

Got Proof #7

Heaven, Hell, and a Loving God

David Staff



Part of Connect Group Questions

May 27, 2018

This week's teaching set forth this summary of Biblical teaching:

The Bible teaches that there is an eternal future for every human being.

Where each person spends that future is life's most important choice (or decision.)

Michael Rogers suggests that Jesus was "the great theologian of Hell," and one of his clearest expositions regarding Hell is offered in **Luke 16:19-31** To energize our mission ("connecting people to life-defining relationships in Christ"), let's take a closer look at what Jesus taught.

GETTING STARTED

*Take a few minutes in opening up to discuss the following matter. A key question to answer if we want to connect others is this - **How worn is my welcome mat?** That is, are people **stepping closer** to knowing about and believing in Jesus because of I am praying or building a trust-relationship with them. **Share what's going on through you in welcoming others closer to Jesus.***

IN THE WORD

Take Bibles and turn to **Luke 16:19-21**, Jesus' account of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus. Work through the following

1] READ the story out loud together (perhaps circle around reading verses)

2] HAVE EVERYONE SHARE **one key** idea that struck them when the passage was being read

3] ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

- a) What do you think this story teaches about **heaven**?
- b) What do you think this story teaches about **hell**?
- c) What's **surprising** in this story? (were there many surprises?)
- d) How do you think an unbelieving, non-Christian would **react** to this story?
- e) Who do you know that **should have a chance** to read this story?
- f) TRUE - FALSE - NOT SURE

A person's status today gives a clear indication of his/her eternal future T F NS

A person becomes aware of his/her eternal fate immediately after death T F NS

Hell is a place of conscious anguish T F NS

It's possible to escape from Hell T F NS

God's Word gives humanity sufficient warning about Hell T F NS

This story from Jesus increases my motivation to share the gospel T F NS

Again...what is the Holy Spirit saying to you as you think more carefully about Jesus' teaching?

MY LIFE - OUR MISSION

We all make choices throughout a given day. Some are less consequential (What shirt shall I wear today? Shall I buy a fish sandwich or a beef taco?). Others are incredibly determinative (I will marry Kevin. I will attend UNI). Some are eternally significant (I will believe in Jesus Christ. I will follow the Koran. I will share the gospel with my friend.).

As emphasized in this week's teaching, the choice to believe or to not believe in Christ is life's most important choice. We should not

conclude Lazarus arrived “at Abraham’s side” because he had been deprived while the rich man was in Hell because he had abundance. The contrast is designed to bring a surprise to those who assumed that the rich were blessed by God while the poor were cursed. Rather, Jesus’ additional teaching needs to bear on this – *“Whoever believes in him [i.e., the Son of God] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”*

Return to the issue of those you know who do not believe. Who are they? Can you name them? And what is the Spirit of God prompting you to do in order that “your welcome mat” toward Jesus might evidence a bit more “wear”?