



FIVE MINUTES AFTER DEATH

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





Five Minutes After Death

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Five Minutes After Death

SERMON REFERENCE: Luke 16:19-31

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2217

There was a time when we did not exist, but there will never be a time when we will not be. Death is unavoidable, but it is not the end. Our eternal destiny waits for us five minutes after death.

In Luke 16:19-31, Jesus shares a parable full of contrasts. This story stresses the importance of settling our relationship with Jesus Christ on this side of death.

First, Jesus points out the contrast in two men's lives: one was rich, the other poor. (See Luke 16:19-21.) They were born into different classes and were part of different social hierarchies; one had much and the other had little.

Jesus also spoke of the contrast in their deaths. When the rich man and the beggar died, they were buried according to their manner of life.

Yet, this passage also shares the contrast of their eternities.

"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. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16: 22-23).

Jesus pulls back the curtain to reveal the other side of death. The beggar was ushered to Heaven, while the rich man watched from Hell.

Describing the glories of Heaven, Jesus shares that the man who once begged for crumbs was now seated at the highest place of honor.

Adrian Rogers says, "Heaven is all that the all-beneficent loving heart of God would desire for you. Heaven is all that the omniscient mind of God could design for you. Heaven is all that the omnipotent hand of God could prepare for you."

But Jesus also taught the agony of Hell and demonstrated it with His own death. The justice of God demands it, therefore, we cannot discard the doctrine of Hell.

Jesus reveals Hell to be a place of sensual, emotional, and spiritual misery; and because our spirits are eternal, the torments of Hell are eternal. (See Luke 16:24-29.)

But if we come to Jesus in repentance and faith, we can know, without a doubt, that He will save us and keep us for all eternity.

Life Application

You don't have to gamble with our destiny; come to Jesus today and be saved. Pray for your loved ones and share the Gospel with them before it is too late.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Man is the only creature who knows that he is going to die, and he is trying desperately to forget it.
- b) Most people do not want to talk about death.
 - i) Reason and experience tell us that we are going to die.
 - ii) If we are not prepared to die, then we are not prepared to live.
 - iii) No one is ever ready for life until he is no longer afraid of death
- c) Human beings are interested in the origin of the species, but we ought to be more interested in the destination of the species.
 - i) From whence we've come is settled; where we are going is not yet settled.
- d) There was a time when you were not, but there will never be a time when you will not be.
 - i) Your soul will continue to exist somewhere, either in Heaven or in Hell.
- e) Jesus is the master teacher, and He told a story that deals with the three great issues we all must face: life, death and eternity.
 - i) Luke 16:19-31
 - (1) Some believe this story is a parable, but the Lord Jesus did not call it a parable.
 - (a) Jesus never spoke a parable in which He mentioned someone's name.
 - (i) He mentions Lazarus by name in this passage, and He deals with Lazarus as an actual individual.
 - (2) Regardless, this story is a truth spoken by the greatest teacher who ever lived, our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - ii) This is a story of contrasts.
 - (1) Jesus contrasts two men.
 - (a) He contrasts their lives.
 - (b) He contrasts their deaths.
 - (c) He contrasts their destinies.

2) A CONTRAST IN LIFE (Luke 16:19-21)

- a) These two men were very different.
 - i) One was a rich man; one was a poor man.
 - ii) One had more materially than his heart could wish; the other did not have enough to even subsist.
- b) Life is full of inequities.
 - i) Congenital inequities
 - (1) We are born with inequities.
 - (a) Some are born with strong bodies, while others are born with frail bodies.
 - (b) Some are born to have beauty, while others are not.
 - (c) Some are born with great intellects, while others are not.



- (2) We are all equal before the law, but we are each born with different gifts and abilities.
 - (a) The rich man in Luke 16, perhaps, had a fine mind that enabled him to make his money.
- ii) Material inequities
 - (1) There are the “have’s” and the “have not’s.”
 - (2) Some are born into great wealth; others are not.
 - (3) Some are born into a place, a free country, where they can enjoy nicer material possessions.
 - (4) The rich man in Luke 16 fared sumptuously each day while another man, just outside his gate, did not.
 - (a) Riches are not wrong in themselves.
 - (b) Our Lord teaches that we’re to have mercy upon the poor and to help get them out of their poverty.
 - (i) Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man.
 - (ii) Abraham was rich.
 - (iii) King David was rich.
 - (c) Psalm 62:10
- iii) Social inequities
 - (1) Doubtless, the rich man was praised and lauded; everyone was likely interested to know about his lifestyle.
 - (2) Few people were interested in the beggar.
 - (a) Never speak despairingly about the poor.
 - (b) We need to say, “But for the grace of God, there go I.”

3) A CONTRAST IN DEATH (Luke 16:22)

- a) Both the rich and the poor die.
 - i) No matter how we try to escape death, we will die.
 - ii) The only thing that may keep you from dying is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
- b) There was a difference when the rich man died than when the beggar died.
 - i) The beggar likely died without ceremony.
 - ii) The rich man likely had access to the best medical treatment of the day, but he died also.
 - (1) 1 Samuel 20:3
 - iii) When the beggar died, the Bible does not say that he was buried; it says the rich man was buried.
 - (1) The beggars of that day, when they died, were often discarded on a garbage heap without a burial.
 - iv) The Bible states that the rich man was buried.
 - (1) People probably eulogized the rich man and praised him as a good man.
 - (a) Romans 3:10
 - (2) All of their words would not change his destiny.
 - (3) All of the finery at his funeral would not change his destiny.

4) A CONTRAST IN ETERNITY (Luke 16:22-29)

- a) In this passage, the Lord Jesus pulls back the curtain and gives us a glimpse to the other side.
 - i) The only thing we really know about life after death is what the Bible reveals and what Jesus says.



- (1) One thing we know is that death is not extinction.
 - (a) There is life after death.
 - (i) We know this because Jesus teaches it.
 - (b) Your soul will be in existence somewhere.
- b) The glories of Heaven.
 - i) Luke 16:22
 - ii) The beggar died and was carried by the angels to “Abraham’s bosom.”
 - (1) When he died, an angel convoy came and took him to a place called “Abraham’s bosom.”
 - (2) Abraham was the “Father of the Faithful,” and to be with Abraham would be a place of incredible honor.
 - (a) When the people of that day held a banquet, they would not sit around a table but would recline; and the best place where one would recline would be where your head would be near the chest, or bosom, of the host
 - (3) This man, who had been feeding on crumbs, is now at a banquet, sitting in the highest place of honor.
 - iii) Jesus is showing us here the radical change that took place for this man as he was carried by the angels to Heaven.
 - (1) When we invite others to receive Jesus as Lord, we are not inviting them to a funeral but to a feast.
 - iv) “Abraham’s bosom” is referring to Heaven.
 - v) Heaven is all that the all-beneficent loving heart of God would desire for you, all that the omniscient mind of God could design for you, and all that the omnipotent hand of God could prepare for you.
 - (1) Heaven will be just right.
 - (2) We will have no longing or desire that Heaven will not fulfill more than we can imagine.
- c) The agonies of Hell.
 - i) The devil is behind the teaching that there is no Hell.
 - (1) The devil knows that if people do not understand the teaching of Hell, then they’ll not prepare to go to Heaven and they won’t give their hearts to Jesus.
 - ii) Many scoff at the idea of Hell, but the Bible teaches that there is a Hell.
 - (1) 1 Peter 1:25
 - (2) The scoffers do not put out the fires of Hell.
 - (a) Men laughed at Noah when he spoke of the flood.
 - (i) Genesis 7:22
 - (b) Men scoffed at Lot when he warned that God was going to destroy Sodom with fire and brimstone.
 - (i) Genesis 19:24-25
 - (c) Men scoffed at Daniel when he said that the kingdom was going to be overthrown.
 - (i) Daniel 5:30
 - (3) We should never mock the Word of God.
 - (a) Listen to the Word of God.
 - iii) Why we believe in Hell:
 - (1) Jesus teaches it.
 - (a) If we ever ridicule a preacher for being a Hell-fire preacher, then we are ridiculing the Lord Jesus Christ.



- (b) There are at least 162 texts in the New Testament that speak of Hell and the judgment of the lost.
 - (i) Over 70 of these texts are issued by Jesus Himself.
- (c) Matthew 5:29-30
 - (i) Jesus is saying that it would be better to be a maimed saint than a healthy sinner on his way to Hell
 - (ii) There is nothing more important than being saved.
- (2) The death of Jesus demonstrates it.
 - (a) If there is no Hell from which we need to be saved, then why did Jesus die?
 - (b) If there is no Hell, then Calvary is the blunder of the ages.
 - (c) The agony and utter midnight of Calvary proves there is a Hell.
- (3) The justice of God demands it.
 - (a) There is a judgment to face.
 - (b) There must be a time when things are made right, when equity does come.
 - (c) Hell is a fact; a disbelief in Hell does not change the fact of it.
- d) The Lord Jesus tells us what Hell will be like:
 - i) Hell is a place of sensual misery.
 - (1) One will feel in Hell.
 - (a) In Luke 16:23-25, the word “torment” is mentioned three times.
 - (b) Hell is a place of torment.
 - (2) The Lord Jesus used the word “fire” to describe Hell.
 - (a) Matthew 25:41
 - (i) Whether Jesus is speaking literally or metaphorically of something that is even worse than the literal thing, it makes no difference.
 - (ii) There is fire in Hell.
 - ii) Hell is a place of emotional misery.
 - (1) Luke 16:25
 - (2) If you go to Hell, you will take your memory with you.
 - (a) Memory will sting like a hornet in Hell.
 - (i) You will remember the church services you attended and the sermons you heard.
 - (ii) You will remember the prayers of your loved ones and every opportunity you had to be saved but said no to Jesus.
 - iii) Hell is a place of eternal misery.
 - (1) Luke 16:26
 - (a) There is a great gulf fixed, a chasm, between the righteous and the unrighteous.
 - (i) In this life, that chasm can be spanned thanks to the cross of Calvary.
 - (ii) But in eternity, there are no second chances.
 - (iii) Hebrews 9:27
 - iv) Hell is a place of spiritual misery.
 - (1) Luke 16:27-29
 - (a) The rich man in Hell begs Abraham to send someone to witness to his family so that they would not go to this place of torment.
 - (b) He is concerned for his loved ones, but it was too late for him to warn them.
 - (i) Many Christians wait until it is too late to be concerned about our loved ones.

**5) CONCLUSION**

- a) There is a Hell.
 - i) Five minutes after you die, you will be in Hell for eternity if you die without receiving the Lord Jesus as your Savior in this life.
- b) In order to go to Hell, you will have to struggle and work to get there.
 - i) It takes more difficulty to go to Hell than to go to Heaven.
 - ii) You will have to climb over some things to get to Hell:
 - (1) Church services you attended.
 - (a) The music and the prayers and the teaching from God's Word.
 - (2) Your own conscience that is telling you to give your heart to Jesus.
 - (3) The conviction of the Holy Spirit.
 - (4) The blood-stained cross of Jesus upon Mount Calvary.
 - (5) The prayers of people who have prayed for you.
 - (6) Your better judgment.
- c) Once someone gets to Hell, they will never get out.
- d) Where will your spirit be five minutes after you die?
- e) You do not have to go to Hell - you can be saved today.
 - i) God loves you.
 - ii) Jesus died for you.
 - iii) Revelation 22:17
- f) If today, in repentance and faith, you give your heart to the Lord Jesus, He will save you and will keep you saved for all eternity.
- g) Please do not gamble with your destiny.
- h) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- i) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Would you take your Bibles and find Luke chapter 16. And we're going to talk about an unpleasant subject today, at least unpleasant for some, and that is the subject of death. Death is a very real subject. And man is the only creature who knows that he's going to die, and he's trying desperately to forget it. If you mention death in some circumstances, they will change the subject like people change the channels with their remote control. They don't want to talk about death. They don't want to face death. But reason tells us we're going to die, experience tells us we're going to die, and if you're not prepared to die, you're not prepared to live. No man is ever ready for life until he is no longer afraid of death.

Now we human beings are kind of humorous. We're interested in the origin of the species. Well, friend, we ought to be more interested in the destiny of the species. I mean, from whence we've come, that's settled, but where we're going, that is not yet settled. There was a time when you were not. There never will be a time when you will not be. And so you need to consider today with me your eternal destiny. The title of our message today is, "Five Minutes After Death." The most amazing time you will ever spend will be the first five minutes after you die. "Loved ones will weep o'er my silent face, and dear ones will clasp me in sad embrace. Shadows and darkness will fill the place, five minutes after I die. Faces that sorrow, I will not see, voices that murmur will not reach me. But where, o, where will my spirit be, five minutes after I die? Naught to repair the good I lack, fixed to the goal of my chosen track. No time to repent, no turning back, five minutes after I die. Mated forever with my chosen throng, long is eternity, o, so long. Then woe is me, if my soul be wrong, five minutes after I die."

Jesus is the master teacher. Jesus told a story. And this story that I'm going to read to you from the Word of God deals with the three great, great, great issues that all of us must face. Those three issues are these: life, death, and eternity. Everything else is a subset of those. Life, death, and eternity. Now I direct your attention now to verse 19, this story that Jesus told that deals with these great issues.

Jesus says in Luke chapter 16 verses 19 through 31, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried; And in Hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeing 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.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. Beside all of this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from thence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.' Then he said, '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 come into this place of torment.' Abraham saith unto him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from



the dead, they will repent.' He said unto him, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.'"

Now, what we have here is a story by the master teacher, the Lord Jesus Christ. Some people say that this story is a parable. I doubt that it is a parable. Jesus does not call it a parable. Luke does not call it a parable. If this is a parable, it's the only parable that Jesus ever gave when He mentions someone's name. He mentions the name of a man, Lazarus. Deals with him as though he is an actual individual. But whether it is a parable or not, the truth is there in parabolic form or in historical form. It is a truth that fell from the lips of the greatest teacher that ever lived. His name is Jesus. And when we look at this story, it's a story of contrasts. He's contrasting two men. He's contrasting their life. He's contrasting their death. And He is contrasting their destiny.

Now, I want you to see, first of all, **the contrast in life**. Beginning in Luke 16 verse 9, you're going to find out that these men are very different. One was a rich man; one was a poor man. One had more materially than heart could wish; the other had not even enough to subsist. And have you noticed that life seems to be so full of inequities?

I mean, they're **congenital inequities**. We seem to be born with inequities. Why is it? Why is it that some are born with such strong bodies and others are born with frail bodies? Why is it that some are born exceedingly handsome and others are born the other way? Why is it that some have great intellects? They're born with gray matter and others don't. We say that, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." But, that is equal before the law, but they are not equal in their gifts and their abilities. Some have more native giftedness and, perhaps, this rich man was born with a fine mind that enabled him to make his money. Perhaps the beggar was not that way.

But not only are there congenital inequities in life, there are **material inequities**. There are the have's and the have not's. And many of us have things, not because of our ingenuity, not because of our wit and wisdom. We were born into wealth, or at least we were born into a free country. We were born into a place; you're dressed nicely and you probably came here in some fairly good automobile. Had you been born in certain countries of the world, I don't care how hard you work, you wouldn't be dressed the way you're dressed today. You wouldn't have the breakfast that you had this morning. You just happen to be born in a free country, in a land of opportunity. And, in some ways, seems to be an inequity.

Here was this man who had so much. Every day for him, the rich man, was a feast. He fared sumptuously every day. He had his gourmet foods. There's another man, just outside his gate, who is covered with sores, and flies, doubtless, on those sores, and dogs who are licking those sores.

Now, riches are not wrong in themselves. And poverty is not a blessing. Don't get the idea that poverty is a blessing and riches a curse. If you can have wealth, that's fine. If poverty is a blessing, then it's our job to divest ourselves of everything we own and to go about trying to make everybody else poor. Think about it. No. Our Lord teaches that we're to have mercy upon the poor and to help get them out of their poverty, not into their poverty. Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man. Abraham was rich. King David was rich. And the Bible says in Psalm 62 verse 10, "If riches increase, set not thine heart upon them."

Now, not only were there these congenital inequities and these material inequities that we see in this story, but also there was a **social inequity**. Here is this man behind his gates. He is there in his palace. He is there with his servants. Outside is this beggar and doubtless, the rich man was praised and petted and lauded and everybody wanted to find out about him. They were so interested to know about the lifestyle of



the rich and the famous. Few people were interested in this beggar.

I can imagine that the servant of the rich man says to the rich man, "You know, I've got these scraps here after the banquet today. There's an old beggar out there at the gate. How about let's taking some of the leftovers and giving them to him?" I can just hear that rich man saying, "No, don't do that. I wish he'd go away. It's disgusting that I have to go past him every time I come in and go out. The problem with that man is he had no ambition. He's too lazy to work. There's something definitely wrong with him. He probably deserves what he is getting." Be very careful you don't talk about poor people that way. It's so easy to speak that way about the poor. And you need to say, "But for the grace of God, there go I."

But we see a contrast in life. There are these inequities in life. The rich man and the poor man. But now, Jesus goes on, and not only does He speak about a contrast in life, but He speaks about a **contrast in death**. Look in Luke 16 verse 22. And the Bible says, "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried." Now, both the rich and the poor die. And I can say to you today that you are going to die. No matter how you try to escape death, you're going to die. The only thing that will keep you from dying will be the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And when He comes, you may die, as you go up to Heaven, die to the old way and come to the new way, but we are going to die.

Peter Marshall told a story many years ago. I can never get it out of my mind. It's a fable about a rich merchant in Baghdad who had a servant. And the servant came to the merchant and said to him, "Sir, I need help." Merchant said to his servant, "Well, what help do you need?" He said, "Sir, I was in the marketplace today and a sinister figure jostled me. And I turned and looked him in the face, and it was death. Death stared me in the face. Master, would you give me a horse. I need to flee to Samara because I saw the face of death today, and I need to flee from death." The rich merchant of Baghdad said, "Take my finest horse and go." Then the merchant himself went down to the marketplace. And he saw a hooded figure, and he tapped him on the shoulder. The figure turned around and the merchant said, "Are you death?" And death said, "Yes, I am death." He said, "Death, I want to ask you a question. Why did you frighten my servant today? Why did you do that to my servant?" Death said, "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to frighten him. I was surprised to see him here. I have an appointment with him tomorrow in Samara." We will never really flee, escape death. Sooner or later we are all going to die.

Now the beggar died. And I'm sure when the beggar died, they hauled him off, relatively sure that is, and the rich man said, "Good riddance." And the rich man died, and doubtless there was a difference when the rich man died. He felt a little pain somewhere. He went to the doctor and he said, "Doctor, I need a checkup." The doctor went through all of the tests and the doctor said, "We may have a problem here." The rich man says, "Well, money's no object. Bring in the others to consult." And they consult. And then they do whatever is necessary to prolong his life, but he gets sicker and sicker. They have the best drugs, the best treatment, they have everything. And while he's convalescing, the flowers come in, the cards come in, but he dies also.

We read the obituaries, we read where the richest in the city die. We read where medical doctors themselves die. One day the banker will write his last check. One day the physician will write his last prescription. One day the pastor will preach his last sermon. We all die. And we don't know when we're going to die.

Dr. James Dobson is one of the greatest Christian men that I know anywhere and I love him like a brother. Dr. James Dobson is a basketball player also. He was playing basketball, just a fun game, with one



of the greatest basketball players who ever got on the court, Pistol Pete Maravich. Pistol Pete could do incredible things with a basketball if you ever saw him play. And James Dobson and Pistol Pete were out there laughing and joking and having a wonderful time. Dobson said to Pete, "Pete, how are you feeling?" He said, "Jim, I never felt better in my life," and fell on his face. Jim thought he was playing a game, but he fell on his face and died. "Never felt better in my life." In the midst of a game. You have an idea that you're going to go on and on and on and that you're not going to die.

I was holding a funeral. I stood there and talked with a prominent businessman and the undertaker. The three of us stood there and we were talking about death. We were talking about the fact that none of us know when we're going to die, and we all three were philosophical, talking about death, the undertaker, a businessman, and the pastor. In a matter of days, both the undertaker and the businessman were dead. I never got that out of my mind. We were standing there talking about death, and they were talking about the fact that nobody knows when he's going to die. Neither of those men had any idea that in just a matter of days, they too would be dead. And what you're thinking right now is, "Tell them, preacher. Tell them." Isn't that right? You don't know. The Bible says in First Samuel 20 verse 3, "There is but a step between me and death."

When I was in seminary, I used to go back and forth from the Gulf Coast of Mississippi where I pastored a little church, to New Orleans where I was going to school, back and forth. I rode and commuted with a young man whose name was Bob. Bob was a tall, sun-crowned preacher, one of the most gifted soul winners I've ever met, a handsome man with a big grin who loved Jesus passionately. Bob said to me, "Adrian, there's an old man who lives on your church field. His name is Mr. Bourgeois." And said, "He has had a serious heart attack, a number of them, and he's going to die. He only has days to live. Adrian, he doesn't know how to be saved. Would you go by and tell Mr. Bourgeois how to be saved?" I said, "Yes, Bob, I will." I went and I knocked on the door. That kindly old man came to the door. I said, "Mr. Bourgeois." He said, "Yes." I said, "I am Adrian Rogers. I'm a Baptist preacher. May I come in for a few moments? I want to talk to you about Jesus and tell you how you can know that you're saved and going to Heaven when you die." He said, "Come in." I sat down and explained the marvelous, wonderful way that a man can be saved, by putting his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And that old man prayed with me, gave his heart to Jesus, and was saved, I believe, and I thank God for that. But that's not the end of the story.

Just a few days after that, my friend, Bob, the young man in his 20's, had lunch with his wife, wiped his mouth, put his napkin down on the plate, took a few steps across the living room, gave a gasp, and fell down dead. Now he had said to me, "Adrian, there's an old man on your church field who only has a few days to live." That old man lived for years. It was Bob who only had a few days to live. And you're thinking, "Well, I'm in good health right now. I don't know." You don't know what accident you may have on the way home. I'm telling you, folks, if you're not ready to die, you're not ready to live. And if you've not settled the fact that you're going to die, pardon me, but you're foolish.

Now when the beggar died, the Bible doesn't even say he was buried. Says the rich man was buried. You know what they did with beggars and people of that day? It's horrible, but they would haul them off and throw them in the garbage heap to burn and just to be consumed. And they wouldn't even have, many times, a burial. Nobody wanted to bury them. Sometimes the dogs would eat them.

But the rich man was buried. If it had been today, it'd been a silk-lined casket. Had it been today, there'd



have been a number of fine-priced automobiles out in front of the synagogue or the church or wherever it was. There would have been a profusion of flowers from one side to the other, a jungle, a riot of color. The air would be filled with perfume. Doubtless one of the greatest speakers would be there to eulogize the man. And one by one the people would, as they would dab their eyes, would say, "He was a good man. Our community will miss him," not understanding the Bible says in Romans 3:10, "There is none good, no, not one." And all of their words would not change his destiny. And all of the finery would not change his destiny, for his soul was in Hell before the undertaker knew he was dead.

Now, there was a contrast, a contrast in life and a contrast in death, but I want to get to the major thing. There's a **contrast in eternity**. Look if you will again in verses 22 and 23 of this chapter. Verse 22 of Luke 16 says, "The rich man died and was buried. And in Hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." A contrast in eternity.

Now, Jesus does what no one else can do. What Jesus does here is to pull back the curtain and let us look to the other side. Now, really, people, the only thing we know about life after death is what the Bible reveals and what Jesus says. Now one thing that we know is that death is not extinction. Death is not annihilation. There is life after death. "How do you know, Adrian?" Because Jesus teaches it. Your soul will be in existence somewhere when the sun, the moon, and the stars have turned to cinders. Your soul will be in existence somewhere. Somebody said that there is a tombstone and engraved on that tombstone are these words, "Pause, stranger, as you pass me by. As you are now, so once was I. As I am now, so you will be. Prepare to die and follow me." And someone wrote on that tombstone underneath it, I'm told, "To follow you, I am not content, until I know which way you went."

We're going to die, we're going to die. And in verse 22 you see a contrast. First of all you see what we call **the glories of Heaven**. The beggar died and was carried by the angels to, "Abraham's bosom." When he died there was an angel convoy that come, that came and took him away to a place called, "Abraham's bosom." What does that mean, "Abraham's bosom?" That's strange. Well, Abraham was the Father of the Faithful, the most revered of the Jewish leaders, the brightest star in the Heavenly kingdom for these Jews. To be with Abraham would be a place of incredible honor.

Now what does it mean to be in, "Abraham's bosom?" Well when people had a banquet of that day, they would not sit around the table as we sit around the table. They would recline. And the best place would be where you would recline, where your head would be near the chest, the bosom, of the host. What he was saying is here, this man, who'd been feeding on crumbs, is now at a banquet. And not only is he at a banquet, he is in a banquet at the very highest place of honor. What Jesus is showing is the great radical change that took place, this man as he's carried by the angels to Heaven.

Now if you're not saved, let me tell you something. I'm not trying to talk you into something grotesque, evil, vile, or bad. I'm not inviting you to a funeral; I'm inviting you to a feast. That's what our Lord is talking about. He's talking here about the epitome of glory when He says this man is, "Carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."

Now I would like to spend a lot of time today talking about Heaven, but I'm afraid we speak too much about Heaven and not enough about Hell, so I'm going to spend just a little time here talking about the beggar in, "Abraham's bosom."



What is Heaven? Let me just put it in several sentences. Heaven is all that the all-beneficent loving heart of God would desire for you. Heaven is all that the omniscient mind of God could design for you. Heaven is all that the omnipotent hand of God could prepare for you. Heaven will be just right.

When I was a little boy, I used to think, well, you know, maybe I don't want to go to Heaven, at least not right now, because I worried would they have any swimming in Heaven? Would you be able to fish in Heaven? Could you play baseball in Heaven? Have you ever thought about that? When you're a child, especially and think well, you know, "Heaven is sort of the next best place, but it'd be a little better to stay here." Don't be so foolish.

Billy Graham was on Johnny Carson's show one time and Johnny Carson said to him, "Billy, if I go to Heaven, will there be golf in Heaven?" Billy said, "Johnny, if you get to Heaven, and golf is necessary for your joy, there will be golf in Heaven." That was a great answer, that's a great answer. Now, don't anybody go around saying there's going to be golf in Heaven. I'm not saying that. I am saying, dear friend, that you will not have a longing, a desire that Heaven will not fulfill more than you can imagine. And I wish I had more time to talk about the glories of Heaven.

But I want to talk to you a little bit about the **agonies of Hell** as we talk about five minutes after death. And my task when I talk to you about Hell is not an easy one. Hell is the butt of jokes, the idea of ridicule. About the only time you see anything about Hell today is in the comic pages. A preacher who preaches on Hell is looked upon as either ignorant or cruel or both. You say, "Well, Adrian, you're not going to preach on Hell today, are you? I thought you were educated. Haven't you been to school?" I've been accused of that. Yeah, I've been to school, but I believe in Hell.

You know, let me tell you why I believe in Hell. And let me tell you, before I tell you why I believe in Hell, the devil is behind the teaching that there is no Hell. Because the devil knows if men don't understand the teaching of Hell, they'll not prepare to go to Heaven, they'll not give their hearts to Christ. It makes no difference to me if all of the scholars and all of the preachers and all of the scientists and all of the artists and all of the statesmen and all of the politicians and the liberal theologians put together said there is no Hell, that would not change one iota, one ounce, of what the Word of God says.

I'm preaching to you from the Word of God. First Peter chapter 1 verse 25 says, "The Word of the Lord endures forever." And the scoffers do not put the fires of Hell out. Men laughed at Noah when he spoke of the flood, but the Bible says in Genesis chapter 7 verse 22, "And all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in dry land, died." Men scoffed at Lot when Lot warned that God was going to destroy Sodom with fire and brimstone. But Genesis 19 verses 24 and 25, "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven." Men scoffed at Daniel when Daniel said that Belshazzar was going to be slain, that the kingdom was going to be overthrown. And Daniel 5 verse 30 says, however, "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain." Don't mock at the Word of God. Don't laugh at the Word of God. Listen to the Word of God.

Let me tell you **why I believe in Hell**. Number one, **because Jesus teaches it**. Now if you ever ridicule a preacher for being a Hell-fire preacher, you are ridiculing the Lord Jesus Christ. There are at least a hundred and sixty-two texts in the New Testament that speak of Hell and the judgment of the lost. Over 70 of these were issued by Jesus Christ Himself. I believe in Hell because I believe in Jesus.

Let me give you some words from Jesus. Put these in your margin. Matthew, chapter 5 verses 29 and 30. Jesus said, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee



that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell." Jesus is not saying that you can get to Heaven by plucking out your eyes or cutting off your hands. But what Jesus is saying, "It would be better to be a maimed saint than a healthy sinner on his way to Hell." Jesus is saying, "There's nothing that is more important than being saved." Nobody could accuse Jesus of being untruthful, and nobody could accuse Jesus of being unkind.

But not only do the words of Jesus teach that there's a Hell, **the death of Jesus demonstrates that there was a, there is a Hell.** Now be reasonable. If there's no Hell from which men need to be saved, why did Jesus die? If there is no Hell, then Calvary is the blunder of the ages. May I tell you that by the spit that they placed into the face of Jesus, by every hair of His beard that they plucked with their hands, by every lash that was laid upon His back, by every thorn that pierced His brow, by the agony and the utter midnight of Calvary, there is a Hell. Why did Jesus die if there is no Hell?

I believe in Hell because **the justice of God demands it.** Do you believe that a man can be a rapist, a murderer or whatever, commit suicide, and it's all over? No. There is a judgment to face. There must be a time when things are made right, when equity does come. Somebody says, "I hate the idea of Hell." Well, I do too, but it's a fact. I'm sure that it broke the heart of the Lord Jesus, but it's a fact. You may hate rats and snakes, but they're facts. The fact that you hate something, disbelief in Hell does not change it.

Now Jesus tells us **what Hell will be like,** and I want you to listen. Hell is a place of misery. It's a place of **sensual misery.** You will feel in Hell. In these verses that I read, in verse 23, 24 and 25, three times Jesus mentions the word torment. Hell is a place of torment. You're going to be tormented if you go to Hell. From time immemorial people have been asking, "Do you believe in literal fire in Hell?" Let me put it this way. I believe in real fire in Hell, real fire, whatever it is. Whether Jesus is speaking here in a metaphor of something that is even worse than the literal thing, it makes no difference. Jesus used the word fire.

Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 25 verse 41, "Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'" Now, if you don't like the idea of fire in Hell, take it up with Jesus, don't take it up with Adrian, because I'm just reading the Word of God today. Jesus spoke of fire. I had much rather Jesus say to me, "Adrian, you took My Word too literally," than to say, "Adrian, you explained it away." Now whatever it is, whatever Jesus intends to convey by using the word fire, may I tell you, friend, you do not want to go there.

And not only is there going to be that sensual misery, there will be that **emotional misery.** Luke 16 verse 25, Abraham says to this rich man, "Son, remember." Did you know that if you go to Hell, you'll take your memory with you? Psychologists tell us that we never, ever, really, truly forget anything. Memory will sting like a hornet in Hell. You will remember this service. You will remember this sermon. You will remember the prayers of your mother. You will remember every opportunity you had to be saved, and every time you stubbornly said no to the Lord Jesus Christ.

A young man was living wild and wicked. And as he was getting ready to go out, his things were there on the table by the front door. And his mother put a Gospel tract there. When he saw it, he picked it up and it made him angry, and he crushed it. He said, "There's a tract. You give me a tract. Today at work somebody



gave me a Gospel tract. Where can I go where no one will give me one of these?" She said with a broken heart, "My son, in Hell nobody will give you one." You will remember that there was a preacher that stood here and begged you to come to Jesus. You will remember that. "Son, remember."

There was a man who said to a wise man, "For one hundred dollars I will teach you how to remember things." The wise man said, "I'll give you a thousand dollars if you'll teach me how to forget some things." But in Hell you will remember.

And then not only is there that sensual misery, not only is there that emotional misery, there is an **eternal misery**. In Luke 16 verse 26 Abraham said, "Look. You can't come over here. We can't go over there. There is a great gulf fixed. There is a chasm between the righteous and the unrighteous." Now in this life that chasm can be spanned. Thank God for the cross where if you're on one side, you can come to the other side. And I love that song called, "Calvary." "O the mighty gulf that God did span, at Calvary." But do you know what this verse teaches us in verse 26? There is no second chance. Hebrews 9:27, "It's appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment." There is the eternal misery.

There's the **spiritual misery**. Luke 16 verses 27 through 29, this man in Hell says, "But look. I've got five brothers. Send somebody that he might witness to my brothers. Send Lazarus. Why, if somebody rose from the dead, they'd believe." Of course, Jesus was prophesying the fact that though He would suffer, bleed, die, and rise from the dead, people still will not believe. And He said, "No, they have Moses and the prophets. They have the Old Testament. If they won't believe that, they would not believe, though one rose from the dead." Now the sad thing is this. That this man in Hell is now beginning to be concerned about his loved ones and it's too late. Do you know what's wrong with many of us in this building today? We're going to wait till it's too late to be concerned about our loved ones.

A woman called me on the phone, she said, "Pastor! Pastor! Pastor! Pastor!" She was hysterical. I said, "Hold it. Get hold of yourself." She said, "Pastor!" I said, "What is wrong?" She said, "My daddy is in Hell! My daddy is in Hell! My daddy is in Hell!" I said, "What makes you think your daddy is in Hell?" She said, "My daddy died this morning. My daddy was not saved. My daddy is in Hell." I said, "Your daddy is not in Hell." She said, "Yes, my daddy wasn't saved." I said, "No, your daddy was saved." I said, "I went by last week and talked to your daddy." Her daddy was a medical doctor. "I asked your daddy if he knew Jesus and he said, "No." I asked him if he wanted to be saved; he said, "Yes." And I said, "I prayed with your daddy. Your daddy gave his heart to Jesus Christ, put his hand in mine, and told me that he trusted Christ as his personal Savior." I said, "Your daddy is not in Hell, your daddy's in Heaven. But I want to ask you a question. Did you witness to your Dad?" She said, "I was going to, I was going to." Do you have a loved one, somebody that you're going to speak to about this? Here's a man, too late, saying "Send somebody to speak to my brothers about this thing." Oh, the spiritual misery of Hell.

Now I must close this message, but I want to tell you something, friend. Listen to me. There is a Hell. Five minutes after you die, you will be in Hell and you will never come out. To get to Hell, you're going to have to struggle to get there. If you go to Hell, you'll have to work to go to Hell. You'll take more difficulty to go to Hell than you would to go to Heaven. You say, "Why do you say that?" You'll have to climb over some mountains to get to Hell.

You'll have to climb over this service, the music that we've sung, the prayers that we've prayed. You'll have to climb over God's Word that I've held in my hand today and preached to you. You're going to have



to put this under your feet and climb over it in order to get to Hell. You're going to have to climb over your own conscience, that is telling you right now, "Maybe I ought to give my heart to Jesus Christ and be saved." You're going to have to climb over that to get to Hell. You're going to have to climb over the conviction of the Holy Spirit because I have prayed and asked God to speak. And I know God's Holy Spirit is working today. You're going to have to climb over that in order to get to Hell. If you go to Hell, you're going to have to climb over the blood-stained cross of Jesus Christ. You're going to have to climb over Mount Calvary in order to get to Hell. You're going to have to climb over the prayers of these people who have prayed for you that you might go to Heaven. You're going to have to climb over those prayers in order to get to Hell. You're going to have to climb over your better judgment to get to Hell. But once you get there, you will not come out. "But where, oh, where will my spirit be, five minutes after I die?"

This may be the last worship service you'll ever be in. This may be the last Gospel message you'll ever hear. So I want to put it to you big and plain and straight. You don't have to go to Hell. You can be saved. God loves you. Jesus died for you. Jesus invites you, "And whosoever will may come." And I promise you, on the authority of this book that I preach from, if today, in repentance and faith, you will give your heart to Jesus Christ, sir, He will save you; lady, He will save you and He will keep you saved for all eternity. And don't gamble with your destiny.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Would you begin to pray for those around you who may not know the Lord Jesus? Father God, I pray today that many will come to Jesus. And Lord, that they'll not wonder about other people, that they will lay any pride in the dust, and, Lord, that they might humbly, joyfully acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior.

If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



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