

Date: 29th April 2012

Readings: Ez 33:7-9

Luke 16:19-29

Rev 21:4,5

Subject: The Witness of God

1. Why Preach?
2. The Judgement to Avoid
3. The Blessing Offered

1. We have a message from God which He has sent us to tell. It is not our ideas or thoughts. We must be faithful. If we are, the hearer is responsible. If not, the preacher is. The message warns of certain judgement because we have all come short of the standard that God requires.

2. God warns that we all have to face eternity. There are two choices, heaven or hell. Men generally are happy to believe in heaven, but they do not want to believe in hell. The Bible warns us that there is a hell where God punishes sin. It says more about hell than heaven because God wants us to realise how serious it is so we do not go there.

The rich man in Luke 16 did not go to heaven because he was rich, he went because he relied on his riches instead of God. Lazarus could only go to heaven because he trusted God. Trust does not mean there will be no problems. For Lazarus, his only comfort in life was the dogs that licked his sores.

Many people think that hell will be a party with friends from this life. The Bible tells us that it is a place of torment where the fire is not quenched. It is so awful that the rich man pleads for a drop of water to ease the pain. When he found there was no hope for him, he asked for Lazarus to return to his brothers, but he was told that they would not believe even if he did.

Some believe that the suffering is temporary. They speak of purgatory from where a person can go to heaven. The Lord Jesus tells clearly that there is a fixed gulf that no one can cross.

3. God tells of what heaven will be like. There is no more tears, death, sorrow or pain. It is full of light and joy, the streets are paved with gold. Thomas asked how we can know the way, John 14:5. The only way is through the Lord Jesus. He shed his blood so that we can be forgiven. No one is good enough. Men say, "No one is perfect". The Bible agrees, but God cannot accept imperfection. We need to receive the salvation of God. The Lord Jesus is the perfect Lamb of God Who died so that we can be set free from our sin. It is not enough just to believe the fact that He died for you, you must commit your life to Him, to place faith in Him.