

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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Eternity

Reading

Luke 16:19-31

Introduction

The book of the Revelation has a very interesting description of those who have never accepted the Lord as Saviour. They are called "earth-dwellers" (Rev. 11:10, them that dwell on the earth), and it indicates those who in a very real way have made this earth their home.

They live for nothing outside the circle of the globe and their world, and it is a giddy circle of work, rest, sleep, work, rest, sleep. Days become weeks and weeks turn into months and months into years. The excitement of sports dies whenever their favorite team loses, the delight of a new car, etc., soon diminishes, and life becomes the humdrum of daily living. They get bored for nothing satisfies, many commit suicide. From time to time they are faced with death when looking at an individual in a casket or coffin. They speak of how peaceful the individual looks and someone will speak a few words of empty phraseology and of how wonderful the person was. Everything that can be done is done to alleviate the starkness of death and eternity. Unless it is someone exceedingly evil, the normal expression is, "they are happier now". Humanity lives within the box of time and sense. This is so tragic and reminds me of a Russian submarine which sank with all hands on board. How utterly foolish it would have been for those seamen to live as if all there was to life was within that metal tube. Yet, this is how the earth dwellers live and blindly imagine what a wonderful life this is.

By the mercy and grace of God there are those who, from time to time, are made aware of the tragedy of the non-effectiveness of our preaching, and ministry. People come and go, smile and sing, dress as we expect, but are like a dead person, utterly lifeless in effectiveness. Sometimes there have been series of gospel meetings in which there has been absolutely no response at all, Sunday evening gospel meetings and family Bible hours roll on year after year and are void of any salvation or restoration. It is often said, "There were good numbers out at the meetings, but when they are nearly all saved and there is no response, we can hardly call it a good series. Of course to make us feel good and just sort of cover-up the lack of blessing, we must blame other situations, never our own unspirituality.

If we want to see blessing them we who preach must live 24/7 in the reality of that which we say! Furthermore, there must be a clear presentation of the gospel, the message of man's ruin, God's remedy, and man's responsibility. Having sat in many gospel meetings and taken thousands of meetings myself, I ask myself, "If I were an individual who knew nothing about the gospel, would I have the slightest idea what was being spoken about? Was there any honest conviction on the part of the preacher?" Furthermore, I have known when someone was deeply interested in salvation but the idle chitchat of the saints after the meeting had taken away any concerns the individual had. Unwittingly, saints did the devils

work of snatching away the good seed. It would seem to me that we have preaching without conviction and conversion without repentance.

What Is Hell Like?

What is it like to be cast into Hell, into outer darkness, into the Lake of Fire for all eternity?

No words can describe what such a situation is like. I had an aunt whom I dearly loved from childhood days. Unfortunately, she was in every way an earth dweller, and approximately 3 weeks before she died my sister spoke to her and calling her by name, of her need of salvation. This was not the first time she had been spoken to for she had two brothers, a sister, and a father who were all saved. She had seen her own husband suddenly drop dead and had been at the funeral of her aunt's and family members, yet despite being over 85 years of age, she said, "I will never accept Jesus Christ as my Savior". Several weeks later at some point in the wee hours of a Sunday morning, my aunt passed from time into eternity. She had died in her sleep and had never accepted Christ as Savior. For weeks I wept and cried as I have never done before, in the awareness that my aunt, whom I loved, was in Hell.

What is it like to be in hell?

a) Those in Hell have:

i) The ability to hear.

1. Never again will they ever hear the gospel message or the words of a gospel text.
2. Never again will they know the convicting of the Holy Spirit and the pleadings of the Spirit for their acceptance of Christ.
3. Never ever again be in a place where the gospel is preached, of reading a gospel tract, or hearing the inviting tones of hymns such as, "Just as I am without one plea but that Thy blood was shed for me, and that Thou bidst me come to Thee, O Lamb of God I come".

Never Again!

4. That which they will hear is the unspeakable description of the unceasing wailing of those who are aware that they had been banished from God for all eternity. Those things which gave them pleasure on earth or the prestige of being in a certain position on earth will all be gone, for there will be no pleasure and no ease in that dreadful place. Whenever I think of their hopelessness and the darkness, I am reminded of the sinking of the Titanic. When that great ship sank thousands were thrown into the ice cold water. At first there were screams and as the minutes passed, they became fainter and fainter until there was absolute silence except for the lapping of the waves. In those last minutes of life they screamed for help, but none came. What are the terrified screams of those in Hell be when they realize its "too late, all hope gone forever".

All hope gone . . . forever!

ii) The ability to feel

1. Every individual in Hell will have a body which will never die and in which there is no respite for pain. They will know the pain of recalled opportunity spurned, of prayers disregarded, and of unspeakable bodily suffering. I am aware that there are those who believe that the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16 is a parable. If that is so, then since no parable can ever convey the full reality of that which it is prefiguring. Consequently, if this is a real story of two real people, it is dreadful. If on the other hand it is simply a parable, then the reality is far worse than the picture ever was.

Suffer Forever!

iii) The nagging fierceness of memory and have a concern for others

1. Those in Hell will do something they perhaps never did in life. They will pray for others, that God would let them hear the gospel so that they never come into that place of torment. Consequently, they have concern for others that they never had when on earth.
2. They will recall the last family member's pleadings, the last gospel message, the last gospel song. It will all be remembered.

iv) The ability to weep and cry (Lk. 16:24)

1. The man cried as he never cried before, but those tears would never be wiped, no soothing arm to comfort, no words of hope to lighten the burden and pain.
2. He cries for mercy but not from repentance. We never read of any repenting in hell!

God silent Forever!

v) When an unsaved person dies, they go from:

1. The world of shadows to the world of reality
2. Laughing to grief
3. Opportunity to no hope
4. Joy to sorrow

Conclusion

In considering the seriousness of such a subject, I'm made aware of the truth of the Lord's word to the church at Laodicea, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17). We really are pathetic and spiritually blind which Peter tells us, "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (2 Peter 1:9). This is because of living, as it were, in a spiritual or comatose state such as:

- a) Knowing what it is to say prayers but knowing little of true intercession
- b) Knowing someone is speaking about eternity but knowing little of weeping for the unsaved going into a lost eternity. To my mind, that which we are in dire need of is genuine honesty before God and not congratulating ourselves on holding to the truth even if it is only in theory, but to be like Daniel and confess that, "I and thy people have sinned" (Dan. 9:1-19). Since none of us knows when those around us will die or when the Lord will come, while we stand here all the day idle may God have mercy on us.

. . . Rowan Jennings

HEAVEN or HELL

**Where are you
going?**



Jesus Christ is The Answer

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