

The Sounds and Fury of Hell

by Steve Zehr

Understanding hell creates a spiritual backdrop that heightens the senses for everything else spiritual in your life, making clear choices possible.

Duration: 59:26

Scripture: Isaiah 34:1

Topics: "Eternal Judgment", "Hell And Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the repulsive and horrifying experience of watching a video of Nick Berg being beheaded by Al Qaeda in Iraq. The speaker describes the screams of desperation and terror as Berg realized his impending gruesome death. This experience led the speaker to contemplate the eternal aspect of life and the use of words like forever and never. The sermon then transitions to discussing the topic of hell, with the speaker acknowledging the possibility that they may not be alive to preach about it in the future. The speaker paints a vivid picture of judgment day and the intense emotions that individuals may experience as they face the reality of never seeing their loved ones again. The sermon emphasizes the importance of contemplating the eternal consequences and seeking salvation.

Transcript

Turn with me in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 34. And I do want to greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I really believe, I want you to... My prayer is that by the time we get to the end of this message, you will believe in that name of the Lord Jesus Christ who is the only one that can save you.

He's the only name upon heaven whereby he must be saved. I'll explain this later, a little bit. I'd like to read this.

Isaiah chapter 34. I really wanted... didn't know if I should read Revelations 20 or Isaiah 34, so I decided to have Jason read one. So please listen, try to get the connection between these two chapters.

Come near ye nations to hear and hearken ye people, let the earth hear and all that is therein. The word and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all the nations and his fury is upon all their armies.

He hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

And all the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll and all their hosts shall fall down as the leaf falleth off the vine and as the falling fig from the fig tree.

For my sword shall be bathed in heaven. Behold, it shall come down upon Idumea and upon the people of my curse to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood.

It is made fat with fatness and with the blood of lambs and goats and with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bosra and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorn shall come down with them, the bullocks with the bulls and their land shall be soaked with blood and the dust made fat with fatness.

For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch and the dust thereof into brimstone and the land thereof shall become burning pitch and it shall not be quenched night nor day. The smoke thereof shall go up forever.

From generation to generation it shall lie waste. None shall pass through it forever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it.

The owl also and the raven shall dwell in it. And he shall stretch out upon the line of confusion and in the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom but none shall be there and all her princes shall be nothing.

And thorns shall come up in her places, nettles and brambles in the fortress thereof and it shall be an habitation of dragons and a court for owls. And the wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island. And the satyr shall cry to his fellows and the screech owl also shall rest there and find for herself a place of rest.

There shall the great owl make her nest and lay and hatch and gather under her shadow. There shall the vulture also be gathered, everyone with her mate. Seek ye out the book of the Lord and read.

No one of these shall fail. None shall want her mate. For my mouth it hath commanded and his spirit hath gathered them.

And he hath cast the lot for them and his hand hath divided it unto them by line. And they shall possess it forever. From generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

The title of my message this morning is The Sound and the Fury of Hell. When I first started thinking about this, studying this subject on hell, I thought, well, I'll just... I don't know, I forget how I kind of got started on it. I started thinking about it and I thought, well, this would be a good sermon maybe later on for next summer when all the summer help is here.

I could preach on this subject. But as I got to thinking about it, I thought that there's a pretty good... there's a possibility that summer may never come again. I may not be here when summer comes.

Some of you may not be here when summer comes. And the very nature of this subject is that it should not wait. And so I felt like I should preach this subject today.

I want to tell you that I may go over time. That is also the nature of this subject. It goes over time.

In fact, there is no time. And I will not be shouting at you. So if you go to sleep, you go to sleep at your own risk.

And I just want to share what the Lord has in my heart. So why speak on hell? There's a couple of things. When I've been to study this, the contrast of hell.

It creates a contrast. It creates a backdrop that heightens the senses for everything else spiritual in your life. It heightens the senses for everything else, the choices you make.

Without the backdrop of hell, everything becomes gray. And you see this many times. I wrote down the word salvation and then grayed it in here.

You can see it's a very simple illustration. And there's a lot of gray in the world today. There's no way to... Until we have the backdrop, some kind of contrast, I'll just write choices here.

Without the graying, you can make clear choices. And that's what it really did for me, was with that contrast of hell as I studied this. It really brought out in relief against the flames of hell this great salvation that we have.

And I guess a week ago last Saturday, we had that burning day. As I came down over, I think it was by Bonvede on I-5 there, I was bringing the water truck back because we had burned, and I just got up on that elevated part of the freeway there. And you look out across the valley, it just looked like... I mean, you must... I don't know if you can count 20 fires at once.

And out ahead of me, there was one on each side of the freeway. Just these pillars of smoke. I mean, symmetrical with the freeway, just almost the same distance apart.

And just huge pillars of smoke. I mean, everybody that was driving down the freeway. In fact, the one on the east was a very beautiful fire for a field burning.

It just glowed. I mean, 50 feet up from the smoke column, it was glowing red. In fact, a lot of people had stopped along the side of the freeway to take pictures of it.

Very beautiful. But when I came over there, I thought, and I've been studying this, that there's ever a sign. And it senses... The backdrop of hell really sharpens the senses in the spiritual mind.

Okay, so a lot of my... I've been doing some study on this. Books that I've read. Of course, the Bible, the words of the Lord, and different ones.

Testimonies of near-death experience, of those that have experienced some of that. I will say that I myself, I've told very few people, but I remember when I was maybe... I don't know if I was even 16. I remember waking up from a dream.

And to this day, I'm convinced that I saw hell. And as I read many of the... I remember waking up, I was more terrified than anything I ever remember. And completely cold sweat.

I don't remember much of the dream. I feel like the Lord took some of that away from me. But it all came back when I read a lot of the testimonies of near-death experiences.

Some of the things they described were exactly what I would have pictured in my mind from this. So, another reason to study hell is that contemplating death will lead to life. Contemplating death will lead to life.

So, it gives the contrast to life that you properly need to understand life. And what it is you are saved from. I remember being down there at the Eugene Celebration.

There was a group of people outside the entrance. I mean, there's probably as many people as there are here. I don't know, there's probably a couple hundred.

In the middle, they had these little sideshows, these little attractions. There'd be juggling acts. But this one was just drumming.

I mean, it was just an intensely loud rhythm. These people were drumming. And this whole crowd of people were surrounding them.

And I was holding a sign there. I remember it just seemed to me like the crowd was almost going hypnotic. They were just... It was just weird.

And I was holding a sign there that said, one of the things it said on it, Have you ever thought about dying? And during this, I don't know, it just went on and on and on. And people swaying and dancing and this man walked up to me and his complaint was that we should be thinking about living, not dying. And I explained to him as best I could that this is the way to think about true life is when you think about death.

V. H. Lawrence once said, Every year you pass an anniversary unawares, it is the anniversary of your death. Have you ever really thought about that? Have you ever considered that every year you're passing the anniversary of your death somewhere? And it is very few people that really consider or contemplate their mortality until they come right up against it. If you think about it, there's no practical way to prepare for this by experience.

Most things in life, you can drive a truck to Portland and by experience get better at it. But you can't get better at death because it only happens once. And like Christopher Bernahue, who was a prisoner at Buchenwald, said, The best way to become a believer short of dying is to sit very quietly and contemplate those things.

The best way to become a believer short of dying is to sit very quietly and to contemplate those things. And he said that death is a word which presents no real target to the mind's eye. Death is a word that presents no real target.

You've never experienced it. And the best way to become a believer short of dying is to sit very quietly and contemplate it. Another reason, 2 Corinthians 5 verse 11 says, Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

Also in Jude 1 verse 23 it says, And others stay with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garments spotted by the flesh. And I'm telling you, I've been studying this for a little while, and it does something to your head. It really does.

I've spent a lot of time thinking about it. In fact, I was up until 3.30 last night. I couldn't sleep.

I was thinking about it. It does strange things to you. And one of the things that really helps you view, if you're saved this morning, this message should really help you view people, the lost, in a way you never have before.

Last night, I'm leaving, Lord willing, tomorrow morning to go for a week of meetings. And if you think about that, please pray for me a bit. Last night, we went into town, my wife and I, and we left the children at Trevor and Gina's place.

Thank you for that. It was very kind of you. And we went up.

We did a little shopping and ate in a restaurant there. And that's all I could think about. I see all these people.

These guys are all I see. In fact, I had such a nod in my stomach as I watched all these people. And so it should do something to you.

It should. And quite frankly, some of you, some of you may never come to the truth of the gospel unless you hear sermons like this. That's what the Bible says.

Some say with fear. Philippians 2, verse 12 says, Work out your own salvation with fear and with trembling. And I'd just like to say that for the children, for those of you, this is not a message to the children.

This is not about child evangelism. You are safe with your parents until God specifically calls you to his kingdom. So I want that to be clear.

This is not a message to the children. And I struggle with that some because I feel that's a little bit the reason I got saved and it wasn't a very good foundation. But for some of you, this is a message for you.

Okay, so where is hell? I just want to start there. I think intuitively, we just believe that hell is down there. Heaven is up there.

Hell is down there. I personally believe that. The Bible has many different references.

We could turn to them. I'll just, Psalm 63, Ezra 26, Ezra 31, Ephesians 4, they all talk about hell as being the lower parts of the earth, the nether parts of the earth going down to the pit. And that is personally where I believe it is.

Hell is a real place. Hell is a real geographic location. Okay, when I was in Bible school, I taught the class on Bible geography.

And that was one of the places we studied. When we got to the end of the... I started in Genesis and went through and I ended up in Revelations. And that was one of the Bible geographic locations.

It is as real as London. It is as real as New York City. There's real people there.

There's real things happening there. It's as real as Tangent, Oregon, Tangent Mennonite Church. It is really going on.

It is really happening. People really are aware of what's going on. In fact, some of the people that have been there and back will talk about that, that they just never realize.

As they are down there, they say, this is a whole world that people up on the surface have no idea that it's really going on. There's that sense of desperation if they realize that. That's one thing I want to tell you that is a real location.

I just wanted to do a little bit of geography here. This is supposed to be earth. First of all, I'd just like to ask you, Leonard or anybody, how hot is the sun? Does somebody know? This is a quiz because I know the answer to it.

I looked it up. The surface, anyway, the figure is around 11,000 to 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Does anybody know how far away we are from the sun? Leonard, 93 million miles? Somewhere in there.

I think that's right. I wonder if anybody wants to try to guess, and this I don't have the answer to, if you would just take the earth and start shortening that distance, at what point would we just go up in flames? I mean, when we got within a million miles, a thousand miles, a hundred miles, just poof, you know, like a marshmallow on a stick. I don't know the answer.

But I found this very interesting. This is the earth. This is, of course, the surface of the earth.

This right here, this first outer ring here, is what they call the crust. Many of you know this. And that, it ranges from five to 20 miles thick.

In the ocean, it can be as narrow as a few miles, five miles, a couple miles thick. Under that is the mantle, and it is made up of a dense, but semi-solid rock, depending on the heat. And so this is approximately 1,800 miles through to the mantle.

And then you have the inner core, which is basically made up of liquid rock. It's liquid fire. It's just molten rock in there.

It's just completely liquid. This is approximately 2,100 miles across. I've often heard of preachers, as they describe heaven, that four squared by so many by so many, saying, well, you know, this fits so many people in it.

They say that hell, maybe you wonder, is this big enough for hell? They say that an area 100 miles through would be plenty big enough to hold the 40 billion or so people that have so far walked the face of the earth. So this is 2,100 miles through. Now, the temperature in this core is, I don't know how they figure this stuff out, but it is anywhere from 9,000 to 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

That's the same temperature as the sun. Folks, we are literally on a flaming rock that is moving through space at about 66,000 miles per hour. Literally between heaven and hell.

Literally you are between heaven and hell. And I'd like to just read a few verses to show that, and these verses really stood out to me. It says that, Deuteronomy 32, verse 22, For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn into the lowest parts of the hell.

So we've seen that, the middle part of hell there. And shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. And so you see this burning through effect.

They talk about this in houses. A lot of times when a house starts on fire and it finally burns through, that's when it really blows up. Also, it shall, okay now listen to this, I read this in Isaiah 34, And the streams thereof shall be burned into pitch.

So that's the water. I was going to talk a little bit about how rock burns. Most steel will burn at about 2,000 degrees.

A rock, depending on the rock, will burn somewhere around that same temperature. And I found it interesting that the components that make a rock burn are these. What would you say? Would it take more or less pressure to make a rock flammable? Well, they say that the less pressure, the more flammable a rock.

Would you say it takes more or less humidity? In a rock, the humidity in a rock, they say the more humidity, the easier it turns to lava. Okay, so we're up here on the surface of the earth. Lots of loose rocks kicking around, plenty of water.

You know, water evaporates at 212 degrees, never mind that the chemistry, makeup of water is extremely flammable. Now listen to this, The Bible says, And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch. You know how pitch burns.

Extremely hot. And the dust thereof, I often wonder about all this dirt. The dust thereof shall be turned into brimstone.

And the land thereof shall become burning pitch. And it shall not quench night nor day. And the smoke thereof shall go up for ever and ever.

For generation to generation it shall lie waste. None shall pass through it for ever and ever. And then, of course, Peter says, But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Now, I'm not going to get too hung up on this point. If you disagree with me and you think hell's somewhere else.

But I personally feel that this is literally the way it's going to be. It's going to, the day of the Lord, however that all works out, it's just, there's going to be a blow-through effect. And this place is going to go up in flames at just the voice of the Lord.

And so, I'd like to look at a few things of hell itself. And as I thought about these different things, I thought, you know, if there was just one of these things about hell that you had to endure, it would be bad enough. But when, and so I'm going to go through these just one thing at a time.

But when you consider these things all put together, it almost overwhelms your mind. And there's no way that I can describe this in any kind of accurate way. The Bible gives us some things.

You have a testimony of near-death experiences and just what the Bible says about it. Okay, so hell. The first thing I'd like to look at is the terror of hell.

One of the things I've noticed a lot of times in people, talking to people on earth here, is that people will, I've heard this over and over again, that people, in their situation, they say, I am so tired of the drama in my life. Maybe it's a divorce situation, it's just something, something's always, just the drama that's going on. That just simply means they're tired of the new developments that are always overwhelming them and just always seem like there's another problem going on.

And so, if you would think about this, the terror of hell. Now, as you enter hell, and you become the object of the demon's hatred, and there's been, I mean, when you read Revelations and you see all these weird beasts, that's one of the reasons I chose Isaiah 34, is there were some, these symbolisms of creatures in there, these wild beasts. But these huge beasts, I mean, 11, 12, 13 feet tall, huge claws.

They talk about demons with, you know, if you would just imagine, just let your imagination, the Bible talks about the locusts coming up out of the pit to sting men. What would you think of a 10 foot long locust? Or a 3 foot tall spider? Or snakes, gigantic snakes, demons, I don't know, they come in all kinds of shapes. And hell is full of these.

And they have pure hatred for man. Now, if you think about why they have hatred for man, it's because they have no access to God. They really hate God.

But man, you are created in the image of God. And they take out all that venom, all that hatred. They will literally tear you apart.

And the Bible also talks about the unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon in Revelations. And I didn't get this written down. I wanted to write this down just to go by memory here.

There was a woman back earlier in the century over in England. And they observed her. There was nothing they could do about it.

But they watched her. And she must have been obviously demon possessed and tormented by the demons. But they would actually watch her as she just writhed in pain from these fang marks on her body.

And they could see the marks. They could see the saliva around the marks. And there was nothing they could do about it.

And she was being bitten. She was being tormented by demons. And if I remember the story right, she was eventually delivered from this.

A man came and prayed with her. A man of God. And I don't remember how it all turned out.

But they actually observed that happening. There's reports of giant spiders, rats, snakes, and all manner of beings that are hard to describe with nothing but pure hatred for humanity. If you would just think about the fear, the sheer terror that would grip you.

I don't know what it was in your life that was the most scary thing. But just that sense of complete shock and panic that overwhelms your body. Maybe you've had nightmares like this.

And where for an instant you just completely freeze up. You can't run. The Bible talks about that.

In hell, they will have no strength. And in some of the testaments, they talk about that. Just being in the cell with these huge creatures that were just hugging them and shredding their flesh off their bodies.

And when they were free, the sheer terror, the mind-numbing terror to try to run. But just no way to run. Nowhere to go.

Just nowhere. And just imagine that for eternity. The one terror after another.

Now if you were to face a rattlesnake, a huge grizzly bear, I came out, you know, people that die from that, I suppose there is that crushing moment of terror. And then, you know, they lose consciousness and you're dead. It's over.

And the bear finishes eating you. But when this can never happen, when you can't even lose your mind, you can't even go insane, it's just one fresh terror after another. And the pain, I think I talked about that with a woman, Kenneth, brother Kenneth Berkey, I've worked with him the last couple of summers and many of you know he was caught in a field fire burned.

That's one thing he told me is how that when he was running through the fire, he, it was unconscious, he was actually just gnashing his teeth from the pain. Field fires look vicious, but they're not that hot. Some of them are, but I mean, I think there's a, there's hotter fires around.

And just the unconscious of the pain, he was just gnashing his teeth. Psalm 73 verse 19, How are they brought into desolation in a moment? They are utterly consumed with tears. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever.

And this is the way I remember it in my dream. And many of them say, like this huge cavern, you can't discover just this huge, and I don't understand how it can be. I want to talk about the outer darkness.

And many of them said they can't explain it either, how that you can have utter darkness, the blackness and still be able to sense and see certain things. I don't know if some of that is metaphoric or how that all works. But this huge cavern in the middle, this glow of this pit, and some of them described it as being a mile across, with flames, reminding me of a volcano, from what I've read, how that this brimstone is just falling.

Can you imagine being in this 12,000 degrees? They say the human body will utterly, some of the human body will just completely vaporize in 2,000 degrees temperature. Can you imagine being at the edge of that with a demon with his hands around your waist, getting ready to throw you into that inferno? And some of the visions of just people, just the pitiful screaming as they're trying to claw themselves out of this pit. Intense, because of the demons surrounding it, and just the intensity of that.

Psalm 11, Upon the wicked shall he rain snares, fire and brimstones, and horrible tempest. This shall be the portion of their cup. One man said that as he got close, he recognized he had been in a very violent life as a young person, and he got cut in a fight, and he had a near-death experience.

He says as he went towards this cavern, he recognized some faces, and they pled with him, Don't come here. Don't come. There's no way to get out.

That was one of the things I kept saying. There's no way out. There's no way out.

There's no way to get out. You don't come. There's no way out of this place.

And that's one of the things he remembers. The Bible talks about being delivered to the tormentors, handed over to them, Matthew 18. But think about no water.

That's just another thing about hell. No water. Never any water.

Just no humidity. No water at all. I was in Peru, and there's some pretty dry place down there, but even in most of the deserts on earth, there's some kind of life that lives in those deserts.

And that's just the barrenness, the landscape. I mean, even your body with no fluids in it. You could be ripped open by the demons and no bodily fluids.

Blood is life. There is no life. There's just the complete dryness of the place.

And it is very difficult to even conceive that part of hell of no water. Just absolutely no water. The barrenness.

Being dead and never dying is another one that was hard for me to grasp as I studied this. How that the flesh actually rots on you. And yet you're trapped in this body that never actually dies.

Can you imagine that? And just the grotesqueness, the smell. The Bible talks about here the stench. And many people talk about that.

Just every dead carrion, the filthiest sewer, brimstone, sulfur. They talk about not being able to get a breath of air. Just never being able to breathe.

And yet you can't die from suffocation. And just rotting. They've talked about maggots.

Just billions of maggots. Can you imagine? The Bible says, will the worm die if not? Being covered and eating constantly with maggots. Because you are a rotting body that is dying.

And just the absolute stench of the place. The toxic atmosphere of what's happening there. Think about being naked.

And interesting enough, some of the most expensive and specialized clothing is to protect against fire. Now in the garden, they were created naked. And quite quickly, as soon as sin came in, they discovered the shame of that.

And it's so interesting to me that Satan has somehow accustomed people to that nakedness now. But can you imagine? They did that in the concentration camps. They would strip people completely naked just to add to their shame, to their vulnerability, to strip them of their dignity before they actually killed them.

Can you imagine being in this? And I know we don't even understand what all this would be. It's just the vulnerability that comes with this. The Bible talks about the righteous being clothed in robes of white.

And just being there completely naked. Vulnerable. I mean, no leather coat to guard against claws or fire or anything.

Just a complete vulnerability that goes with that. I like to think about the blackness, the darkness. Just the intensity of blackness.

I was out the other night. I was doing some field work rather late. It was about just a few minutes before midnight and I had left my field.

It was clear up by the turkey farm. I had left my tractor in one and walked down the road to get the other one, to get the other truck. As I walked down the road, it was right at the foot of the mountains down there, and it was an extremely dark night.

It was a beautiful night, but the moon hadn't come up yet and it's been a new moon anyway. Lots of stars, but extremely dark. And I was walking like this, and like I said, it does strange things to your mind, this

whole subject.

It's been on my mind a lot, and I've been changing irrigation in the dark. I don't normally, these kind of things don't bother me, and they really don't. But as I walked down this road, an elk, a bull elk up in the hills right off to my left bugled.

And if you know anything about how elks bugle, they start out with an extremely loud scream. And there's something about the night. There's something about screams.

And there's something about screams and the pitch blackness. I mean, it makes your hair stand on end a little bit. But can you imagine these screams, these screams of desperation, these screams of hopelessness, these screams of pain, the screams of terror, the screams, all kinds, all the screams that you could think of just continually piercing your mind, piercing your soul, the intensity of it.

As you hear these women just going off, just screaming, and you spend all day lusting after them. These beautiful women, you see all these women, you lust after them. And you go home at night and your wife can't keep the baby asleep from screaming while you're trying to sleep.

So you get irritated at her, and you say, why can't you keep that baby asleep? What's wrong with this baby? Why does it have colic? Isn't there anything we can give it? Because for eight hours, this baby's screaming and it gets on your nerves. And can you imagine the intensity of forever this ear-piercing screaming? And the angel poured out his bile upon the feet of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain. And the angels which kept not their first estate but left their own habitation, he hath reserved an everlasting chain from the darkness into the judgment of the great day.

Jude 1.13 Raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame, wandering stars, to whom is reserved that blackness of darkness forever. The need to be seen. There's one thing about darkness.

They say one of the trigger points when you get lost, one of the trigger points of panic is that nobody is able to see you. And the way they come up with this is that they've done studies on moms and little babies. They've watched these babies interact with them.

They're very newborn. They'll just sit there for hours and just gaze at each other. And there's kind of this emotional tie that's going on.

But what gets happened, what gets ingrained in a human being through that experience is the need to be seen by somebody else. And so when you're lost in the woods all by yourself, they say, and I have no way to prove this, that what you're actually reacting to in that panic is the fear that you will never be seen by anyone else again. And that's the term.

He was never seen again. No one ever seen him again. That's what they say.

So when your little girl runs through the house, Mom, where did Mommy go? They say that fear is that she will never be seen by Mommy again. Can you imagine being cut off from Almighty God, from the face of God? One of the things that touched my heart in this whole thing, and I don't know if I can convey this to you, when you think about everything that is good on earth, everything that you have ever enjoyed, the light, the sunrise, I don't care how bad your day is, there's something good in it. But not only are you cut off from God, your Daddy, never, he says, depart from me, I shall never see you no more.

You workers of iniquity, I will never, your Daddy, the one that created you is cutting you off, that rejection from your own father that you will never be seen again by him. And that, not only that, he sends you with a curse. I don't know, it's a terrible thing to send your children to bed with issues in their life.

You should tell them that you love them, give them a kiss. If you had a shouting match with them, if you give them a licking. Maybe you even remember as a child going to bed like that and there was unresolved issues.

Can you imagine for eternity? The unresolved issues in your life your Daddy sent that cursed you as you walk away. And in this darkness there's nothing ever pretty, no pretty riverbank to walk by, no flowers, no green grass, no blue mountains, no burnt fields, nothing pretty to ever see again. It's just complete desolation.

I talk about the screams a little bit, I'd like to just talk about that just a little bit more because I think that is one of the most repulsive ones to me. I had the opportunity quite a few years back to watch a replay of the video of Nick Berg, he was a contractor in Iraq, being beheaded by the Al Qaeda over there. And quite frankly, it's something that completely repulsed me.

I did not think it would affect me that way. I did not believe myself to be that kind of a person. It wasn't even something I cared to talk about to other people.

A lot of times when I see something like that, when we see something in the news or on the news, we often share with people. It was completely repulsive to me. And the thing I remember is those screams of desperation as he realized what was happening to him.

He was blindfolded, he was kneeling down and the man took the knife and just began to saw away. And you can imagine, as you realize what's happening, your life is coming to an end in a very gruesome way. And just the screams of terror.

And the near death, as you imagine the repulsiveness of coming down to that cavernous pit and hearing those repulsive screams that never end. And with all these screams, there's no way to get any rest. There's no way to get any rest.

The Bible says that. It says, And they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Luke 12, 19 And I say unto my soul, Soul, thou hast much good.

This is the contrast. Thou hast much good laid up for many years. Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

It is just what the world is constantly working for. It's rest. And it's just sheer laziness.

They sleep till noon. They drug all night. They sleep till noon.

They get drunk all night. And it's just that party. They just want to relax.

They just want to play. And I find it very interesting that one of the most popular drugs of all time in the U.S., methamphetamine, is designed to keep you awake for days on end. I think it's just a prelude to what hell is like, this hellish drug that's going around our country.

And one of the most pitiful things I've ever seen was my one friend. Many of you know him. He came down off this high after days of being awake.

He was so groggy sleeping. And one of the things that I understand that when you first come down off this high, you cannot sleep. You're too tired to sleep.

And then you'll just sleep for days. But he was in that point there where he... I actually cried over him. It was so sad when I sat in his living room and a perfectly normal person, but he absolutely could not make sense.

He was so sleepy that he couldn't make sense in a conversation. You think about that in hell. I don't know.

During the summer we work. We work all night and work all day. And there comes a time when you are so bone weary.

Just the fatigue. And how does it feel to finally lay down? And sometimes it doesn't matter if the baby is screaming. You just sleep.

But there is never any rest. And I don't believe we lose that desire to sleep in hell. It is just never, ever any rest.

There's just constantly you cannot sleep. You can't find rest. The Bible talks about in our life it's the opposite.

We are the ones that are working now. We are the ones that are awake at night. We are the ones that are praying.

We are the ones that are fasting. We are the ones that are denying self. You should be the one that are losing sleep now.

Over your son, daughter, yourself. So that you, Hebrews 4, so that you can enter into that rest. Beware, lest any of you have an evil heart of unbelief and departing from this living God.

And many of them were destroyed by their destroyer and could not enter into that rest. Forever awake. Forever in that state of limbo where you are so groggy and you can't even think straight.

You cannot rest. This one here is very, to me this one is one of the hardest ones from my perspective. And I thought about the heart brokenness.

The Bible says the weeping. The broken heartness and how, you know, Jesus said he came to heal the broken hearted. And then it says that he's going to wipe the tears from their eyes.

But at this judgment day, and I had such a clear picture as I was thinking about this. And you know how sometimes your children, they do something wrong. They do something bad.

And depending on the personality anyway, sometimes as they contemplate what's about to happen, you know, they're sitting on the edge of the bed, they're waiting. And before the punishment even starts, they will begin to weep as they think about what's coming, what's about to happen. And one time this happened, I simply sat there almost mesmerized as I just, as I had this picture of what judgment day would be like.

I'm leaving tomorrow and I already miss my family. You think about how that is at judgment day. And this is it.

This is it. We live life, all our lives, with me and my wife. Here's the children, they're gone.

This is, you will never see daddy again. You will never, ever, ever see daddy again. And daddy will never see the little children.

Daddy will never see the mother. And as I read some of the accounts of hell, one man said that is one of the things that gripped him so much. In a few times he had fleeting moments of earth.

One of the things that came back to him was his wife. How he longed to feel her again, to hug her again, to talk to her, just some kind of sane conversation. And he realized that he would never have that opportunity.

He would never be able to do that. Miller J. Erickson said, it's an experience of intense anguish, a sense of loneliness. There's the realization that separation is permanent, thus hopelessness comes over the individual.

I would just like to say to you, if you're one of those couples, and I say this with love, but if you're one of those couples, either listening to this tape or just out here in this audience, that just really don't quite have it together. Maybe it was. I'm going to plead with you.

A lot of times you're the most spiritual and you know it. You know your husband is not taking life as seriously as he should be. I just want you, you need to sit down with your husband.

You say, honey, we need to get this figured out. If I go to heaven, if me and the children go to heaven and you and I are separated, God's going to wipe the tears from my eyes, but you are forever going to miss me, and I never want you to miss me like that. I believe you need to talk like that.

You need to speak like that. You need to get real about where you're at. The forsakenness in hell, the hopelessness, I talked to an old person not too long ago, and I talked to different people, but oftentimes they say, I ask them, you know about heaven and hell, do you know where you're going? What's going to happen after death? And they say, well, I'll just live the best I can and let God decide and just hope things turn out right then.

If we could really grip what it is to have hope in this life, it really doesn't matter. I remember living in complete sin and somehow hoping or thinking somehow in our mind that things will maybe turn out. So when you are in hell, you will finally know.

You will finally know how things turned out. And it is the most intense hopelessness. There's nothing to look forward to.

You're a nobody. There's no problems to work on. There's no way to exercise your mind.

Trevor's tired of working on the press. There's no press to work on. There's no projects.

There's no meetings. There's nothing. You're just nobody.

There's no purpose. Just the complete hopelessness for eternity. The eternal part.

I like to think about the eternal part just a little bit. And I don't know, I had no idea how to try to even explain this. And we kick these words around that I don't know why we've been using like forever, always, never.

These are words that we can't even describe in our language. And I remember another thing Kenneth told me as we were talking about when he was running through this fire. He said it wasn't very far.

I don't know how far it was. He said it really wasn't far to get out of the flames. He said, but I was just running through these flames.

And in all this pain he said it just seemed like it was forever. Like I just couldn't get through these flames. And then he asked me, he said, Steve, you know how long forever is? And I said, well, that's a long time.

And he goes, no, it's not a long time. There is no time there. It's just long.

And that's true. It's just a long. It's not a long time.

It's just a long. And I thought about how I could convey or give an example of eternity. I thought, what better way than take a church full of Mennonite people that are hungry and want to get out of church and it's already over time with a boring preacher and just hold still and be completely silent.

I'm not even going to tell you how long we're going to do this. And just be completely silent and think about all these things I told you. I'd like you to just bow your head and just think about that.

Okay, so it's after a millennium. That was another three minutes. If after a millennium, hell would begin to cool down.

This raging sea of flame would begin to, the troughs between the waves wouldn't be quite so deep anymore. And finally this would all cool down. These tormented, decomposed wretches would wash up on the shore.

And the sun would begin to come up. And an ocean breeze would blow a nice cool breeze down through there and wash away that stink. And the steam would rise off these bodies.

And the Son of God would come down through there and say, Who is there among you that wants to repent? How many of you do you think would take that chance? The Bible says in Revelation that they nod their tongues for pain, but they would not repent. And it's no wonder the Bible says, For a fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the earth. Today is the accepted time.

Hell is never going to cool down. Today is the accepted time. 2 Corinthians 6, verse 2 says, For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted in the day of salvation, have I succored thee? Behold, now is the accepted time.

Now is the day of salvation. When Jesus came to earth, and he began to ask these people, these serpents, these generations of vipers, how shall she escape from the damnation of hell? He was serious about this. This was the question he was thinking about.

As he gazed across their volleyball games, as he watched them with their silly little skits, laughing, as he gazed across their volleyball games, as he looked across their fellowship meetings, as he watched them

at their sewing circles, as he watched all these people, that was the thing he was thinking about. How shall she escape the damnation of hell? He wasn't smiling when he said it. He wasn't making a joke about it.

But he was deadly serious. You know, we're like, we're on here. This is the earth.

We're trapped here between heaven and hell. This thing's about ready to go in flames. Where are you going to go? Job says, it is as high as heaven.

What canst thou do deeper than hell? What canst thou know? The Bible says, how shall we escape? How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? Do you see how great the salvation is that God gave you? God never created the hell and all these evil things that I described. God never created them for you. He never created them for humanity.

He created them for the devil and his angels. But for you, he sent a savior. For you, he sent a savior.

For God, salvation. For God to love the world, that he sent his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God to love the world.

John Piper says, I know of no one who has overstated the terror of hell. We are meant to tremble and feel dread. We are meant to recoil from the reality, not by denying it, but by fleeing from it into the arms of Jesus who died to save us from it.

Neither is salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. I'm going to give you just a few minutes if there's anybody that wants to say anything. It's hard to convey the importance of this and I think it's worth going 15 minutes over time to do it.

I know for myself it really made me think different. It gave me a different perspective as I studied these things. It gave me a different way of looking at people and looking at life.

I would just ask you to consider that. If you're the person that needs to make a change, make a change. That's a given.

That's what we're talking about. But if you're the kind of Christian that maybe like we all tend to get that you can walk into a restaurant and the only thing you see is the menu. The only thing you feel is how hungry you are.

That's for us. That's for us. If you can look at that beautiful college girl and all you can think about is how little she has on.

One man talked about a woman. He saw a demon holding a woman and he was forcing liquid sulfur down her throat. Think about that next time you see her and weep.

Try to remember to weep. Weep for your children. Weep for your grandchildren.

Let it wake you up in the night. I can tell you a few more dreams I had. But I had one dream about a man that I had passed out tracks too many times.

I talked to him about the Lord and he eventually died. I had a very vivid dream of that man one night of where he was chasing me for not sharing the gospel with him more. I woke up, I got out of bed and I went out to the living room.

I think I prayed for every sinner I could think of. But I long since stopped. I think it's because we forget this contrast.

Everything becomes gray and we forget the contrast. Let's stand for closing prayers. Dear Holy Righteous Father, I just want to come to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one that can save us from the wrath that is going to come.

Father, I just pray that our hearts would be stirred, not just with emotion, but seeing the terror of the Lord, we will persuade men. Seeing the terror of the Lord, we will get along with each other. Seeing the reality of hell, we'll have a love for each other, a love for our wives and our children.

We'll have a contrasting picture in our mind that will color and picture and tint every decision we make. Every action and interaction and scheme that we think of, Father, would be tinted with this backdrop of the flames of hell. Father, I just want to give our safekeeping, our well-being into the hands of our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ as we go from here.

Bless this congregation. I just pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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