

**In modern culture, the existence of hell is:**

- Comical
- Debated
- Repulsive
- Unjust
- Misunderstood (Ezekiel 33:11)

**Jesus spoke of hell on multiple occasions:**

- Matthew 13:41-43
- Mark 9:46
- Matthew 25:31-46

In scripture, imagery always points to a greater reality.

**Luke 16:19-31**

<sup>19</sup> "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. <sup>20</sup> At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

<sup>22</sup> "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup> So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

<sup>25</sup> "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things,

but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

<sup>27</sup> "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

<sup>29</sup> "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'"

<sup>30</sup> 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

<sup>31</sup> "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

## Jesus teaches that hell is a place of:

- Relational separation (vs. 23 and 26)
- Removal from God's common grace (vs. 24)
- Torment (vs. 24b)
- Predictable trajectory (vs. 25)

*"I willingly believe that the damned are, in one sense successful, rebels to the end, that the doors of hell are locked from the inside."*

*"There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, in the end, 'Thy will be done.'"*

*"Hell is the greatest monument to human freedom."*

– Quotes from *The Great Divorce* by C.S. Lewis

- Deep-seated regret (vs. 27-28)

### ***My response to the reality of hell:***

*I will not run from hell but toward Jesus.*

### ***My Argument with God***

*How could hell possibly be right for Millie?*

## Next Steps

Read the passages listed to fully understand the teaching of Jesus about this controversial topic. For further reading, check out *The Great Divorce* by C.S. Lewis.

## Small Group Questions

- 1) In what modern cultural contexts (TV, movies, comics, books, conversations) have you encountered the idea of hell? What was the portrayal of hell like?
- 2) The most common emotion connected to hell is fear. What other emotions do you encounter in Luke 16 from the man? From Abraham? From God?
- 3) How does the reality of hell change the trajectory of your discipleship?
- 4) In light of the message about hell, where do you find the hope of heaven?
- 5) How can we pray for you right now?

## **OUR MISSION**

To create an authentic Christian community that effectively reaches out to unchurched people in love, acceptance and forgiveness so that they may experience the joy of salvation and a purposeful life of discipleship.