



SUNDAY MORNING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: Hell: It's Real and It's Not Funny

Passage: Luke 16:19-31

Speaker: Pastor Dan Preston

Introduction: Hell is the most denied and avoided doctrine in the Bible. People joke about it, soften it, or ignore it. But the fact is this: Jesus spoke more about Hell than He did about Heaven, because He knew how real and terrible it is. In our text, Jesus gives us the story of two men. Both die, but their destinies are radically reversed. The poor man, Lazarus, who had so little in this life, dies and is carried by angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man, who had so much, dies, and in the next moment opens his eyes in torment. Through his experience, Jesus gives us a glimpse into Hell—brief, but powerful enough to destroy many of the misconceptions.

I. Hell Is a Place of Misery (Verses 23-24)

"If 'fire' is merely figurative, it must stand for some great reality, and if the reality is more intense than the figure, what an awful thing the punishment symbolized by fire must be." — William Evans

The rich man's thirst is striking. It was not just physical—it was spiritual. He longed for what he had rejected all his life.

"The most sobering thought that could ever cross our minds is the fact that the rich man in hell...has not yet received the drop of water for which he so desperately longed." — Erwin Lutzer

This misery is not momentary—it is conscious, unrelieved, and everlasting.



SUNDAY MORNING
AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

II. Hell Is a Place of Memory (Verse 25)

“...a region of deprivation, and unending regret. There, with all their memories and feeling fully intact, images of their life on earth will return to haunt them. They will think back to their friends, family and relatives; they will brood over opportunities they squandered and intuitively know that their future is both hopeless and unending. For them death will be far worse than they imagined.” — Erwin Lutzer

The rich man could not take his money with him, but he did take his memory. He could recall Lazarus lying at his gate, sermons he had heard, warnings he had ignored.

A. Think of Felix

Paul reasoned with Felix about righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. He trembled—he was under deep conviction, he procrastinated. But that convenient season never came. Imagine remembering that for eternity—so close, yet lost.

B. Consider King Agrippa

Agrippa responded to Paul, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” Almost saved is still entirely lost. Hell will be filled with people who were “almost persuaded.”

C. The Rich Young Ruler

Jesus told him the truth—that he must forsake his idol of wealth and follow Him. He walked away from eternal life with his hands full of temporary riches. What a memory to carry forever—that he traded heaven for gold.

D. What of Pilate?

He knew the truth, but he feared men more than God. So he washed his hands before the crowd, but not before the Lord. His tragic choice is forever sealed—he delivered Jesus to be crucified.



SUNDAY MORNING
AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

III. Hell Is a Place of Mourning (Verses 27-31)

He does not laugh, boast, or make light of his fate. He mourns. He begs Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers.

“The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night...” (Revelation 14:11)

“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes...” (Revelation 21:4)

Hell is not a party—it is perpetual mourning. No laughter, no joy, no companionship—only weeping.

IV. Hell Is a Place of Mistaken Thinking

“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? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:22-23)

Hell will be filled with people who thought they were too good to go there, or who assumed they had plenty of time, or who believed all religions lead to God. But mistaken thinking ends in eternal ruin.

Conclusion: Death is not the end, but the doorway into eternity. Every person will live forever—either in the presence of God or separated from Him. The story of Lazarus and the rich man reminds us that our choices in this life determine our destiny in the next. But the good news is that God has made a way of escape: through Jesus Christ, forgiveness and eternal life are offered to all who believe. The question is not whether you will live forever, but where. Today is the time to choose life in Christ.

“In the end there are only two kinds of people: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in Hell choose it.” — C.S. Lewis



Bethany Baptist Church • 4402 40th Street • Lubbock, TX 79414
806.799.2464 • churchstillworks.org • Dan Preston, Pastor