

- ↪ Life on earth can go in many directions but life after earth will only go in two, where will you be? "Do you plan to go to heaven?" what's your plan? Can we agree if what God says is required differs from what you have or can produce, you're not going? Jesus, the eternal One, is the owner of both places, He created them. He knows what it takes to get into them and out of them.

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**The story breaks into three parts: Life, Death, and Life after Death.**

- 1) Life, Luke 16:19, this is extreme wealth, he was always decked out in the most expensive clothing. The other extreme is in Luke 16:20, the word for poor in the Greek here means to have literally nothing to your name. Extreme poverty and extreme illness, "laid at the gate" Extreme hunger, these weren't crumbs but chunks of molded bread Luke 16:21.
  - 2) Death, Luke 16:22, if Jesus paused here, the Pharisees and the average person that was listened would have thought, "of course, now he goes to hell to continue his torment", but that's not what happens!
  - 3) Life after Death, the rich man Luke 16:23. The same torment awaits those who die outside of Christ, who reject faith in God.
- ✓ The phrase "lifted up his eyes" is a statement of self-realization, it's like he's finally awake for the first time! Note, this compares to the statement of the prodigal son in Luke 15:17. He has memory there, Luke 16:25, "son, remember..." There will be no Alzheimer's in Hell. Eternity is place of clear memory and of sobriety, Luke 16:27, that's very sober of him. Rather indicting, don't you think about our current state, how sober are we when we fail to share, fail to care about those around us who are certainly headed to Hell, Romans 9:2-3 and Romans 10:1.
  - ✓ Do the people in Hell right now have a greater burden for people without Christ than we do? "Father"? He's a Jew, aren't all Jews saved??, Luke 16:24. Not any more than all Baptists are or all who believe in God are. There is no mention of rescue or repentance of any kind here Luke 16:25-26. No repentance, no chance to repent, to change of direction, no chance start doing what you should have been doing, all your chances for that are here and now. Hell is not remedial; it doesn't fix anyone; it crystalizes who you were in this life; crystalizes the permanency of your evil without relief or mitigation forever. A place where one suffers so profoundly that the tiniest drop of water would mean everything to you. You enjoyed all the providences of God but didn't love Him or thank Him in return? The kindness of God leads us to repentance, but you thought you needed no repentance.
  - ✓ It's not his riches that sent him, there's a second rich man in this story, even more wealthy than the first rich man, do you see him? His name is Abraham! So, it's not riches that condemn us but our response to them, riches just bring out what was already in our hearts. He's concerned about his brothers, Luke 16:27-28 but they had already been warned Luke 16:29-31. Isn't there something in you that says, "if God would just do some big miracles, everybody would get saved." No, they wouldn't! The greatest evidence of the reality of God is His Word. Some may be tempted to think that God is cruel by not pulling out all the stops and working some kind of global miracle so people will get saved. He's not doing it because He knows it won't work, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 10:1-5, they saw all the miracles and still wouldn't believe, John 12:37-38. Just a short time later Jesus did raise a man from the dead, another man named Lazarus, John 11:38-44. The result was that the religious leaders began to plot more earnestly to kill both Jesus and Lazarus, John 11:45-53 and John 12:10-11. It's not that they don't know, Romans 1:18-21, 28, 32, it's not that the most powerful communication of God isn't in place either, Hebrews 4:12.

**Abraham is right! The sword that divides the saved and the lost is people's response to God's written Word! The word of God sufficient, Abraham says it, Jesus says it, the testimony of history says it. Hebrews 4:1-3, they had seen all the miracles but refused to trust God. Jesus teaches that the wicked do not just cease to exist but go to a place of torment. Jesus said hell is indeed real. God desires none should perish there, 2 Peter 3:9. In fact, if you insist upon going there, you will have to do so over Jesus dead body, and His shed blood.**

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