

HELL IS NO JOKE

June 7, 2026

PASTOR JERRY LEWIS

Summary: This powerful message confronts us with an uncomfortable truth that many modern churches avoid: hell is real, and our eternal destiny hangs in the balance. Drawing from Luke 16:19-28, we encounter the sobering account of the rich man and Lazarus—two men who lived vastly different lives but faced an irreversible eternal fate upon death. The rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, lived sumptuously every day, while Lazarus lay at his gate covered in sores, desiring only crumbs. Yet when both died, their destinies were sealed: Lazarus was carried to Abraham's bosom while the rich man opened his eyes in torment. What makes this passage particularly striking is the rich man's desperate plea—not for himself, but for his five brothers still living. He begged Abraham to send someone to warn them, revealing a profound truth: those in hell would give anything to warn the living, yet we who have the opportunity often remain silent. This message challenges us to examine whether we're truly ready to meet God or merely hoping we are. It calls us beyond cultural Christianity and comfortable religion into genuine surrender and holiness. The reality is that hell is described 162 times in the New Testament—Jesus spoke more about hell than anyone else in Scripture. He called it outer darkness, unquenchable fire, eternal punishment, and a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. We cannot afford to be deceived by modern doctrines that dismiss hell's existence simply because it makes us uncomfortable. Our five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—will all be heightened in eternity, whether in the glory of heaven or the torment of hell. The question before us is urgent and personal: if we died today, where would we go? This isn't about religion or church attendance; it's about the condition of our hearts and whether Jesus truly reigns as Lord of our lives.

Scripture References:

- Luke 16:19-28 (Primary text: The Rich Man and Lazarus)
- John 3:16-17 (God's love and Jesus' mission)
- John 10:10 (Abundant life)
- 1 Corinthians 2:9 (Heaven beyond comprehension)
- Matthew 5:22, 29 (Hell fire and radical commitment)
- Matthew 8:12 (Outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth)
- Matthew 13:41-42 (Fiery furnace)
- Matthew 25:41, 46 (Eternal fire and eternal punishment)
- Mark 9:43 (Unquenchable fire)
- Matthew 24:4 (Warning against deception)
- Galatians 1:9 (Curse on those preaching another gospel)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12 (Know those who labor among you)
- 2 Timothy 4:1-4 (Preach the word; people will accumulate teachers for itching ears)
- 1 Timothy 4:1-2 (Seducing spirits and doctrines of devils)
- Hebrews 9:27 (Appointed once to die, then judgment)
- Hebrews 12:1 (Lay aside every weight and sin)
- John 15:2 (Branches that don't bear fruit are cut away)
- Romans 6:23 (Wages of sin is death)

Key Points:

- Jesus came to redeem humanity from hell and provide abundant life, not to condemn but to save
- Hell is referenced 162 times in the New Testament, with Jesus speaking about it more than anyone else
- Modern deception teaches there is no hell or that a loving God wouldn't send anyone there, but this contradicts Scripture
- Hell is described as: outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth, a fiery furnace, unquenchable fire, eternal punishment, and a place of conscious torment
- Notable religious leaders and movements have abandoned belief in literal hell, promoting inclusion theology and universal salvation
- The end times will be marked by people accumulating teachers who tell them what they want to hear rather than sound doctrine
- In hell, all five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) remain functioning and heightened, intensifying the torment
- The parable of the rich man and Lazarus demonstrates that eternal destinies are sealed immediately upon death with no second chances
- Hell involves: no sleep, no rest, no peace, constant screaming, unbearable heat (estimated 12,000 degrees), complete isolation, and eternal hopelessness
- Christians must examine their lives: How much time in God's Word? How much prayer? What are they filling their minds with?
- Being in church all your life doesn't guarantee salvation—personal readiness and relationship with Christ is what matters
- The mark of the beast and new world order are approaching; believers must be spiritually prepared for increasing persecution

Quotes:

Jesus came that mankind would not have to go to hell. The purpose that he came was to redeem us back to the Father.

Full submission to the Holy Spirit will lead us to Heaven. Disobedience to the Holy Spirit consequently will lead us to hell.

The person that goes to hell actually sends themselves to hell by their actions, by their rebellion, by their lifestyles, and by their disobedience.

Once you die, judgment is next. You will not stand there with your family. You will not stand there with your homie. You're going to be standing there just you and the Lord.

In hell, all five senses are still functioning. A person's sight, a person's hearing, a person's smell, a person's taste, and a person's touch.

In hell, you never sleep, you never rest, or find a quiet moment. Any form of rest is completely non-existent.

Your decision today determines your destiny both now and in the future. Choices have consequences. Choices release or confine.

If you died today, where would you go? Would you be immediately transported to heaven or immediately transported to hell?

5-Day Devotional: Living Ready for Eternity

Day 1: The Reality of Eternity

Reading: Luke 16:19-31

Devotional: The story of the rich man and Lazarus confronts us with an uncomfortable truth: our choices today determine our eternal destiny. This isn't meant to frighten us into submission, but to awaken us to reality. The rich man's greatest regret wasn't his wealth, but his unpreparedness. He lived for temporal pleasures while neglecting eternal matters. Today, examine your life honestly. Are you living with eternity in view, or are you consumed by the temporary? God's warning is an expression of His love —He desperately wants you in heaven. Don't wait until it's too late to get right with God. Your eternal address is being determined by today's decisions.

Day 2: Removing Every Weight

Reading: Hebrews 12:1-2

Devotional: Athletes don't run marathons carrying unnecessary baggage. Likewise, spiritual progress requires removing anything that slows us down. The writer of Hebrews urges us to "lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us." What's weighing you down spiritually? Is it unforgiveness, pride, materialism, or compromise? These weights aren't always obvious sins—they're often good things that become distractions from God's best. The Holy Spirit reveals these areas not to condemn you, but to prepare you for heaven. When God points something out, respond immediately. Clear your plate of everything that competes with Him. Fix your eyes on Jesus and run your race unencumbered, ready for His return.

Day 3: Discerning Truth from Deception

Reading: 2 Timothy 4:1-5

Devotional: We live in an age where people want their ears tickled rather than their hearts convicted. False teachers abound, offering comfortable messages that require no repentance or transformation. Paul warned Timothy that people would accumulate teachers who tell them what they want to hear, turning from truth to fables. The gospel isn't always comfortable—it challenges our flesh and calls us to die to ourselves. Don't be swayed by popular theology that contradicts Scripture. Test every teaching against God's Word. Seek preachers who speak truth even when it's unpopular. Your soul's eternal destination depends on believing and obeying the authentic gospel, not a watered-down version designed to make you feel good while living wrong.

Day 4: The Power of the Blood

Reading: Hebrews 9:11-14, 22

Devotional: The blood of Jesus speaks better things than the blood of Abel. Abel's blood cried out for judgment; Jesus' blood declares mercy, forgiveness, and redemption. When sin speaks death, the blood speaks life. When guilt condemns, the blood justifies. When Satan accuses, the blood defends. This isn't cheap grace that allows continued sin—it's transforming power that breaks sin's dominion. Have you truly applied the blood of Jesus to your life? It's not enough to know about it intellectually; you must personally appropriate its cleansing power. Let His blood wash you from the inside out, transforming your desires, renewing your mind, and preparing you for eternity. The blood is sufficient for every sin, every shame, every failure.

Day 5: Living with Urgency

Reading: Matthew 24:36-44

Devotional: Jesus warned that His return would come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. The question isn't if He's coming, but are you ready when He does? Many professing Christians are spiritually asleep, more invested in this world than the next. They attend church but lack genuine transformation. They claim salvation but live in compromise. Don't be deceived—religiosity without relationship, attendance without surrender, won't save you. Examine yourself: Is your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? Are you living holy? Is the Holy Spirit actively working in your life? Today is the day of salvation. Don't assume you have tomorrow. Get right with God now. Live each day as if it's your last, because one day it will be.