Date : 22nd November 2026
Theme : Making our Election sure
Topic : How to avoid ending in Hell.
Passage : Luke 16:19-31
Key Verse : *...fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.... Matthew 10:28 nkjv*

Introduction
What makes you think you will escape hell? The common answer is: ... *I am a good person. Good people don't go to hell.* Another answer is probably... *I am a Christian. I believe...* But if entry into heaven is denied, does it automatically render me ending in hell? The truth is yes, because there is no third alternative destination.

Therefore, every effort to ensure not ending in hell, must be exerted here and now. The trajectory we chose now determines our destiny.
We will address 3 issues.

- Why is ending up in hell considered a terrible punishment?
- Who will end in hell?
- How do we avoid ending in hell?

1. Why is ending up in hell considered a terrible punishment? P.I.T
The Word of God reveals that the excruciating pain sufferers will face is:

a. **Permanent**: Ending in hell is terrible because it is described as unquenchable fire; a place of eternal fire. It lasts forever with no running out date. Those who are imprisoned on earth can at least look forward to their release dates, but hell is permanent — a forever punishment. The Lord Jesus calls hell the everlasting fire. *Matthew 18:8*

b. **Irreversible**: Hell is a place of unending pain and suffering.
The Lord describes it as being so emotionally painful that there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Gnashing is grinding or clenching — a description of one who is full of rage or disappointment, intense frustration.
The Lord also refers to this pain as being inflicted by *their worm does not die... Mark 9:48.* Remember how King Agrippa the First suffered? He was eaten alive by worms when he claimed to be a god, refusing to give glory to God.

c. **Terrifying**: Ending in hell is unspeakably terrifying because no mercy will be shown. The torment of heat and thirst will not be relieved. *Luke 16:23*
The Lord mentions this as a place of outer darkness. Here, everyone is on edge. Urgent relieve is longed for but there will be no one to show mercy even if asked for.
The rich man asked for mercy but received none. *Luke 16:24*
It is a merciless existence; those in hell cannot die or beg for relief. Hell is considered eternal conscious torment where the soul cannot die.

God, who is able to cast the condemned sinner, will not extend mercy. Since we know the terror of the Lord, we must persuade men now, before the transition into eternity; today we have mercy.

2. Who will end in hell? A.B.C

Basically, all who reject Jesus as Lord and refuse to put their faith in Jesus' substitutional sacrifice will end in hell. However, those who merely profess the name of Jesus but live for themselves and not to glorify God, or who deny Him before man and have no fruit to confirm their faith, also will not escape hell.

Apostates

These were once believers but have departed from the Lord *Hebrews 6:6*
The Lord forewarns many will grow cold in the last days.
Timonthy also wrote *...In the last days, some will depart from the faith... 1 Timothy 4:1*
In Matthew 7:21, the Lord said *Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of the Father... Matthew 7:21*
Dead faith, not substantiated with action, does not count. *James 2:26*

Backsliders

- Without continuing faith in Christ. *Hebrews 11:6*
- Without holiness. *Hebrews 12:14*
- Who refused to be overcomers. *Revelations 2:5*
- Whose Names were blotted out. *Revelations 3:5; 20:12*
- Lukewarm Christians *Revelations 3:16*
- Whose names not listed in the Lamb's book of life. *Revelations 20:12*
- The list in Revelations 21:8
- The list in 1 Corinthians 6:9,10
- The proud *Matthew 18:13*

Covenant Breakers

All to whom the Lord Jesus will say *I never knew you; depart from Me... Matthew 7:23*
These have had no covenant relationship with Him because they never made one or had done so before but have since broken it.

i) Some claim to have a relationship called friendship. But the Lord qualifies who is His friend. *...you are My friend if you do what I have commanded you... John 15:14*
The Lord was gracious when He addressed Judas (on the night he betrayed Jesus) as *friend*. But Judas did not flinch, he betrayed Jesus anyway. Judas next encounter with Jesus will have Jesus as Judge.

Whoever betrays Jesus by disobedience ceases to be His friend. We deny Jesus when we passively refuse to acknowledge Him as Lord.
Sin is betrayal of Jesus. If we continue to sin, there is no more sacrifice for sins but a certain fearful expectation of judgement and fiery indignation. *Hebrews 10:26,27*

ii) All who offend and practise lawlessness. *Matthew 13:41*
On one occasion the Lord Jesus states that anyone who offends and cause children to stumble with be punished by being cast into the sea with a millstone tied to his neck. *Mark 9:42*
Lawlessness is the sin of disregarding the laws (commandments) of Christ.

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3. How do we avoid ending in hell? E.F.G

a. Extreme measures

The first question is "Do you want to?"

Strangely, there are many flippant jokes about how much fun it will be in Hell. Jokes like meeting famous film stars and avoiding holy people. These are based on man-made ideas, not on biblical truth. These people are not serious about escaping hell; if they did, they must be prepared to take extreme measures. What kind of extreme measures?

The Lord's answer.

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. Matthew 18:8

To further emphasize how much escaping hell is worth, the Lord said to do the same thing to your eyes, if they are the cause of sin. *Matthew 18:9*

Does the Lord desire to see a church full of people without limbs and eyes?

The Lord is using a part of speech called a **hyperbole**.

What the Lord wants to emphasize is that avoiding hell is so serious an issue that we must be willing to take drastic measures to escape it.

Do you really want it?

b. Fear of God

...conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear 1 Peter 1:17

Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell... Matthew 10:28

Only the Lord Jesus can cast anyone into hell. Fearing Jesus is therefore the first step to escaping Hell. Fearing the pain of hell is a healthy fear.

The fear of God is pure, the beginning of wisdom. Psalm 19:9; Proverbs 9:10

It takes wisdom to recognise danger and to understand God's solution.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. Psalm 25:14

When we fear God, He gives, to the sincere seeker, spiritual wisdom to receive His secrets.

With the fear of the Lord is strong confidence. Proverbs 14:26

Confidence, rather than terror, belongs only to God-fearing people.

The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. Proverbs 14:27

In fact, it was to save us from hell, that Jesus came and died as atonement for our sin. He actually suffered the torment of hell when He hung on the Cross. He faced death for every man.

c. **Guard your heart diligently** *Proverbs 4:23*
Guard against choosing the easy road. Press your way into the Kingdom. Enter by the narrow gate — overcoming obstacles. *Luke 16:16*

- It may be a violent pressing because the journey of faith involves facing hardships. Satan will not allow the redeemed easy passage. Satan is doomed in the Lake of Fire, and he wants people, especially followers of Jesus, to end there too.
- Guard your life so as to stay in compliance with His will as revealed in His Word.
- Guard against lukewarmness. Our hearts grow cold when we fail to keep it warm. How did the disciples receive warmth in their hearts as they walked along the Emmaeus Road? It was the Word of God.

APPLICATION

Recall the **key** words for each section, unpacking its significance:

1. Why is hell so terrifying?
   P
   I
   T

2. Who will be there?
   A
   B
   C

3. How do we avoid hell?
   E
   F
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