

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**Luke 16:19-31**  
**Lesson #23**  
**Two Rich Men**  
**03/01/2020**

## What do we know about Life after death?

What can we know without having one?



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### NDE (Near Death Experiences) Observations

- **Transcends** culture, time, & age.
- **Common** characteristics.
  - Awareness of being dead
  - Emotional peace and being loved
  - Out-of-body experience
  - Tunnel of light
  - Life reviewed
  - Reluctance to return
- **Life altering** affects (usually positive).
- **NOTE: Paul's experience in 2 Cor.12:1-10**

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### Luke 16

"19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. 20 And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, 21 and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores."

22 Now it came about that the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. 23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried out and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame."

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"25 But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.

27 And he said, "Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father's house — 28 for I have five brothers — that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment." 29 But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them." 30 But he said, "No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!" 31 But he said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead."

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### Observations

#### Context

- **Look ahead** - The unjust steward Lk.16:1-13
- **Look back** - The regretful rich man Lk.16:19-31

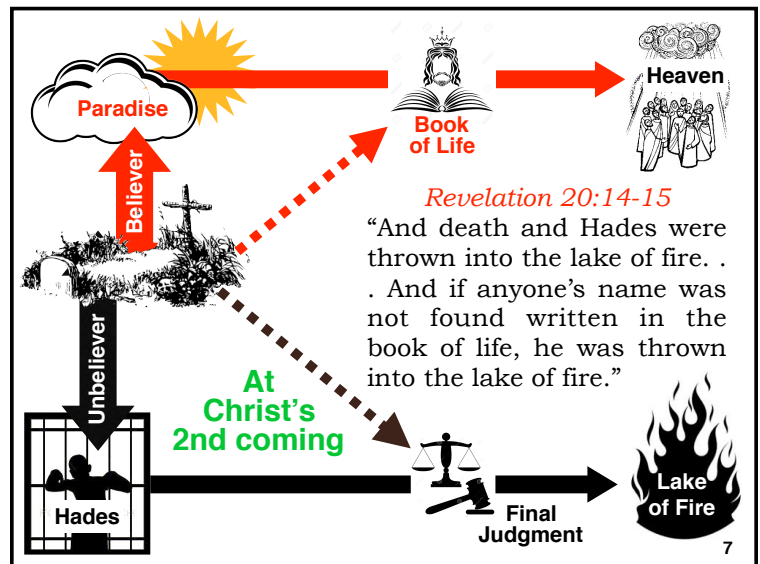
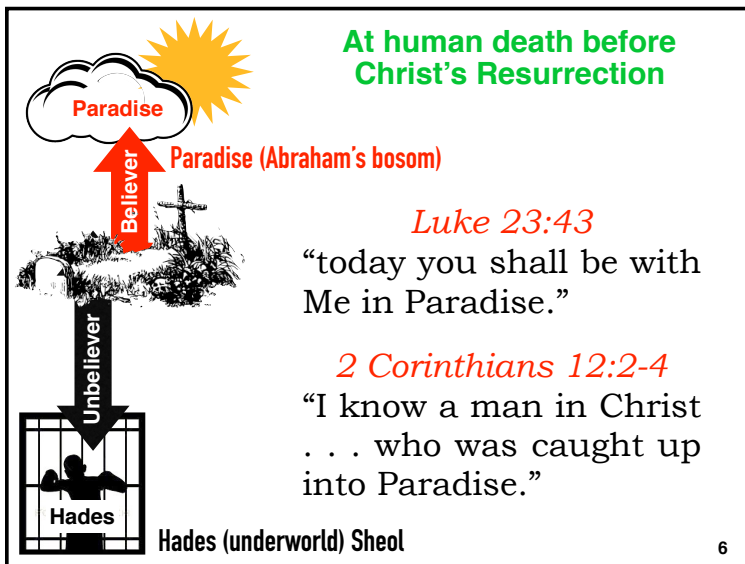
#### Two rich men

- **Rich man was materially rich** - In this life he prospered but in the next life he suffered.
- **Lazarus found favor with God** - In this life he suffered but in the next life he was blessed.

#### Two issues

- **Choices in this life** bring consequences in the next.
- **Ears to hear** (not more evidence) is the issue.

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**The four Biblical terms translated "hell"**

- **Sheol** - Hebrew (used 31 times) An expression meaning the general abode of the soul's of the dead. It is an obscure, shadowy place of futility
- **Hades** - Greek (used 10 times) The N.T. equivalent of Sheol, "the lower parts of the earth" Eph.4:9
- **Gehenna** (used 10 times in the Gospels) The place of future eternal punishment of the wicked, the lake of fire (a burial pit outside Jerusalem).
- **Tartarus** (used only in 2 Pet.2:4) A prison for demons and Satan (abyss, bottomless pit).

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*Luke 16*

"25 But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your life you received your **good things**, and likewise Lazarus **bad things**; but now he is being **comforted** here, and you are in **agony**. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us."

- **There is not a positive correlation between a Godly heart and worldly success.**
- **Worldly success can be a hindrance to spiritual insight and blessing.**

*Revelation 3:17* "Because you say, **"I am rich, and have become wealthy**, and have need of nothing," and **you do not know** that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,"

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*Luke 16*

"27 And he said, "Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father's house — 28 for I have five brothers — that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of **torment**." 29 But Abraham said, "**They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.**" 30 But he said, "No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!" 31 But he said to him, "**If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.**"

- **"Torment" suggests an experience of great insight resulting in agony, and remorse with no comfort or end.**
- **More evidence does not correct blindness, deafness, & hardness of heart.**

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**1. Remember to take your baptism seriously**

- We are **Alien Ambassadors to this world.**
- Our goal is not to win in this world **but rather to be "salt and light" in this world.**
- It is better to do the right thing **knowing that you may suffer for it.**  
"I am trying to follow Jesus and it is not working for me." **What did you expect in following a man who was crucified.**
- **Realistic expectations are vital to personal joy and peace in this life.**

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## 2.

### Request the right things.

- We don't need a **personal NDE**.

*1 Peter 1:8* "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and **though you do not see Him now**, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

- Pray not for "perfect choices" but for **wisdom and ability to grow through all circumstances**.

*Romans 8:28* "And we know that God causes **all things to work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose."

- The biggest mistakes we make are in our **poor response to the mistakes we make**.

What is clearly revealed in Scripture is how we should face life and **respond** to any circumstance we face.

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"Good judgment comes from experience and experience comes from bad judgment."

Fred Brooks

13

"Failure is not an event, it is an attitude."

"If you learn from defeat, you haven't really lost."

Zig Ziglar

14

## 3.

### Respond to the Light you have.

- Most of life's big decisions are made with **limited evidence**. - Marriage
- If we refuse to believe one thing we are **believing an alternative**.
- Humans are **instinctively religious**.
- We all have made religious "**faith based**" **decisions** about reality.

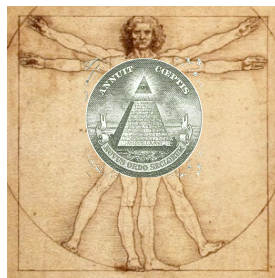
The atheist's "religion" is based on a **FAITH** assumption that all **reality can be reduced** to space, time, energy, & matter and that humans can know it all.

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### Secular Humanism (Life independent of God)

Defining reality and making decisions as though God did not exist or did not matter.

- Total **Temporality**
- Radical **Relativity**
- Absolute **Autonomy**
- Egocentric **Entitlement**
- Metaphysical **Materialism**
- Comprehensive **Contingency**



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When asked why he did not believe in the Christian God he replied, "Not enough evidence, not enough evidence."

"Whatever knowledge is attainable, must be attained by scientific methods; and what science cannot discover, mankind cannot know."

Bertrand Russell  
(philosopher)

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### 3. Respond to the Light you have.

- Don't keep holding out for more proof.  
**How much proof will satisfy you?**
  - Jews seek signs but the **resurrection did not impress them.**
  - Science is a "truth net" with limited ability and scope.

#### My critique of the University -

1. It is not humanistic enough
  - It needs to include the spiritual dimension
2. It is not liberal enough
  - It needs to embrace broader presuppositions
3. It is not a true university
  - It needs more synergism between departments.

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## Life's big questions

### What does it mean to be human?

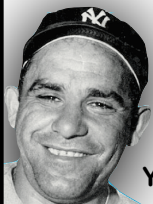
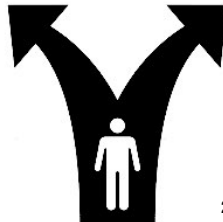
- **Mortality** - Why do we die?
- **Meaning** - For what do we live?
- **Morality** - Why do we do good?
- **Management** - Why is it so hard?



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- If we refuse to believe one thing we are **believing an alternative.**

"If you come to a fork in the road, **take it.**"



Yogi Berra

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#### Being true to ourselves as humans.

*Matthew 13:9*

"He who has **an ear to hear**, let him hear."

#### The image of God (spiritual antenna)

God revealed

- nature
- conscience
- prophets

Jesus

- teaching
- death
- resurrection

"ears to hear"

Fully human

*Hebrews 1*

"<sup>1</sup> God, after **He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,** <sup>2</sup> in these last days has **spoken to us in His Son,**"

*John 10:4*

"the sheep follow him because **they know his voice.**"

21

"The blind man is not aided by light without sight."

A.W. Tozer



22

## Closing thoughts

- **There is not a positive correlation** between a Godly heart and worldly success.
- **Take our baptism seriously** - We are alien ambassadors in this world.
- Make fearless decisions with faith **that God will work all things for good.**
- There will never be enough evidence to convince **a hard heart, blind eye, & deaf ear.**
- We are free to choose **but not free to edit the rules of engagement with God.**

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