son under foot, they cannot accuse God of being unjust if they find themselves consigned to everlasting torment. Men then must say, "True and righteous are thy judgments, O Lord."

Before coming to the main part of my message, let me state that the more closely men walk with God and the more they love Him, the more they will believe in a place of eternal punishment. In ignorance, many people have stated that they love men too much to believe such a doctrine, but when we come to love men with the love of Christ, that is, willing to lay down life itself for our fellow-beings, this will be believed, even as Jesus Himself believed it.

As the church and Christians become worldly and easy-going, they grow loose in their acceptance and belief of God's Word. The fact that there is such an increasing looseness in doctrine and belief is not to our credit. We are living in a day of education and material advancement, but I sometimes wonder if we are as educated and as far advanced as we think we are. Perhaps if we would study the Bible a little more carefully and learn God's attitude, we would come to the conclusion that we are not quite as wise as we think. God still says: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

The people in general, the churches, and even our whole nation, is greatly in need of an increasing amount of this fear.

Let me say further that men who accept loose doctrine and men's ideas on the penalty of sin soon lose their spiritual power and are of little or no value in winning men to Christ. If men succeed in making themselves believe there is no hell, they certainly will not make any attempt to cry out against sin and the danger of going to hell. Such individuals will more likely be found trying to upset the faith and destroy the confidence of those who have already been won to Christ.

If you really believe in the doctrine of eternal punishment, and if it really gets hold of you, you will work as you never worked before for the salvation of the lost. The altars of your church will be fruitful; souls will be saved; and men will endeavor by the help of the Spirit to walk humbly before God and consistently before their fellowmen.

It was because of the subtleties of Satan, the destructive power of sin, and the horrors of hell that Jesus was willing to go to the cross and there suffer and die.

NOT APPOINTED TO WRATH

Our text states that God has not appointed us to wrath. That is, God does not want us to die and go to hell. All through the past ages God did all He possibly could to save men. The Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles were faithful in telling men of God's interest and love, but in all too many instances it was disregarded. It isn't God's will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. If a soul is finally cut off and goes to hell, it is because God has faithfully warned him and waited for his final decision.

In a little northern town, on a New Year's eve, a man was standing in the snow halfway up to his knees, and leaning, about half-drunk, against a telephone pole. His mother was down the street a short distance in a prayer meeting. She was sobbing, sighing and praying for the salvation of her son. The hands of the clock were pointing to the midnight hour. The whistles began to blow and the bells began to ring the old year out and the new year in. As the whistles and bells announced the closing hour of the old year and the opening of the new, the Holy Spirit whispered to this fellow, "If you don't get right with God before those bells quit ringing, you will never get right with God." He lifted his eyes and glanced about him quickly, but there was no one to be seen. The Spirit again spoke to him, "If you don't get right with God before those bells quit ringing, you never will get right." By that time he was sober and fell on his knees in the snow-bank, groaned, and lifted up his soul in agony over his lost estate. Before the bells quit ringing, he found God.

You, too, my friend, can find God and be saved from everlasting torment. God will be faithful and true to you if you will respond to His call. No soul will ever be damned until after he has willfully, wickedly and maliciously gone past God's danger signal. "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thess. 5:9. In Romans 9:22 Paul also states that God has "Endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."

APPOINTED TO SALVATION

First, we have noted that God did not appoint us to wrath. In the next place, Paul states positively that God has appointed us to obtain salvation. We therefore conclude that God has done all He can do. In order, then, for salvation to become effective in the lives of men, it must be accepted by faith. Men must be willing to confess the error of their ways and live according to the loving directions of the Holy Spirit.

This includes forgiveness of sins. No man can be a child of God and escape hell unless his past is forgiven and put under the blood. You will have to do more than shake hands with the preacher, be baptized, and follow the rituals of the church. You can do all of that and still lose your soul.

To be saved also means that you are a child of God. You are adopted into His family. As long as you are a child of the devil, you can never have hope of heaven. You will have to make application to be adopted into the family of God. I can assure you that the transaction will not be at all complicated, but you will find it to be simple, safe and sure.

Another very important thing is that every believer needs to receive the Holy Spirit. This is the earnest of the believer's inheritance and is promised by the Father to all who will meet conditions and ask in faith. It is the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers who gives the strength, courage, grace, wisdom and all that is needed to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil. Surely we need all we can get and thank God, everything we need is provided, to save us from a devil's hell.

Then, God also intends that we should grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There will be the guiding, instructing, empowering, enlightening presence of the Holy Spirit which will enable us to grow in stature, in wisdom, in power, in usefulness, in service, in ability and in all that which will add to our Christian life and experience. The reason so many people backslide is because they do not work hard enough at the job of going forward. If we are diligent in the spiritual activities and exercises which God has outlined for us, we need never have any fear of God's love being turned to wrath. When a man has a genuine experience of scriptural salvation and hates sin and the devil with a holy hatred, he need not have any worries as to the possibility of escaping the tortures of a devil's hell.

Finally, salvation makes possible for us a home in heaven instead of a bed in hell. To those who were redeemed and to all who know Him today, Jesus says: "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

That is our iron-clad guarantee of the resurrection and the mansions in glory.

SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST

In the third place, we note in the text that our escape from God's wrath and our appointment to salvation is "by our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is not by our own righteousness, our own good deeds, our morality, our ability, or our ingenuity, but by the love and grace of God and by the blood of Christ. With sin, Satan, death, judgment and hell staring us in the face, there was absolutely no way whereby we could have the approval of God except by the sacrifice of a sinless victim. Through Adam the seed of sin entered the human race, thus disqualifying every man in making atonement for either his sin or the sin of his fellowmen. It only remained for the Son of God to be born of a virgin; to suffer and to die or for the entire human race to be eternally banished from the presence of a holy God. God, because of His love and mercy for you and me, sent Jesus to die.

Imagine yourself back in old Jerusalem for a moment. Look! Yonder comes a man down the street followed by a dozen men. They turn into a room and the leader begins to talk to these men. His words are indeed solemn! Looking upon that group of twelve, he says: "One of you shall betray me." They look at one another in amazement, and each asks: "Lord, Is it I?" He answers: "The one to whom I give the sop, when I have dipped it, he it is who will betray me." Then Jesus dips the sop and gives it to Judas, saying: "What thou doest, do quickly." Instantly Judas steals out, leaving the others with Jesus who was speaking very solemn words.

In a little while we see those same serious men as they make their way through the darksome night! They are going to a place called Gethsemane. Eight are asked to tarry at the outer edge of the garden while Jesus takes three others apart for a season of prayer. Listen! He is speaking solemn words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me." He goes a little farther and falls on his face, and prays, saying: "O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." He goes back to those three men and they are asleep. Listen, what a heart-bleeding cry: "Could ye not watch with me one hour?"

He is praying a second time: "O, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done."

A third time He prays that prayer while those men sleep on. But now the scene changes. An angel comes to strengthen him! Jesus then speaks again to the men, saying, "Sleep on now, and take your rest; behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

Now we see Judas, and with him a great multitude who have swords and staves. They lay hold on the Holy, sinless and harmless Son of God and lead Him through one mock trial after another. The night wears away in old Jerusalem and what a night it was! The earth had never seen the like before and shall never see its like again. At last, the night passed and the morning came. That gentle one is stripped of His robe and forty stripes save one are put upon His quivering body. Now we see them leading Him away and climbing Golgotha's hill. He is carrying a heavy cross. It is too heavy. He is weary and worn. He totters. He falls. He can carry the cross no further. They seek for someone to carry the cross and finally Simon, the Cyrenian, is found. He carries that cross for the tired Master. Now they have reached the top of the hill. Look! They are nailing the Son of God to the cross! They lift up the cross and it drops into a hole with a cruel thud. What a terrible scene! Their heartless work is done. He is upon the cross. See Him there as the crowds surge by, mocking, railing and wagging their heads.

Listen, He is speaking: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." The crowd continues to surge about the cross. Listen, He is speaking again: "I thirst." They gave Him vinegar to drink. Will He speak any more? Look! He is dying between two men, and for a time they both deride Him, but now one of them is appealing to Him: "Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom!" Light breaks in upon the clouded soul of the dying thief, and he says: "Lord, I see the truth at last -- Thou art dying for my sins-I repent. Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The dying Saviour answered: "Today, thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Will He speak any more? Oh, the agony upon His face! He is looking upward. What is He saying now? "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He dies to make atonement for human sin and to save you and me from the blackness and darkness of hell. He dies-the just for the unjust! He bears our sins in His own body on the tree. Will He speak yet again? Yes, He speaks and this time with a loud voice. It is just three words -- "It is finished."

Tell it in heaven" -- It is finished." Tell it wherever men, women and children have wandered from God" -- It is finished." There is redemption for every sinner in the world who will repent and accept Christ as His personal Saviour. What a glorious gospel we have! Do you see it, my friend? Jesus died to save you from your sins and from a burning, tormenting devil's hell. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. 4:25.

Even though He was crucified for us, Paul says He was also raised for our justification. And, thank God, He is soon coming back again! For everyone it is going to be either Satan or the Saviour; sin or righteousness; heaven or hell.

I am sure that not a one of you can doubt that there is a real, terrible, burning and eternal hell when we think of Gethsemane and Golgotha. If there is not a hell, then the shame, the spitting, the beating, the crown of thorns, the nail-pierced hands and feet and the riven side were worse than useless! My friend, Jesus knew there was a hell and that is the reason He died for you. You certainly cannot be so ungrateful and so hard-hearted as to reject Him. I plead with you, right now, to say, "Yes," to this loving, merciful and compassionate Christ. May God bless and help you is my prayer.

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THE END