

# Things in Hell Needed in the Church

**Lesson Text: Luke 16:19-31**

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## INTRODUCTION:

### A. Luke 16:19-31 -

19 There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.

20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,

21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 Then he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.

27 Then he said, I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house,

28 for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.

29 Abraham said to him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.

31 But he said to him, If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.”

### B. This is the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

1. Some say it is a story about life after death. Think of it as a story about life after life.
2. It is a story about life before death as well as a story of life after death.
3. It begins during this life and continues beyond death into the next life.

4. It begins on earth and continues into the hadean world, the realm of the unseen.
- C. Some believe the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus to be a parable. Others believe it to be an actual story of factual events. Either way, the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus depicts a number of spiritual truths.
- D. Our lesson text sets before us three pertinent facts:
1. Fact number one: Two men lived.
  2. Fact number two: Two men died.
  3. Fact number three: The situation of those two men in the next life was exactly the opposite of what it had been in this life.
    - a. The rich man on earth became the beggar in hell.
    - b. The poor man on earth became the rich man in Paradise.
    - c. The rich man here was clothed in purple and fine linen.
    - d. In the next life he was robed in a garment of fire.
    - e. The poor man was attended by dogs here, but in the next life he was attended by the angels of God.
    - f. In this life the rich man fared sumptuously every day, but in the next life he couldn't get so much as one tiny drop of water to cool his tormented tongue.
    - g. The poor man here suffered evil things, but in the next life he was comforted.
    - h. In this life the rich man was comfortable, but in the next life he was tormented.
- E. Seemingly, mankind desires to live the life of the rich man on earth, but the life of Lazarus in the next life. Oh how we do need to remember that "In death we leave behind all that we have and take with us all that we are.
- F. After death the rich man and Lazarus were in Hades (unseen world).
1. Lazarus was in the place of the righteous dead before judgment. Would be in Heaven after the judgment.
  2. The rich man was in the place of the unrighteous dead before judgment (Tartarus), and would be in Gehenna after the judgment.
  3. Should the hour of your death come before the Lord's return, your soul will enter one of these two places. Which place is dependent upon whether you are saved or lost. The saved will go where Lazarus is. The lost will go where the rich man is. I had rather be where Lazarus is. Where had you rather go?
- G. The rich man arrive in Tartarus and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Our study will center on the some "Things in Hell Needed in the Church."

## **SIX THINGS IN HELL NEEDED IN THE CHURCH.**

### **A. THERE WAS A WILLINGNESS TO ADMIT MISTAKES.**

1. Man is a proud being. It is deemed weakness to admit error or fault. For many, such an admission would be taboo.
2. In our English language with its some 450,000 word vocabulary, seemingly three of the hardest words for man to put together in a sequence is “I have sinned.” It is easy to say”
  - a. “You have sinned”
  - b. “He has sinned”
  - c. “She has sinned”
  - d. “They have sinned”
  - e. But it is hard to say, “I HAVE SINNED.”
3. In the Bible we find such expressions as:
  - a. “You have sinned”
  - b. “He sinned”
  - c. “He has sinned”
  - d. “She has sinned”
  - e. “They have sinned”
  - f. “Our fathers have sinned”
  - g. “We have sinned”
  - h. “Israel has sinned”
  - i. “Jerusalem has grievously sinned”
  - j. Etc.
4. However, of the thousands upon thousands of people we read about in the Bible, named and unnamed, I have found the expression “I HAVE SINNED”, uttered by ten different Bible characters.”
  - a. Pharaoh
    1. Confessed to Moses and Aaron after the plague of hail. Exodus 9:27
    2. Confessed to Moses and Aaron after the plague of locusts. Exodus 10:16
  - b. Baalam confessed it unto the angel of the Lord. Numbers 22:34
  - c. Achan said it to Joshua. Joshua 7:20
  - d. King Saul
    1. Twice to Samuel. 1 Samuel 15:24 & 30
    2. Once to David. 1 Samuel 26:21
  - e. Shimei confessed it to David. II Samuel 19:20
  - f. David
    1. Confessed it to Nathan, the prophet. 2 Samuel 12:13
    2. Twice he confessed it to God. 2 Chronicles 24:10 & 17
    3. Acknowledged it in Psalm 41:4 and Psalm 51:4
  - g. Nehemiah. Nehemiah 1:6
  - h. Job. Job 7:20
  - i. Micah. Micah 7:9

- j. Judas Iscariot. Matthew 27:4
- 5. The rich man did not argue with Abraham over an injustice in his being sent to Tartarus. This he accepted. The absence of such an argument is an admission of guilt.
  - a. He knew he had wasted and ruined his life.
  - b. He wanted others to be warned lest they make the same mistake.
- 6. The rich man's admission of wrong came entirely too late. It is not too late for you to admit that you have sinned, repent of your sins, and come to Christ.
- 7. How much more wonderful the church would be if all would renounce pride and bigotry and admit their mistakes, correcting them to the best of their ability.
  - a. Many congregations divide because of someone's failure to admit, "I was wrong, I have sinned."
  - b. Some will continue that stubbornness and go to hell for it before they will admit their mistake(s).

## **B. A RECOGNITION OF TRUTH.**

- 1. Loving the Lord involves loving others.
  - a. The world needs to recognize this truth.
  - b. The Church needs to recognize this truth.
- 2. The rich man saw Lazarus in a different light in eternity than he had seen him in life.
- 3. Here is a man in hell who gains a recognition of off . . . it is too late. Truth must be learned and Truth prepares people for death..
- 4. In verses 27 and 28, the rich man wanted Lazarus to go testify unto his five brothers who evidently were making the very same mistake(s) that he had made while on earth.
  - a. He recognized the truth that there were some things his brethren needed to know and do in order to avoid that place of torment.
  - b. Man needs to recognize that today.
- 5. Oh how the Church needs to fully recognize the Truth of God and the fact that without a belief in it and an obedience to it, people are lost in this life and will be tormented forever in the life to come.
  - a. It take more than recognizing and knowing . . . it takes living it and doing it.
  - b. **James 4:17** - "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin."

## **C. FERVENT PRAYER.**

- 1. This delaying man in life became a praying man in torment. I doubt if he was the first or was he the last. **Luke 16:24** — "Then 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.”

- a. That’s prayer.
  - b. Not from habit . . . not from duty.
  - c. That’s a heart pleading prayer. That prayer had plenty of feeling.
2. How long has it been since you prayed or heard a prayer like that? What would the church be doing throughout the world if all were praying that fervently.
  3. The rich man first prayed for his own need (water). Secondly, he prayed for his brothers’ needs. Does self still come first today?
  4. Friends, this rich man waited too late to become a praying man. What about you?
  5. God is not going to hear the prayers of the non—Christian.
    - a. **John 9:31** - “Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.”
    - b. **Proverbs 15:29** - “The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.”
  6. Oh how the Church needs to pray fervently.

#### **D. THE REALITY OF THE GOLDEN RULE.**

1. We have said that this is really a story about life after life. In the hadean world, the rich man wanted Lazarus to serve his needs while in life he had failed to serve Lazarus’ needs. Always receiving . . . never giving. Now, there is no one to give to him.
2. **Matthew 7:12** – “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”
3. Oh how we need to believe this and practice it to a desperate and needy mankind.
4. The rich man reaped what he had sown. His sins found him out . . . but when he found them out, it was too late to do anything to change his lost and sinful condition.
5. God’s people need to practice the golden rule. It will make a difference.

#### **E. PERSONAL CONCERN FOR THE LOST.**

1. **Verses 27-28** - “Then he said, I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.”
  - a. A soul winner in hell . . . how incongruous!

- b. Very few soul winners in the Church how pathetic!
- 2. Here was a man in hell who wanted to send out a missionary. He had the vision to see in hell what we don't have the faith to see in the Church . . . the need for man to be taught and warned. Many congregations lack this man's interest in mission work.
- 3. Are you concerned with the lost?
  - a. Is your own family lost? Parents, wife, husband, children. How tragic!
  - b. Are your friends lost?
  - c. Are you lost?
- 4. The rich man now believes in and sees the need for evangelism and carrying out the command to reach others with the Gospel. Now, he can reach no one . . . not even himself. What about you? He reached where he was by failing to reach out to others.
- 5. He became concerned about his family when it was too late to save them. Friends, it is not too late for you to save yours.
- 6. The message from hell to those on the way - "Don't come to this place of torment!" That didn't come from a preacher . . . that came from a man in hell.

#### F. **REMEMBER THE GOOD THINGS.**

1. **Verse 25** - "But Abraham said, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented." We need to remember that we are the recipients of good things.
  - a. God's love. **Romans 5:8** - "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
  - b. God's Son. **John 3:16-17**
  - c. God's Word. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** - "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,  
That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
  - d. Lord's Church. Matthew 16:18 - ". . . And upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
  - e. God's grace. **Ephesians 2:8-9** - "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. "
  - f. Forgiveness of sins. **Colossians 1:12-14** - "Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.  
He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

g. God’s presence.

1. **Matthew 28:20** - “. . . Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
  2. **Hebrews 13:5** - “. . . For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."
3. We need to remember the good things and be thankful and happy as opposed to remembering all the bad things and being negative and discouraged. Be a happy Christian!

## CONCLUSION:

A. Brethren, we need these things in the Church.

### 1. A WILLINGNESS TO ADMIT MISTAKES

- a. **James 5:16** - “Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another . . .”
- b. **1 John 1:9** - “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

### 2. A RECOGNITION OF THE TRUTH

- a. **John 17:17** - “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”
- b. **John 8:32** - “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

### 3. FERVENT PRAYER

- a. **1 Thessalonians 5:17** - “Pray without ceasing.”
- b. **James 5:16** - “. . . The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”
- c. **Luke 18:1** - “Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.”
- d. **John 9:31** - “Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.”

### 4. THE REALITY OF THE GOLDEN RULE

- a. **Matthew 7:12** - “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”
- b. **Matthew 25:40** - “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”

### 5. A PERSONAL CONCERN FOR THE LOST

- a. **Romans 10:1** - “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.
- b. **Mark 16:15-16** - “And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. “

**6. REMEMBER THE GOOD GOD HAS DONE FOR US**

- B. The rich man was too late with his change. The change must be made while in this life. You have time, the gospel, and the opportunity. Failure to obey will lead you to where the rich man went. Come to Christ in obedience to the gospel!
- C. **God's Plan for Man's Salvation.**