

The Afterlife in Graphic Display

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Date: 23 March 2025

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[0 : 00] Parker. Take your Bibles with me and turn to Luke chapter 16.

We come to a passage that takes us a bit to another dimension. We've been singing about a holy God and we see a graphic display of his holiness in a way that maybe makes us uncomfortable. So I want to read, we're looking specifically this morning at Luke chapter 16 verses 14 through the end, through 31.

And as they did in Nehemiah's time, Nehemiah 8, 5 says that Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was above all the people.

And as he opened it, all the people stood. So as I open the book here, I invite you if you're able to stand in the honor of the words of Jesus.

[1 : 26] Luke chapter 16 verse 14. The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things and they ridiculed him.

And he said to them, you are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

The law and the prophets were until John. Since then, the gospel, the good news of the kingdom of God is preached.

And everyone forces his way into it. Or another way to read that is everyone is being intensely persuaded to enter it. But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the law to become void.

Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery. And he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery. There was a man, there was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen.

[2 : 46] And who feasted lavishly every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus.

Covered with sores. Who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off.

And Lazarus at his side. And he called out, Father Abraham, have mercy on me. And send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and to cool my tongue.

For I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, child, remember that you in your lifetime received good things.

[4 : 04] And Lazarus in like manner, bad things. But now he is comforted here. And you are in anguish.

And besides all this, between us and you, a great chasm has been fixed. In order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able.

And none may cross from there to us. And he said, then I beg you, Father, to send him to my father's house.

For I have five brothers. So that he may warn them. Lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham said, they have Moses and the prophets.

Let them hear them. And he said, no, Father Abraham. For if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.

[5 : 11] And he said to them, if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.

Wow. So, it is written. Let us pray. Father, help us as we come to this text. Some things in it are hard to grasp.

Some things in it are kind of wow and uncomfortable. We as believers dread for others to suffer.

And so, help us, Lord, grasp. Help us grasp. What Jesus is impressing upon us. And the warnings that he gives us.

Help us hear them. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. R.C. Sproul, in his commentary on the Gospel of Luke, introduces this passage with these words.

[6 : 33] He says, Most people, both inside and outside of the church, believe in the reality of heaven. Yet, at the same time, most people, both inside and outside of the church, deny the reality of hell.

For those who claim the name of Christ especially, this is a strange phenomenon. Inasmuch as we have the same source for affirming both heaven and hell.

The Lord Jesus Christ. And yet, when Jesus speaks of heaven, many Christians say, Yes, Lord. But when he speaks of hell, they say, No way, Lord.

In his earthly teachings, as they are recorded for us in the New Testament, Jesus spoke more about hell than he did about heaven. Clearly, it was a matter of great importance and concern for him.

Also, we hear so much more about hell from Jesus than we do from the Old Testament prophets or from the New Testament apostles. We are reluctant to believe the truth about hell when we hear it from the prophets or the apostles.

[7 : 45] And we believe it only scarcely more when we hear it from Jesus himself. Yet, there is no greater authority on these questions than Jesus of Nazareth.

If Jesus was wrong about this, there is no intelligent reason to believe him about anything else. If you're a Christian, denying the reality of hell is simply not an option.

So, why do we struggle so much with the idea of hell? There are many reasons, some of which are found in our care, concern, and compassion for our fellow human beings who may end up there.

I can't get happy in this life thinking of anyone going into such a miserable place. But, of course, I'm not yet finished with my sanctification.

And I still have a tendency to have more compassion for my fellow human sinners than I have for the glory of God. There are two significant reasons for our hesitation regarding, and at times our revulsion to, the doctrine of hell.

[9 : 02] The first is that we don't understand who God is. We have little to no understanding of the depth and the breadth and the height of his perfection, of his holiness.

The second is that we don't understand the sinfulness of sin. We are quick to say, to err is human and to forgive is divine. We are equally swift to affirm that no one's perfect.

The awfulness of sin hasn't really captured our understanding. What repentance we have before God is shallow at best as we sugarcoat our offenses.

Not only against our neighbors, but especially and ultimately against God himself. So are the words of R.C. Sproul.

In Luke 16, Jesus describes for us, particularly in verses 23 and following, what hell will be like.

[10 : 15] And he uses graphic language. Flames. Agony. A chasm. So why does he do this?

What are we to learn from this passage? Well, let's take a step back for a moment real quickly and just look at the whole of Luke 16, okay?

In verses 1 through 7, he tells a story. There is a rich man. Verse 1. He said to the disciples, there was a rich man. Then we see that same exact phrase again in verse 19.

There was a rich man. So we have a story at the beginning of the chapter. We have a story at the end of the chapter. Both about rich men. And in the middle of that, verse 14, are the Pharisees.

Who were lovers of money. Who, Jesus said, justified themselves. So just notice the framework.

[11 : 19] We see a frame here, okay? A story about a rich man at the beginning of the chapter. A story about a rich man at the end of the chapter. In between are these Pharisees. Jesus rebuking the Pharisees about their justification of themselves.

And he brings the law and the prophets to them. Okay? So that's important. I debated this week whether, do I just try to do an exposition of 14 to 18?

Because that's, there's enough there. I could do five weeks on that. Or do I take the whole, right?

Because it's a lot. And compared to how when we went through the Gospel of Mark much slower, we're going much quicker through the Gospel of Luke.

Trying to take bigger segments. So we're doing the whole thing. And I think what we see, it's, as the chapter shows, this is about riches.

[12 : 22] And then in the middle we have these Pharisees who love money. So I think what we have in what Jesus is saying to the Pharisees directly in verses 15 to 18 is a warning.

And then telling the story in verse 19 on is another kind of warning. And I think there are levels of warning. This section, I call it a portent of the torment in hell.

I like that word portent. Because it seems more ominous. Portent means a sign or a warning or even a foreshadowing. Like an omen.

This is more like the portrayal of portent. And you can't get away from the graphic language. I've always held this section.

I've never done a study before until this week of, okay, what is that? Is Jesus describing a real thing? What's going on here? So, I believe so.

[13 : 28] In these verses, I think Jesus gives two warnings in two different levels. The first level, the basic level in verses 14 to 18 is Jesus warns the Pharisees that those who justify themselves are disregarding God's word.

If you are justifying yourself before men, you are disregarding what God has said. And that's the basic level. That's why he brings the law and the prophets into them.

And then telling the story in verse 19 and on is a second warning. And it's a deeper level. So, on one level, those justifying themselves are disregarding God's word.

On a second level, those disregarding God's word will suffer eternal torment. Those disregarding God's word will earn eternal torment.

Okay. So, let's look at this. So, verse 14, we have the introduction of the Pharisees. Now, back in 16.1, Jesus was just telling this to the disciples.

[14 : 41] He tells this parable, right, about the rich man and the unjust or the dishonest steward, Lord, who squandered the money. And then quickly, because he's getting fired, he acts shrewdly.

And so, Jesus praised the shrewdness, not the dishonesty, but he praised the shrewdness to do what he could to secure his future.

And Jesus applied that in verse 9 to we should do work with what this unrighteous mammon, the money, which is not godly stuff, but use it for the benefit of others so that we might secure a place, treasure in heaven.

And then he says, also, verse 10, he talks about faithful and a little faithful and much. And then verse 13, he says, no servant can serve two masters. You cannot serve God and money.

So, he brings up money. And right there is where the Pharisees struggle or they ridicule him because they love money.

[15 : 47] They love money. They think under their theological system of the old covenant, if you keep the law, you are blessed. That is the system of health and wealth and prosperity.

If you want health and wealth and prosperity, you have to go to the Old Testament, not the New Testament. You have to go to the Old Testament and keep the law. Because God said, if you keep the covenant, you will be blessed.

You won't have enemies. You'll have health. You'll have wealth. You'll have prosperity. I will bless you, bless you, bless you. But if you disobey, if you break this covenant, you're cursed.

So, I think that the Pharisees are under the impression that they're keeping the covenant. And therefore, they're blessed. And therefore, riches are part of that blessing. And they love those riches.

Gosh, Abraham was rich, right? Job was rich. David, Solomon was rich. Solomon, great with his riches, wasn't he? Apostate in the end.

[16 : 52] What happened to David when he got rich? He fell. Abraham, he was rich, but he lived in tents. Isaac was rich, but he lived in tents.

Jacob was rich, but he lived in tents. Moses grew up in the palace. He was rich. What did he do? He refused it. So, if you want to find riches in the Old Testament, you're going to have a hard time justifying riches. Not that a rich man can't be a believer in Christ.

There are some. Abraham was. David was. Joseph of Arimathea in the New Testament. We have some, but they're very few.

They're not the norm. So, anyway, so they, because they love money and they think they're okay with money, they justify themselves. They hear this story that Jesus tells them.

[17 : 49] They ridicule him. They mock him. Literally, the word means they turn up their nose. Ha! Ha! So, Jesus sees this and recognizes this and turns to them and rebukes them.

You. You are those who justify yourselves before men. You put on a show. You act like you're okay. You justify yourselves before men. You give off the appearance that you're righteous. You check the boxes. You go to synagogue and you pay your tithe and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

You don't walk too far on the Sabbath, et cetera. All the rules, you keep the rules. But it's all external. God knows your heart. You justify yourself, but God knows your heart.

You think you're okay, but you're not okay. God knows your heart. And what you esteem, what's esteemed among men, what's exalted among men, like honor and praise and position and power and wealth is detestable inside of God.

[19:01] Woo. See, God has a different. God looks at the heart. And so he warns them.

Verse 16. Now he brings up the law and the prophets. So you're justifying yourselves, but let's talk about the law. Verse 15. Verse 16. The law and the prophets.

What's the law and the prophets? Well, the law is the first five books of the Bible, the books attributed to Moses' hand and writing. The prophets is everything after that. There's historical prophets and then there's the writing prophets and then there are the spoken prophets.

The law is what God set down as the foundation. The prophets are the ones who give an exposition of the law. They apply it. So he says the law and the prophets.

So that all of this, in other words, the Old Testament, what we call the Old Testament, the scriptures, the law and the prophets were until John. Since then, the kingdom of God is being preached and everyone is being intensely encouraged to enter it.

[20:15] So in other words, the preaching is intensified. Jesus is calling people to get into the kingdom. He's telling these stories in the narrow door and warning them, get in the kingdom.

But here's the statement, though. This is where we could spend a lot of time. Here's a turning point, he says, in verse 16.

The law and the prophets weren't until John. John who? Who's John? John the Baptist. Yeah. Back to chapter 2 or 3 of Luke at the very beginning of the story.

John the Baptist comes in. He's preparing the way, right? He is the Malachi guy. He's the voice crying in the wilderness. He's the guy that prepares the way. He's the bridge.

He's the in-between. He's got one foot in the Old Testament, one foot in the New Testament. He's new. He's still the old guy, but he's proclaiming the new guy. He's calling for repentance.

[21:13] Repentance is how you prepare for the coming of the Lord. And all the sinners and tax gatherers followed John and got baptized in him and were repenting. Guess who didn't do that?

Guess who didn't get baptized by John? Pharisees. I need to. So Luke makes the commentary back in chapter 7 that the Pharisees and the scribes rejected God's purpose for themselves because they didn't get baptized under John.

They saw no need of repentance. They're okay. They keep the law. Right. So since then, since then.

So there's a change going on. It sounds like Jesus saying, law and the prophets weren't until John. Now we're done with those. Sounds like, right? Now we're done. The law's done. Now it's the kingdom of God.

Right? So he says that. Since then is the gospel. Jesus brings the kingdom, which is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets. And all our, now our text reads, and most translations read it as everyone forces his way into it.

[22:25] That, the, the, the word forcing his way into it, that's, that would be middle voice. It could just as well be passive voice, which means not that they're doing the action, but the action's done to them.

And in Greek, the, the, the middle and the passive look exactly the same. So you have to make an interpretation. How do I read it? Well, I have to read it according to the context. So in the context, is everyone forcing their way into the kingdom?

No, no. Some are pursuing it. Absolutely. But not by no means all, but all are being persuaded. All are being intensely, forcefully urged to enter it.

That's the idea. And that's what I call preaching. There's teaching, you know, and then there's preaching, which doesn't mean shouting. It just means a strong forcefulness.

Okay. That's what it means. I caught that from John MacArthur. It's like that guy preaches.

Interesting.

[23 : 32] As I, as I became pastor, I was, I was teaching. That's what I did. Teach, teach, teach. I started to hear some of these preachers, which weren't shouters. They were just urgently appealing.

I got it. Oh. Because the New Testament tells me that part of my job is to preach. It is to proclaim. It is to herald. It is to solemnly testify as Paul does in Acts.

So, in other words, you know, put the forcefulness into it. Anyway. That's what Jesus did. Jesus preached the kingdom. He proclaimed it.

He didn't just talk about it. He didn't just share it. He proclaimed it. See? He proclaimed it. And just a little aside about preaching.

I got deeply convicted about this when taught through Corinthians. And Corinthians talks about that the gospel is foolishness. And that preaching is also foolishness.

[24 : 38] It's a method, even in the first century, which was like, no. But Paul said, but that's God's method, so that's what I got to do. And that's how God saves people.

Through the foolishness of the gospel and the foolishness of the preaching. And the foolishness of the means, which is not manipulation, but the work of the Holy Spirit. Anyway. 1 Corinthians 1 and 2, that helped me a lot.

It's also not drawing crowds. If I could heal and stuff, that might draw some crowds. We're saying this is holy.

We have holy hands. They're holy because God uses them. You know, so my voice, even though, you know, corruptible, can be a holy vessel when God uses them.

And that can bring a different kind of healing. So law and kingdom. So has the kingdom replaced the law? Is that what Jesus means, verse 16?

[25 : 46] Does it mean? So verse 17. So Jesus is going to clarify, no. The law is not ended. Things have changed. Absolutely. There's a difference. There's a distinction. Something has happened to change things.

A fulfillment has come. A greater power has come. What the law talked about, Jesus activated. Jesus enabled us to be people that can actually do the law.

So what does he say? Verse 17. Hey, the law's not over. It's easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot. One, you know, in the Hebrew writing, there's just a little, just a little dot over the letter and changes the letter all the way.

What looks like an R then becomes a D. We can put a dot over there. Same word, but you got to look closely because it's, anyway. So not even that, not even that passes away.

The law is still effective. It stands. It has not fallen. Because the kingdom has come, it does not lessen the moral standard of the law.

[26 : 59] And actually, Jesus increases the standard. Have you ever read Matthew 5? You have heard that it was said. But I say?

You have heard that it was said. Right? Do not commit adultery. What do I say? Even look at a woman to lust. You have committed adultery in your heart.

And you are liable to hell. See, adultery, that was a big wall. That was kind of safe. Right?

Usually. Not in our society, but. And all of a sudden, Jesus takes the wall down and it's like, hello. Hello. We're all guilty.

So the law is still there. And then an example, verse 18. I know you're all asking, why is that verse there? What does that have to do with anything? Divorce or remarriage? Why does he bring that up?

[27 : 59] He's talking about the law. He's talking to the Pharisees. He's going to talk about riches. He brings up divorce and remarriage. What does that have to do with? It's an example of how the law has not fallen. The law still stands.

In fact, Jesus has increased the law. For example, Jesus says, verse 18, everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery.

No exception. And everyone who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery. That's the law. That's the standard.

Period. I know you're going to say, oh, Matthew, he gave an exception. That was for premarriage. I'm not going to go through the deal on divorce or marriage.

Taught on that. It's in our archives back in 2019. We went through the gospel of Mark chapter 10. We dealt with it in specific there. We looked at Moses. We looked at Jesus.

[29 : 03] We looked at Paul. We looked at all those and worked it out a little bit. Still scary. But here's the thing. You hear that.

Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery. How are you doing with that? Has that nailed anybody? Or anyone who's married a divorced woman commits adultery. Now, if you're sitting there going, I'm okay. I'm good. I'm all right. If you think you're okay, all right. Matthew 5. Right?

I say, look, if you just do it in your heart, you're done. You're toast. If you think you're okay, oh, I'm okay with that one.

If you think you're okay, look deeper at the law. And look deeper at what Jesus says about the law. Because if you're not toast now, you will be pretty quickly.

[30 : 12] His point is the law slays you. The law slays you. Yes, I have come. The law and the prophets, their whole thing was until John.

Now, I have come to fulfill it. I have come to bring it to completion. I have come to enable you. I brought a whole new power. The law is the law.

The law is holy and righteous and good. There's nothing wrong with the law. What's wrong is we can't keep it. That's the problem. God made a covenant with Israel.

How'd they do? I mean, not even three days. While he's still up on the mountain, they're doing, you know. So they didn't know.

The whole Old Testament is proof that you can't keep the law. Even David, David, he had a heart for God. He was zealous for God.

[31 : 14] And what happens? He got rich. He got prosperous. He got servants to do the war thing for him. He could stay home. And there is his downfall.

So, okay. Jesus is warning these Pharisees who love money that those who justify themselves are disregarding God's word.

Because the very thing that they love is what God's word speaks against. God's word speaks about loving your neighbor.

God's word speaks about, we're talking Moses now, opening your hand and sharing with the needy. The Proverbs and the prophets talk about those who are rich are going to fall.

And those who are poor and look to the Lord will be raised to us. So, he calls them to hear the law.

[32 : 22] So, here's our question. What's the right use of the law? Does the law still apply for us as believers? I mean, we're gospel, right? We don't need the law, right? We got Jesus, right?

Well, yeah. In a lot of ways, yeah, absolutely. Jesus fulfills the law and his law actually supersedes the other law. And he says it very clearly. I say, you have heard, here's that commandment, I say.

Right? So, what's the right use of the law? And these are Pharisees who justify themselves. Where does our justification come from? If we can't justify ourselves, how can we ever be justified?

Yeah, absolutely. So, in Romans 3, Paul brings both these concepts together. He talks about the law and the law and the prophets, and he talks about justification that it comes in Christ. Jesus has brought all of that together.

He's brought the law, and he's brought forgiveness, and he's put it all together in himself. Here's what Paul says, Romans 3. Romans 3, he mentions the law eight times in this passage.

[33 : 27] Okay? So, he's dealing with the law. Because Paul was zealous, right? He was a zealous Pharisee for the law. So, if anybody's going to speak authoritatively about what the difference about the law is under Christ, it's Paul.

And he does it very carefully here. Romans 3, 19. Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law. Why?

So that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. So, that's the law. The law says, here's my standard. You're accountable to me.

You meet this standard, or you're dead. For, Paul says, by works of the law, no human being will be justified in his sight. So, he's just saying, nobody can keep the law.

Not one will be justified in his sight. Since through the law comes the knowledge of sin. See, what's the purpose of the law? Purpose of the law shows God's holy standard.

[34 : 31] Thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt, right? That's the standard. Thou shalt, have you? Have you? Only one God? Never taken his name in vain?

Always honored your parents? Never committed adultery? Never committed a murder? Never committed lying? Never coveted your neighbor's stuff? Ow, that one, that one, really.

And the no other gods before me, that one, that one's tough. A lot of idols going around. And if you still think you're okay with those, go to Matthew 5 and see what Jesus says.

But you should not be okay reading those 10. You should not be okay. No one. Because through the law comes the knowledge of sin. The law is revealing my sin.

That's its purpose. It's to show me that I can't. It's to show me that I need mercy. It was to show David that the only thing after he committed adultery and then murder and lied and conspired, after he did all those covenant breaking things, he cried out for mercy.

[35 : 45] Psalm 51. If I could offer a sacrifice, I would do it. There's no sacrifice for what I did. So have mercy. Oh, David was slain.

Okay. So what's the law? So the law revealed sin. But now, so how do we find justification? But now, Paul goes on, the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law.

Although the law and the prophets bear witness to it. See, the law and the prophets were pointing to Christ all along. They were pointing to another righteousness. Because the law said, you're not righteous.

There's another one coming. The righteousness of God, here it is. The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

And are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Jesus paid a price. Whom God put forward as a propitiation.

[36 : 48] A satisfaction of his wrath. A propitiation by his blood to be received by faith. It's received. This was to show God's righteousness. Because in his divine forbearance, he had passed over former sins.

It was to show his righteousness at the present time. So that he might be just. And the justifier of the one who has faith in Christ.

So Paul says, do we then overthrow the law by this faith? Are we done with the law by this faith? By no means. No.

On the contrary. We uphold the law. We need the law. It's the bad news. So that you can receive the good news of the gospel. How's the law bad news?

It's not bad news in itself. It's holy, righteous, and good. It's perfect. It's a standard. It's just holy.

Problem is, where are we? That's the bad news.

[37 : 54] Absolutely. All have sinned. And fallen way short. So if you think you're okay, please listen.

The law reveals our sin, reveals that we cannot keep it. That's the bad news. The law shows that we are under the wrath of God. The good news is that God gives his righteousness through faith in Christ.

Christ, who kept the law, who paid our debt, and gives us his righteousness in exchange. So the first warning we have here, Jesus rebuking the Pharisees, is that those who justify themselves, those who say they're okay, those who act like they're fine, those who think, I'm doing fine, I haven't broken verse 18, I haven't broken, you know, Exodus 20, I'm good.

I keep bringing you back to Matthew 5. But those who justify themselves are disregarding God's word. Because God's word says, no, you are not just.

You are not righteous. You're not okay. You are not okay. That's why I sent my son. That's why I sent my son.

[39 : 15] So that if you trust in him, you can be okay. But first you gotta kneel. First you gotta admit.

First you gotta turn. First you gotta repent. First you gotta accept, I'm nowhere close to okay. So that brings us to a second warning, which is kind of another layer.

Those who justify themselves are disregarding God's word. Well, here's the second part. Those who disregard God's word, earn eternal torment.

I say earn what you deserve. If you disregard his word, you get what you deserve. Eternal torment. Here comes the uncomfortable part, right? Here comes this story that we go, oh boy, oh boy, I don't like this. God is love. God is forgiving.

[40 : 19] Yes. God is holy. And he is just. And as a just God, he must do what is right. Now Romans said he, in his forbearance, he overlooked sins, right?

He didn't bring, I mean, he didn't slay the Israelites every time they, right? He was patient. He's long suffering. That's just the kind of guy who doesn't want to do that. At some point he has to draw the line.

So we, we, today we did the flood, right? There was, there was a point where he had to draw the line. He had to say, that's enough. There's, there's coming another time. There came a time in Israel's history when God said, that's enough.

You go to Babylon. And when you come back, it's not your land. Still not their land, by the way. Still no temple.

Okay. That's huge. Are the Jews hearing that? 2,000 years, no temple. Why not? Maybe someday there will be.

[41 : 26] I don't know. Those disregarding God's word will reap eternal torment. Those dismissing, putting off the word of God will earn eternal torment.

They will reap what they have sown. So what's the afterlife like? Okay. So Jesus gives us some things. So is this a parable?

We had this talk in class downstairs. Is this a parable? It's not called a parable. And some say it's a true story because there's the name Lazarus in it. So that Jesus is referring to an actual real thing. That's, that's entirely possible. I think what Jesus is describing though gives us a feel for what the afterlife is.

What the afterlife of the unbeliever is going to be like. Okay. So, so let's look at some of this. First of all, what's it like? Well, first of all, there's going to be conscious torment. And notice in verse 19 to 22, he, he, he sets up a contrast.

[42 : 31] There's a rich man and there's a poor man, right? There's the life and the death of the rich man and the poor man. The rich man had it all. He's got rich clothes. He's got rich food. He's living it up, right?

Eat, drink and be merry. He's doing all that. Meanwhile, just outside his front gate is laid a man in the opposite of situational life.

He's not dressed in fine clothes. He's dressed in sores. He's not eating sumptuously every day at the table. He's lying on the ground, hungering for the crumbs to fall from that guy's table.

Right? And to top it off, dogs for the Jew, unclean, scavenger, wild dog. Not talking about, you know, Lassie. We're talking about Cujo or something like that.

I don't know. What is that? I don't even know what that is. I think it's a Stephen King movie or something. We're talking not nice little puppies, but they're licking his wounds.

[43 : 35] So maybe God is helping him. His name Lazarus comes from Eleazar, so it's shortened from Eleazar to Lazarus, which means God helps.

And you look at this in his life. How did God help him? Well, maybe the dogs were helping. I don't know. But he certainly helped him afterwards. So you have these two absolutely stark contrast differences.

And then even their death. Even their death is described differently. Lazarus dies, and he's carried by the angels. That's cool, isn't it? Carried by the angels.

Is that real? Is that real? Is that what happens? Well, who's telling the story? Okay, I think we can count on it. Carried by the angels.

To the bosom of Abraham. To the side. To the honored position by Abraham. What happens to the rich man? Well, he died and he's buried. No angels.

[44 : 39] But he's not just buried. Okay, when you're buried, what happens next? Well, verse 23. In torment. In torment. In Hades.

Being in torment. He lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. So he is conscious. He's aware. He recognizes. Right?

But he's in torment. In Hades. So this is a different word than hell. Hades. Which usually means grave. Speaking of afterlife.

It's the same word. It's the word used in the Old Testament. In the Greek part of the Old Testament. For Sheol. You know, I go down to Sheol. Right? I'm not abandoned to Sheol.

Right? So the grave. But it's more than the grave. The word for hell is Gehenna. Right? Jesus talked about that. That's fire. Hell is, I think, what is after judgment.

[45 : 39] Hades is pre-hell. It's kind of maybe the, I don't know. How much do you take from this? Right? All this stuff is so sketchy. It's like, how do you put it together and different people put the

puzzle together differently?

But I think Hades, at the very least, is a pre-hell. For the unbeliever. So you go to the grave, you're not just out. You're not done. You're not annihilated.

You're not just stop existing. You still exist. You're in Hades. Where you have conscious, if you do not know Jesus Christ, you are in conscious torment. The word is tortured.

It's a word that they used to, when they talked about taking a prisoner, strapping him down, tormenting him to get the truth out of him. It's that kind of, it's just. And it's, no, we're not talking about physical.

He's died, right? His flesh has died. So now what's the torment? It's at least mental, spiritual. Anguish. And he's conscious.

[46 : 41] So then we learn, secondly, we learn that Hades, that afterlife is a permanent separation. Verse 24. He makes a request of Abraham.

He sees Abraham. He sees Lazarus at his side. He calls out, Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, because he's still a servant to me. Send Lazarus to serve me.

Send Lazarus to dip his finger in the water and then give me a drop on my tongue because I'm dying. For I am in anguish in this flame.

More graphic image. Notice that he seeks, he recognizes, how does he recognize Abraham? I don't know. Name tags?

I don't know. He, he recognized, how did, how did Peter recognize, you know, Moses and Elijah in the transfer? I don't know. How does he know this is Abraham? He just knows.

[47 : 40] And by the way, he, he knows Lazarus. How did he know Lazarus? It clues us in that he knew who Lazarus was all along. Well, it says he was dropped off from my trail.

Right, right. Yeah, at his gate. At his gate. But he's, he's callous to this guy. But he knows his name. He knows who he is.

And so when he sees him in Abraham's bosom, he calls, he sees him and he asks Abraham to send him to give him relief. It's just interesting that he knows who he is.

Which, which tells us that he was callous to Lazarus through his life. Just uncompassionate. He's got all rich food. And what, what, Lazarus gets it when they throw the trash outside?

I, I, I don't get it. What's, what's with this guy? So Abraham says, what's Abraham's answer? Can you have any relief after life, in the afterlife?

[48 : 38] Abraham said, child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things. And Lazarus and like man are bad things. But now he is comforted here and you are in anguish. Period. You have reaped what you sow.

You have made your decision. There is not a purgatory. There is not a second chance. There's not another way. And by the way, add to that verse 26. Besides this, between us and you is a great chasm, a great gulf, a huge valley in between has been fixed, has been perfect passive.

Which means God fixed it. God established it. There's nothing we can do about it. And you can't come from here to there.

Lazarus can't come over to you. And you can't come over here. Apparently, you know, you're, you're not disembodied spirits that can float around. You know, you're, you're, you're stuck where you are. However that looks, it's a permanent separation.

No crossing. No access. No bridge. Okay. Request one.

[49 : 48] Knock down. No relief. Torment. Conscious torment with no relief. Okay. Do we want to go any further? Isn't this bad enough? No, we have to go to the next one because it explains the whole bottom line to it.

Why is this the way it is? Why is this person's suffering conscious torment? And, and, and he's permanently separated from comfort.

Well, verse 27, we have a second appeal. He makes now to Abraham. Okay. Then I beg you, father Abraham, to send Lazarus to my father's house for I have five brothers so that they, he may warn them lest they come to this place of torment.

Finally, this guy shows an ounce of compassion. He's got compassion for his brothers now. At least, at least don't let them come here too. At least let me do that.

Please send Lazarus because if he comes from the dead, they'll, they'll believe him. Right? And, and Abraham says, verse 29, sounds kind of cold, doesn't it?

[50 : 55] Abraham said they have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them. That's it. So, so, so, so the rich man argues again.

He said, no, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, then they'll repent. I mean, a miracle, I mean, raised person from the dead, that'll do it. Wouldn't that convince you? Wouldn't that convince you?

Wouldn't a resurrected body from the dead convince you? You think so? Sign from heaven, I would have signed from hell. And he said, verse 31, if they don't believe, if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.

In other words, a miracle, a resurrected warning is not a greater persuasion than Moses and the prophets.

If you have Moses and the prophets, in other words, if you have the Old Testament scriptures, that is enough. Hear them.

[52 : 09] Have you heard them? Or have you disregarded them? See, if you've been disregarding them all along, a raised body will not convince you. Remember what Jesus said about signs, an evil generation seeks the sign, right?

Amen. So, here's the question. How is it that Moses and the prophets is enough? How is it that Moses and the prophets can lead to salvation from hell?

How is it? Does Moses and the prophets say enough? Well, it was enough for Abraham. Well, he didn't even have Moses and the prophets, did he? It was enough for Moses.

It was enough for Joshua. It was enough for David. It was enough for Daniel. Who else? There's a multiple. It was enough for Ruth. Ruth had been hearing it for 10 years.

And she showed up in Boaz's field. And he says, I know who you are. You're the one seeking refuge under the wings of Yahweh. You heard about Yahweh. You want our God.

[53 : 18] So, Boaz is like, I think I want you. Well, okay. Then the love story started. Yeah, there's enough.

So, here's what Paul says to Timothy. 2 Timothy 3 says, indeed. Here's the situation in the last days. All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Okay. Circle that verse. That's where our life is. All who desire to live godly. Just the desire to live godly. Will be persecuted.

That's your life. Some have said for Christians, we experience hell on earth. And later we experience heaven. Those who experience heaven on earth, you know, the best life now, will experience hell later.

All who desire to live godly will be persecuted. You will suffer. You will be under trial. You will go through hardship. Look at Lazarus.

[54 : 22] Who wants to be Lazarus? Look at Jeremiah. Look at Ezekiel. Look at these people. Look at Daniel. Everything stripped from him.

Serving a false god. Forced to serve. I mean, look at these people. Okay. Look at Moses. Gave up everything. Gave up everything.

For the reproach of Christ. Okay. You desire to live godly. You desire to follow Jesus. You'll be persecuted. You'll go through hardship. That is our life.

Amen. But that is not our hope. Amen on that one. Wow. So, you'll be persecuted. Wow. Evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

But, as for you, here's what you do. If you're desiring to live a godly life in Christ Jesus and you're being persecuted, here's what you do. Here's what you do.

[55 : 23] As for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed. No new stuff for you. Get back to what you know. Get back to what you were convinced of.

Knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, Moses and the prophets.

Which are what? So, what does he have to say about the Old Testament? Which are able, watch this, to make you wise for what? Salvation.

What kind of salvation? Salvation. Through faith in Christ Jesus. Did you know the Old Testament does that? Do you know the Old Testament is able to make you wise for salvation in Christ Jesus? Through faith. Do you know that the Old Testament preaches saved by grace alone? Through faith alone? In Christ alone? To the glory of God alone?

[56 : 24] According to the scriptures alone? Did you know that's always been true? That didn't just become true in the 16th century. It didn't just come true when Luther and Calvin and Zwingli and all those guys got the Holy Spirit and their lives were changed and they went and were persecuted.

Unfortunately, they got into a battle over baptism. They were just idiots. So, even though they're wonderful heroes, they're also quite tainted and human.

Just like we are. What do we argue about these stupid things for? Oh, I'm not going to that church. They don't believe in sin. You've been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ.

All scripture, in fact, Paul says, all scripture, every word of it, is God-breathed by God. It's breathed out. It's the breath of God. And it's profitable. All scripture is profitable for teaching, for reproof, correction, and for training in righteousness.

All of it can do that. So that. What's its purpose? So that the man of God, the man who looks to God, the man who believes in God, the man who desires to be godly, may be complete, equipped for every good work.

[57 : 51] So that the man of God may be adequate. One of the translations is adequate. You feel inadequate? Anybody feel inadequate? Here's where you get your adequacy.

Here's where you get your adequacy. It makes you adequate. It makes you complete. Why? Because it points me back to Jesus. It points me to God.

It points me away from the things of this world. It points me to what matters. It shows me what I value. It makes me sing the psalms that we sing. By the way, we sang one verse of Psalm 42.

I wish we could expand that song to include the other verses that David wrote. I talked to Dan about that before.

I tried to do that. I like singing scripture. Especially Psalm 42. It's dark. It's dark.

[58 : 52] I like the dark songs. Because the dark songs like that, my soul is cast down. The dark songs are the ones that are real.

Not that the others aren't. But when you have been persecuted, when you go through hardship, what can you sing? I want to sing real.

Well, and the song says, hey, I got all this bad stuff going on. Right? My soul is cast down. But I speak to my soul. Instead of listening to my soul, I speak to my soul. And I tell my soul, soul, put your hope in God.

Take your eyes off your stuff and get your eyes back. I mean, it's good stuff. It's not, you know, okay. Not about that. Boy, I'm getting sidetracked a lot today.

I hope some are still with me. Thank you. I appreciate that. So, the Old Testament. Paul tells Timothy, the sacred writings are able and all scripture is profitable.

[60 : 02] So, the Old Testament. And he was just talking about the Old Testament at that point. We didn't have, you know, when Paul was there, the Gospels were just starting to come out. None of Paul's writings were being circulated quite yet.

We're just talking about the Old Testament. The Old Testament is what Jesus taught from. The Old Testament is what the apostles taught. The Old Testament is what Paul and Peter and John gleaned and applied to us New Testament truths.

The Old Testament is the foundation for the New Testament. We can't understand this without the Old Testament. So, hear the warning. Now the kingdom has come and it clearly reveals the promises of the Old Testament that are fulfilled in the New Testament.

It shows the shadows of the Old Testament that have become substance. So, hear the warning. Those disregarding God's Word will reap an awful torment forever.

And that's the bad news. The good news. And, beloved, we have to hear the bad news. We have to know that Jesus is pushing this.

[61 : 10] He is being graphic about this. He is speaking about what is true. Anybody knows what the afterlife is like?

Huh? And can warn us before we get there. So, those disregarding God's Word will reap, will earn awful torment forever.

But the good news. The good news. It's not what God wants. The good news. What God wants is He sends His Son. He loves us. He loves our rebel selves.

He loves us whether we broke verse 18 or not. Whether we broke Exodus 20 or not. Whether we broke Deuteronomy 5 or not. Whether we broke everything Jesus raised in Matthew 5.

He loves us. By the way, talk about divorce or remarriage. Remember John chapter 4? Jesus met a woman. Ooh, a woman. Came alone because she was so shameful.

[62 : 16] Remember what He said about her? Oh, you've been married how many times? And now the man you're living with? Is not your husband? Remember that? So, Jesus says, here's the law.

And Jesus says to this poor woman who has shattered that law. He says to her, I got water. I got water. I can relieve you.

I can take away your shame. I can bring salvation. I can save you. See, because I've broken the law of God. I'm not beyond redemption. Huh.

See, that's the good news. The good news is God sends His Son as a remedy for our ruin. So, turn to Him. Listen to Him. Turn to Him. Seek mercy. Now. Don't put it off.

Don't dismiss the Word. God has not left us to ourselves. He has not abandoned us. He seeks the rebel. He gives us every opportunity.

[63 : 16] And it's only those who disregard His gracious warnings who will earn God's justice. Let us pray. Father, what do we do with this text except lay on our face before You?

What do we do? These are the words of Jesus, so we can't dismiss them. These are Jesus' warnings that the law and the prophets still have a purpose.

And they're important. They're essential to drive us to Christ as our only hope. So, lift up Jesus before our eyes as, yes, He is representing a holy God.

He is a holy Son who sets the law straight, who raises the law, who keeps the holy law, but offers to us who can't keep it His gracious forgiveness.

And so, help us, O God, to seek Him back. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.