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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g05By-v8itI>

Hell is Real



Ready for some hard truth? Hell is real, it's eternal. And I'd rather tell you the truth that saves your life than a comfortable lie that destroys your eternity. Let me start with something everyone experiences: birth. Every single one of you was

physically born. Your mother carried you in that walking, swimming pool for nine months, and then... boom, there you were. The Bible calls that being born of water. But here's what we don't like to talk about: you were born in sin. In Psalm 51, verse 5, King David confessed something deeply personal. **"⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me."** (Psalm 51:5) Not that his mother did anything wrong. David is saying that sin is our default condition from the moment we exist. In Romans, chapter 5, verse 12, Paul explains why. **"¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—"** (Romans 5:12) One man, Adam, one sin, and just like that, death spread everywhere.

Now, here's the part that has been shocking people for the past 2,000 years. In John, chapter 3, verse 18, Jesus didn't say, "You will be condemned *someday* if you don't believe." He said, **"¹⁸ '.. he who does not believe is condemned already,...'"** (John 3:18) Already, not future, present tense, "You are born condemned." That's why Jesus told Nicodemus something difficult to hear: "You must be born again."

Listen, we begin with the first birth. You cannot avoid it. But then there is a second birth. All people are born of the water, but Jesus asked Nicodemus, “Don’t you know that birth from the water is not enough?” You see, there’s also the second birth from the Spirit and when you’re born from the Spirit, your sin is now forgiven; your sin is now removed and forgotten; your sin is now no longer condemning you. You are born from the Spirit. That means you have new life; you are a new creation. There is the first birth and the second birth. And there is the first death and the second death. The first death, we as believers should not worry about that. But the second death, that’s the one you do not want to have a part of.

Now, let me explain where people go when they die. In the Old Testament, before Jesus died and resurrected, there was a place called Sheol in Hebrew or Hades in Greek. Same place. And it was divided into two compartments: one was called Abraham’s bosom, where believers went. The other was the place of torment, where unbelievers went. In Luke chapter 16, starting at verse 19, Jesus told His listeners about two men, a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus. This is not a parable. Jesus used a real name. He was talking about real places and real destinations. Jesus said in verse 22, “²² **‘So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom....’**” Wait, stop there. The beggar who suffered on earth when he died, angels came for him. Then verse 22 continues, “²² **... ‘The rich man also died and was buried.’**” (Luke 16:22) He just died, no angels, simply buried. Then in verse 23, “²³ **‘And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.’**” (Luke 16:23) He could see what was happening around him. He was conscious, he was in torment, and he could see paradise on the other side. But verse 26 gives us the devastating truth. Abraham said, “²⁶ **... ‘besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’**” (Luke 16:26) Two

compartments separated by a gulf you could see to the other side, but you could never cross. Before Jesus died and resurrected, all people went to Hades. Again, Hades was divided: a place of torment, and Abraham's bosom. It's not a final destination; it's just a waiting room.

But then everything changed. Jesus died, three days later He rose from the dead, and something extraordinary happened. In Ephesians chapter 4 verses 8 through 10, Paul wrote about Jesus descending to the lower parts of the earth and then ascending, leading captivity captive. Listen to me, Jesus went to Hades not to suffer, to proclaim victory! And when He rose, He took all those Old Testament believers from Abraham's bosom and brought them to heaven. Now, the game had changed completely. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 8, Paul wrote, **"We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."** (2 Corinthians 5:8) Believers now go directly into God's presence when they die. In Luke chapter 23 verse 43, when the thief on the cross was dying next to Jesus, **"And Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'"** (Luke 23:43) Today, not tomorrow, today, direct presence.

But unbelievers, they still go to Hades, they still go to the place of torment, they're still conscious, they're still waiting. Hades is a temporary residence for all dead unbelievers, awaiting judgment. In Revelation chapter 1 verse 18, Jesus said, **"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."** (Revelation 1:18) Jesus said, "Look, I have the keys of Hades and Death." In other words, "If you believe in Me, you have no parts in Hades or Death. But if you don't believe in Me, that's the place you'll be headed until the day of judgment when Hades and Death will be cast into the lake of fire."

What comes next? Well, after the 1,000-year millennial kingdom, all unbelievers who ever lived will be resurrected from Hades. Revelation chapter 20 verses 11 through 15, John described it: **“¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it,... ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”** (Revelation 20:11,15) The lake of fire, the final destination. And here’s the part people don’t like to hear. It’s eternal, permanent, forever.

In Revelation chapter 20 verse 10, John wrote, **“¹⁰ 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.”** (Revelation 20:10) Forever and ever, not annihilation, not ceasing to exist, tormented, conscious, and eternal. In Matthew chapter 25 verse 46, Jesus Himself said, **“⁴⁶ ‘And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’”** (Matthew 25:46) The same word, *everlasting*, is used in both. If you believe eternal life is forever, you have to believe eternal punishment is forever.

But here’s the good news. You don’t have to go there. Your name doesn’t have to be excluded from the Book of Life. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 21, Paul wrote, **“²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”** (2 Corinthians 5:21) Jesus took your place, your condemnation, your guilt, so you could be forgiven. **“¹⁶ ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.’”** (John 3:16) The choice is yours; your destination is your decision. Don’t wait, make sure your name is in the Book of Life. Believe in Jesus today as if your eternity depended on it, because it does.

* Scripture is taken from the New King James Version unless noted otherwise.

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