

Surprises in Hell

Lu 16:19-31

Introduction:

1. Satan's deceptive use of near death experiences
 - a. We hear about them from time to time
 - b. A person dies and floats out of his body. He sees the doctors working frantically to resuscitate him as he hovers near the ceiling of the room. He floats down a long tunnel and sees a bright light at the end. The feelings of love and joy are great. He sees a "ghost-like" being in bright white flowing robes. He is told that he must go back to the earth, and he revives in the hospital room. "I'm not worried about salvation. I am no longer afraid of death because I felt so much peace and joy in that place."
2. What a surprise awaits such people when they enter hell.
3. Kroger manager who always said, "No surprises."

I. Many Will Be Surprised in Hell

A. Some Will Be Surprised that Hell Exists

1. They Didn't Think that Hell was a Real Place
 - a) *Maybe they said, "Hell is here on earth"*
 - b) *They thought it was an imaginary place – used to scare people*
2. Some Listened to a Liberal Pastor
 - a) *He said the grave was the end – there was a purgatory*
 - b) *He said that God is too loving to send people to hell*
3. Some Listened to a Teacher / Professor in School
 - a) *Science has no place for heaven or hell*
 - b) *Humanism has no place for hell*
 - c) *Values clarification has no place for hell*

B. Some Will Be Surprised That They are There

1. They Knew That There was a Hell
 - a) *They just didn't think they would go there*
 - b) *They knew that God must hate sin*
 - c) *They thought God would weigh their good / bad*
2. They Thought that "Being Good" Was Enough
 - a) *Perhaps they kept the "Golden Rule"*
 - b) *They didn't murder, rob, commit adultery etc*
 - c) *They were good neighbors, good employees, citizens, parents*
 - d) *They weren't perfect, but weren't bad enough to go to hell*

3. They Thought “Being Religious” was Enough
 - a) *They went to church occasionally*
 - b) *They were baptized*
 - c) *They held a position in their churches*

C. Some Will Be Surprised at Who They Meet There

1. They Expected the Wicked to Be There
 - a) *Hitler, Nero, Stalin, Mussolini*
 - b) *Madelyn Murray O’Hare, Bertrand Russell, Voltaire*
 - c) *Atheists of all ages*
2. They Didn’t Expect “Good” People to Be There
 - a) *Unsaved presidents, kings, prime ministers*
 - b) *Unsaved doctors, lawyers, accountants, professionals*
 - c) *Unsaved scientists, college presidents, corporate executives*
 - d) *Unsaved people who were honest, upright, good citizens, humanitarians, good character, sincere*
3. They Didn’t Expect “Religious” People to Be There
 - a) *Hell will be filled with unsaved preachers, deacons, Sunday School teachers*
 - b) *Hell will be crowded with unsaved popes, cardinals, priests, Baptist preachers*

D. Some Will Be Surprised How Quickly They Got There

1. They Heard the Verses About the Brevity of Life
 - a) *Life is like a vapor*
 - b) *Our lives are like grass*
 - c) *Your life is like a shadow*
 - d) *Our lives are like the wind*
2. They Thought They Had a Long Time to Live
3. They Thought that Only “Old-People” Died
4. They Wanted to Have Fun First
5. They Wanted to Put Religion Off Until Later in Life

E. Some Will Be Surprised at the Torments There

1. They Didn’t Think that There Would Be Real Flames
2. They Made Fun of Hell and Joked About It
3. They Thought that Maybe Their Sins Would Burn Up

II. Don't You Be Surprised About Hell

A. Hell is a Real Place

1. It is mentioned 53x in the Bible
2. It is called “everlasting punishment” in Matt 25:46
46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.
3. It is called “everlasting fire” in Matt 25:41
41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:
4. It is called a “furnace of fire” in Matt 13:42, 50
42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. **50** And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
5. It is called “the lake of fire” in Rev 20:15
15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.
6. It is called “unquenchable fire” in Matt 3:12
12 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

B. Hell Has Real People In It

1. All Unbelievers will be there – Rev 21:8
8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.
2. Religious people will be there – Matt 23:15, 33
15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
3. False professors will be there – Matt 7:21-23
21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. **22** Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? **23** And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.
4. The devil, antichrist, false prophet will be there – Rev 20:10
10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

C. Hell Has Real Torments – Lu 16

1. Vs 24 – Unsurpassed misery
24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.
2. Vs 25 – Unfound mercy and unforgettable memories
25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.
3. Vs 26 – Inescapable morgue
26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.
4. Vs 27-31 – Undelivered message
27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: **28** For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. **29** Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. **30** And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. **31** And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

D. If There Isn't a Hell

1. Lets go home
2. I'll quit preaching
3. Call the missionaries home
4. Quit the ministry
5. Live it up – do what you will

E. If Hell is Real...

1. Then why don't we live like it?
2. Then why don't we act like it?
3. Why don't we have a burden for those who are going there?

The patient was a 48 year old white male who was a rural mail carrier. He was of medium build, dark haired and had a personality that would please anybody. Unfortunately he represented one of those rare instances where the EKG not only went “haywire”, but his heart stopped altogether. He was in cardiac arrest and dropped dead right in my office. Instead of fibrillating, his heart had just plain stopped. He crumpled lifeless to the floor. It was late afternoon and the other doctors had left and only nurses were left but they knew what to do and their performance was commendable.

I started cardiac massage and a nurse started mouth to mouth while another nurse brought a cart with the pacemaker equipment. I had to insert a pacemaker wire into the large vein beneath the collar bone which leads directly into the heart. One end of this wire was manipulated into the heart and the other end was connected to a gadget that regulated the heartbeat.

The patient began coming to but whenever I would reach for instruments or otherwise stop the compression on his chest, he would gain consciousness, roll his eyes upward, arch his back in mild convulsion and die once more.

Each time the patient would regain heartbeat and breathing he would scream, “I am in hell!” He was terrified and pleaded with me to help him. I was scared to death. He begged me not to stop. You see, the first thing most patients tell me when I try to resuscitate them is ‘Take your hands off my chest, you’re hurting me.’ I am big and my CPR can fracture ribs, but this patient was telling me not to stop.

I saw the genuinely alarmed look on his face. His look was a grotesque grimace expressing sheer horror. His pupils were dilated, and he was perspiring and trembling and his hair appeared to stand on end. “Don’t you understand? I am in hell. Each time you quit, I go back to hell.” I told him that I was busy and asked him not to bother me until I got the pacemaker wire in place. I could tell that this man was serious and he was indeed in trouble. He was in a panic like I had never seen before. During this time he died and came back 3 or 4 times.

Finally he asked me, “How do I stay out of hell?” I thought back to my Sunday School days and told him I guessed that he would have to ask Jesus to save him. Then he said to me, “I don’t know how. Pray for me.” I told him that I was a doctor and not a preacher. Then he begged me again, “Pray for me!” All the while I was busy working on the pacemaker.

The patient’s condition finally stabilized and he was transported to the hospital. I went home and dusted off a Bible and began reading it. I had to find out what hell was supposed to be like. Death has been routine to me but I became convinced that there was something beyond this life. I continued reading the Bible.

Two days later I sat next to the bed of that patient with a pen and pad in hand. I was ready to write down his recollections of hell. “What hell? I don’t remember any hell.” he said. He could not remember that horrible experience. His subconscious mind was blocking out the memory of that experience.