

Jesus Explains Death and The Reality of Eternal Hell

This morning I would like to remind you of the most horrible doctrines in God's Word—the reality of an eternal Hell for those who do not believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

The amazing thing about Hell is how seldom we hear about it.

Jesus spoke more of Hell than Heaven—we speak more of Heaven than Hell.

Jesus warned of Hell from the start to the end of His ministry.

Jesus preached about the horrors awaiting the unsaved lost ones in public, in private, with saints and with sinners.

Jesus spoke much of it—we speak little of it.

It was almost 20 years ago I read an article in Moody Monthly that more clearly described Hell than I was even comfortable with. Let me share that with you.

That hideous doctrine¹ of hell is fading. How often have you thought of it in the past month, for instance? Does it make a difference in your concern for others, in your witness? Is it a constant and proper burden?

Our Lord's words on the subject are unnerving. In Luke 16, He tells us of a rich man who died and went to Hades (the abode of the unsaved dead between death and final judgment). From that story and a few other revelatory facts, we can infer several characteristics of hell.

First, it's a place of great physical pain. The rich man's initial remark concludes with his most pressing concern: "I am in agony in this flame" (Luke 16:24). We do not make enough of this.

We all have experienced pain to some degree. We know it can make a mockery of all life's goals and beauties. Yet we do not seem to know pain as a hint of hell, a searing foretaste of what will befall those who do not know Christ, a grim reminder of what we will be spared from.

God does not leave us with simply the mute fact of hell's physical pain. He tells us how real people will respond to that pain. Our Lord is not being macabre; He is simply telling us the truth.

¹ John Thomas, *That Hideous Doctrine*, MOODY MAGAZINE, Sept. 1985

First, there will be “weeping” (Luke 13:28). Weeping is not something we get a grip on; it is something that grips us.

Recall how you were affected when you last heard someone weep. Remember how you were moved with compassion to want to protect and restore that person? The Lord wants us to know and consider what an upsetting experience it is for the person in hell.

Another response will be “wailing” (Matthew 13:42). While weeping attracts our sympathy, wailing frightens and offends us. It is the pitiable bawl of a soul seeking escape, hurt beyond repair, eternally damaged. W wail is sound gone grotesque because of conclusions we can’t live with.

A third response will be “gnashing of teeth” (Luke 13:28). Why? Perhaps because of anger or frustration. It may be a defense against crying out or an intense pause when one is too weary to cry any longer.

Hell has two other aspects, rarely considered, which are both curious and frightening. On earth we take for granted two physical properties that help keep us physically, mentally, and emotionally stable. The first is light; the second is solid, fixed surfaces. Oddly, these two dependables will not accommodate those in hell.

Hell is a place of darkness (Matthew 8:12). Imagine the person who has just entered hell—a neighbor, relative, co-worker, friend. After a roar of physical pain blasts him, he spends his first moments wailing and gnashing his teeth. But after a season, he grows accustomed to the pain, not that it’s become tolerable, but that his capacity for it has enlarged to comprehend it, yet not be consumed by it. Though he hurts, he is now able to think, and he instinctively looks about him. But as he looks, he sees only blackness.

In his past life he learned that if he looked long enough, a glow of light somewhere would yield definition to his surroundings. So he blinks and strains to focus his eyes, but his efforts yield only blackness. He turns and strains his eyes in another direction. He waits. He sees nothing but unyielding black ink. It clings to him, smothering and oppressing him.

Realizing that the darkness is not going to give way, he nervously begins to feel for something solid to get his bearings. He reaches for walls or rocks or trees or chairs; he stretches his legs to feel the ground and touches nothing.

Hell is a “bottomless pit” (Rev. 20:1, 2 KJV); however, the new occupant is slow to learn. In growing panic, he kicks his feet and waves his arms. He stretches and he lunges. But he finds nothing. After more feverish tries, he pauses from exhaustion, suspended in black. Suddenly, with a scream he kicks, twists, and lunges until he is again too exhausted to move.

He hangs there, alone with his pain. Unable to touch a solid object or see a solitary thing, he begins to weep.

His sobs choke through the darkness. They become weak, then lost in hell's roar.

As time passes, he begins to do what the rich man did—he again starts to think. His first thoughts are of hope. You see, he still thinks as he did on earth, where he kept himself alive with hope. When things got bad, he always found a way out. If he felt pain, he took medicine. If he were hungry, he ate food. If he lost love, there was more love to be found.

So he casts about in his mind for a plan to apply to the hope building in his chest.

Of course, he thinks, Jesus, the God of love, can get me out of this.

He cries out with a surge, "Jesus, Jesus! You were right! Help me! Get me out of this!"

He waits, breathing hard with desperation. The sound of his voice slips into the darkness and is lost.

He tries again, "I believe, Jesus! I believe now! Save me from this!" Again the darkness smothers his words.

Our sinner is not unique. Everyone in hell believes.

When he wearies of appeals, he does next what anyone would do—assesses his situation and attempts to adapt. But then it hits him—this is forever.

Jesus made it very clear. He used the same words for "forever" to describe both heaven and hell.

Forever, he thinks, and his mind labors through the blackness until he aches.

"Forever!" he whispers in wonder. The idea deepens, widens, and towers over him.

The awful truth spreads before him like endless, overlapping slats: When I put in ten thousand centuries of time here, I will not have accomplished on thing. I will not have one second less to spend here.

As the rich man pleaded for a drop of water, so, too, our new occupant entertains a similar ambition. In life he learned that even bad things could be tolerated if one could find temporary relief. Perhaps even hell, if one could rest from time to time, would be more tolerable.

He learns, though, that "The smoke of [his] torment goes up forever and ever; and [he has] no rest day and night" (Rev. 14: 11 NASB).

No rest day and night—think of that. Thoughts of this happening to people we know, people like us, are too terrifying to entertain for long. The idea of allowing someone to endure such torture for eternity violates the sensibilities of even the most severe judge among us. We simply cannot bear it.

But our thoughts of hell will never be as unmanageable as its reality. We must take this doctrine of hell, therefore, and make sure we are practically affected by it.

A hard look at this doctrine should first change our view of sin. Most believers do not take sin as seriously as God does. We need to realize that in God's eyes and in His actual plan, sin deserves eternal punishment in hell.

We can actually learn, by comparison, to hate sin as God hates it. As the reality of hell violates and offends us, for example, so sin violates and offends God. As we cannot bear to look upon the horrors of hell, so God cannot bear to look upon the horrors of sin. As hell revolts us to the point of hatred for it, so also God finds sin revolting. The comparison is not perfect but it offers a start.

Second, the truth of hell should encourage our witness. Can we ever hear a sigh of weariness, see a moment of doubt, or feel pain without being reminded of that place? In all honesty, can we see any unbeliever, watch his petty human activities, realize what he has in store, and not be moved with compassion? It encourages us to witness in word and in deed.

That hideous doctrine may grip our souls in dark terror and make us weep, but let us be sure it also prompts us to holiness and compassion.

More than heaven--Christ spoke of hell.

More than love--Christ spoke of eternal destruction.

More than the church to come--Christ Jesus warned of God's wrath and judgment and hell.

In the time it takes me to say this sentence, 30 human beings awoke in eternity because they died on earth.

And, that was in 10 seconds.

Every hour, 6,464 die. That's 155,131 per day – about fifty-six million a year – and about 108 since I started one minute ago.

I believe that we must pause and reflect on the destination of all those travelers from earth. JESUS DID – HE preached about Hell at the height of His popularity. Look with me at Matthew as Jesus gives the most complete warning in all God's Word about the eternal horrors of Hell.

In Matthew Jesus explains that life has:

- 2 ENTRANCE GATES – the wide and the small
- 2 ROADS – broad and narrow
- 2 DESTINATIONS – destruction and life
- 2 GROUPS OF TRAVELERS – many and few
- 2 LIFESTYLES – the sayers and the doers
- 2 INEVITABLE ENDS – being throw into fire and entering the kingdom of heaven

Then He specifically warns everyone to flee, to avoid at all costs, to do whatever it takes to not end up in the Lake of Fire.

LET'S NOTE HIS WORDS – FOR HE WOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS. He created the measureless universe. He calls the numberless stars by name. He has numbered each of the hairs upon our heads, the days of our lives, the words we will give an account to Him for.

YES, HE IS QUALIFIED TO SPEAK, AND DOES, WARNING US OF HELL! AND, HE DOES SO 40+ TIMES IN MATTHEW ALONE – LET'S LOOK AT THEM. In fact, get a pen and mark these on paper or in your Bible. WHY? Hell is being lost by our generation as a true doctrine. The respected British theologian John Stott has recently moved away from it as are others. But no matter what men do, if Jesus Christ preached it, so should we.

Matthew 3:7, 10, 12 (John the Baptist Christ's forerunner said) But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to **flee from the wrath to come?** 10 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and **thrown into the fire.** 12 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will **burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."**

Matthew 5:22, 29-30 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' **shall be in danger of hell fire.** 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your **whole body to be cast into hell.** 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your **whole body to be cast into hell.**

Matthew 7:13, 19, 23 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that **leads to destruction,** and there are many who go in by it. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and **thrown into the fire.** 23 And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you; depart from Me,** you who practice lawlessness!'

Matthew 8:12, 28-29 But the sons of the kingdom will be **cast out into outer darkness**. There will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**." 28 When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. 29 And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here **to torment us before the time?**"

Matthew 10:15, 28 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be **more tolerable** for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! 28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to **destroy both soul and body in hell**.

Matthew 11:22-24 But I say to you, it will be **more tolerable** for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say to you that it shall be **more tolerable** for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

Matthew 12:32, 36, 41-42 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will **not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come**. 36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in **the day of judgment**. 41 The men of Nineveh will **rise up in the judgment** with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the South will **rise up in the judgment** with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 13:30, 40, 42, 48-50 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles **to burn them**, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' ' " 40 Therefore as the tares are gathered and **burned in the fire**, so it will be at the end of this age. 42 and will **cast them into the furnace of fire**. There will be **wailing and gnashing of teeth**. 48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but **threw the bad away**. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, **separate the wicked from among the just**, 50 and cast them into **the furnace of fire**. There will be **wailing and gnashing of teeth**."

Matthew 15:13-14 But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted **will be uprooted**. 14 Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, **both will fall into a ditch**."

Matthew 16:18, 25, 27 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the **gates of Hades** shall not prevail against it. 25 For whoever desires to save his life **will lose it**, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and **loses his own soul**? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the

glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will **reward each according to his works**.

Matthew 18:8-9 "If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be **cast into the everlasting fire**. 9 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be **cast into hell fire**."

CHRIST'S STORIES DIDN'T ALL HAVE GOOD ENDINGS...

Matthew 18:34 And his master was angry, and **delivered him to the torturers** until he should pay all that was due to him.

Matthew 21:41, 44 They said to Him, "He will **destroy those wicked men miserably**, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 44 And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it **will grind him to powder**."

Matthew 22:7, 13 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, **destroyed** those murderers, **and burned up their city**. 13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him **into outer darkness**; there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.'

Matthew 23:14-15, 33 14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive **greater condemnation**. 15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a **son of hell** as yourselves. 33 Serpents, brood of vipers! **How can you escape the condemnation of hell?**

Matthew 24:51 and will **cut him in two** and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.

Matthew 25:30, 41, 46 And **cast** the unprofitable servant **into the outer darkness**. There will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.' 41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you **cursed**, into **the everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels: 46 And these will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life."

Do any other Apostle write of the horrors of Hell? Yes, Paul, Peter, Jude, James and on and on they go!

Romans 2:9 **tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil**, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

2 Thessalonians 1:9 These shall be **punished with everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

Hebrews 10:31 It is a **fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but **cast them down to hell** and delivered them into **chains of darkness**, to be **reserved for judgment**;

Jude 6-13 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has **reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment** of the great day; 7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, **suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.** 8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. 9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" 10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. 12 These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; 13 raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars **for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.**

Revelation 14:11 And **the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever**; and **they have no rest day or night**, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Revelation 19:20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These **two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.**

Revelation 20:10-15 The devil, who deceived them, was **cast into the lake of fire and brimstone** where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. 11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were **cast into the lake of fire.** This is the **second death.** 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was **cast into the lake of fire.**

So why did the rich man of Luke 16 go to Hell?

What happened to him?

The word of God was never received, it never pierced the heart. When God's Word is received the life begins to change.

Self-centeredness begins to die

Self-indulgence begins to be disciplined away

Self-sacrifice begins to be pursued

Compassion, kindness, caring, and love take root and grow.

WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS?

Jesus Christ died for sinners – All who receive Him are forgiven of all their sins – All who are forgiven receive eternal life!

Sing – Prayer – “God Forgave My Sins”

NOTE these Laws of Death For Lost & Saved

THE DETAILS: Start in v. 22 as - No less a reporter than the Lord of Truth. Christ Jesus here gives a glimpse of the grave thru the door of death! Note these laws of death for lost and saved. His points were:

1. PERMANENCE v.22 Only the body dies, not the soul; Righteous go to bliss; Lost go to torments v.22
2. CONSCIOUSNESS v. 23 In the grave we are conscious, we can see and remember or recognize people even ones we never met. Intuitive recognition of Abraham who died 20 centuries before rich man and Lazarus. v.23
3. SIGHT: They can see "far off" - long distances and have recognition of those they knew in their lifetime "saw Lazarus" v.23.
4. COMMUNICATION: They can speak v.23
5. SENSATION: They can feel their body's physical desires are still present v.24 like "Thirst"
6. PAINFULNESS v. 24 In the grave the lost can still experience pain. Note the vivid contrast "that tongue that never lacked on earth calls for that hand that was unheeded at his gate..."
7. MEMORY v. 25 In the grave events from Earthly life may be recalled. Memory seems to be unimpaired.
8. HOPELESSNESS v. 26 In the grave there is no escape. "Great chasm" eternally beyond help "none can pass"
9. HORROR v. 27 In the grave the occupants of the torment want no one else to come it is so bad. Reality of constant torment only drove him to have others flee. [Recent punk rocker said wanted to go to Hell with friends and fun].
10. ISOLATION: No communication from the lost dead to living allowed, the dead have no influence in spirit world v.27
11. QUALIFICATION: Word of God determines the destiny of all, the rest passes away. v.29 Supernatural not always convince [note Christ's miracle and apostles and prophets only confirmed faith - never produces...]
12. INTUITION v. 29 Abraham seems to know the events after his life 2166 BC, including Moses 1446 BC and the prophets. Abraham knew history after his death [died 20 cent. B.C.] Knew Moses and prophets 600-1200 years after death.
13. FINALITY: No one goes back! v.31

So that is the content of the parable, but I think there is more. If you step back ask yourself, so what made the rich man so bad? Did he harm Lazarus? Did he commit gross moral sin? Was he a murderer, liar, or anything like that?

If we look carefully at these 13 verses we see that every word, every phrase is chosen to communicate such depths of meaning. Jesus contrasts two characters.

First, there is the rich man, usually called *Dives*, which is the Latin for rich. Each new phrase builds a picture of this man. The point Jesus is making is about the luxury in which he lived. His clothing was purple and fine linen. If you remember our series in Exodus you know that is exactly the elements God chose for the robes of the High Priests. In modern terms those robes would cost about \$75,000 to \$100,000. Even today a normal person would never be able to afford a wardrobe in which each outfit would require an average person to spend his entire earnings from 6-8 years of full time labor per outfit!

But Jesus goes on, this Dives or rich man ate a luxury feast every day. Infact, the Greek word Luke uses denotes a gourmet feeding on exotic and costly dishes. And Jesus emphasizes that he did this *every day*. Think of Bible times where normal people felt very fortunate to get to eat meat once in the week. And that was only after laboring for the other six days. But Dives not only didn't have to work it seems, but he also was feasting. This paints a picture by Christ of indolent self-indulgence.

When Lazarus waited for the crumbs that fell from Dives's table it is another insight into the Biblical world.. In Christ's time most people had no knives, forks or napkins. They usually ate food with their hands. But in very wealthy houses, the rich would clean their hands by wiping them on chunks of bread, which would then be discarded by the servants into the trash.

Now enters Lazarus. He sat by the trash thankfully getting any chunk of used hand cleaner bread.

Consider Lazarus. Because Lazarus is the only character in any of Christ's parables who is given a name we are led to ponder whether this may be a true life account. Lazarus is the Latinization of the Hebrew name Eleazar, which means *God is my help*. So Eleazar or Lazarus was a totally helpless, sick, and starving beggar, covered with ulcerated sores; and so helpless that he was unable to keep the dogs that roamed the street from bothering him.

So life passes for both and the scene in the after life shows a drastic switch in their conditions.

Jesus tells us that Lazarus is in the glory of Heaven's waiting room and Dives is in the torment of Hell's waiting room. Again I ask, what can we find was the sin of Dives?

- It wasn't cruelty, the text doesn't say he ordered Lazarus to be carted away from his gate.
- It wasn't hatred, the text doesn't say he locked his garbage cans.
- It wasn't murder, the text doesn't say he wounded Lazarus as he drove through the gate.
- It wasn't violence, the text never implies Dives was harming Lazarus at all.

The only sin we can see from God's Word is that Dives seems to never have even noticed Lazarus.

To Dives the Rich Man, this poor, dying beggar was just another clump of the landscape.

To Dives the Rich Man, it was “perfectly natural and inevitable that Lazarus should lie in pain and hunger while he wallowed in luxury. As someone said, It was not what Dives did that got him into heaven; it was what he did not do that got him into hell.”

So let me emphasize this, Jesus paints us an unforgettable picture. In it we see a man who could look on the world’s suffering and desperate needs and simply never feel the conviction of God.

This Rich Man would look at a fellow human who was starving and deathly ill, and do nothing about it.

So Jesus paints the punishment of those who never noticed. When God's Word is not received, Christ's compassion is also absent.

But why was the part added that Jesus told about refusing to send a warning to Dive’s family? Could it be Jesus is saying that to those who are exposed to God's Word and yet when they see the pain, sorrow, and dying of this world, and it moves them to no feeling and to no action, nothing will change them?

The terrible warning of the sin of Dives is not that he did wrong things, but that he did nothing².

LET’S SUMMARIZE THE BIBLICAL PRESENTATION OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT IN HELL IN FOUR POINTS:

1. IT IS THE PLACE OF ETERNAL, UNENDING PAIN, MISERY AND TORTURE - A darkness so impenetrable than the countless ages of eternity that none of the lost will ever see light or relief – no wonder they are wailing, howling and gnashing teeth.
2. IT IS THE PLACE WHERE BODY AND SOUL ARE TORMENTED. All will be raised, both saved and lost (Jn. 5:28/Dan. 12:2 – some to bless – the rest to horror. The worm dieth not. Mark 9:48 – Eating the conscience and the flesh? Never consumed by the hellish worms that feed upon them and never die.
3. HELL IS THE PLACE WHERE THERE ARE LEVELS OR DEGREES OF TORMENT – All face intense and unending pain. Some will face far greater.

HEBREWS 10:28-29 – Says the writer of Hebrews. “How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?”

Those who willfully reject Jesus Christ and trample, as it were, on the sacrifice He made for them with His own blood will receive much greater punishment than those who had

² Adapted from Barclay, William, *Daily Study Bible Series: The Gospel of Luke (Revised Edition)*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press) 2000, c1975.

only the light of the Old Covenant. And on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the pagan materialistic cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom than for the Jewish cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum—who not only had the light of the Old Covenant but the opportunity to see and hear the Son of God in person and to witness His miraculous works (Matt. 11:22-23).

In the parable of the slaves who awaited their master's return from the wedding feast, Jesus explains that "that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, shall receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of flogging, will receive but few" (Luke 12:47-48).

"Hell will have such severe degrees," writes John Gretna, "that a sinner, were he able, would give the whole world if his sins could be one less."

The torment of hell will be everlasting. Nothing will be so horrible about hell as its endlessness. Jesus uses the same word to describe the duration of hell as the duration of heaven: "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matt. 25:46). People in hell will experience the absence of hope.

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE INFINITE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST (C. H. Macintosh)

"If anything less than eternal punishment be due to sin, what need was there of an infinite sacrifice to give deliverance from that punishment? Did Jesus shed His precious blood to deliver us from the consequences of our guilt, if those consequences be only temporary? Grant us the truth of an infinite sacrifice, and we argue from thence the truth of eternal punishment."