

Romans 14:19
So then let us
follow after things
which make for
peace, and things
whereby we may
edify one another.



John 8:32 and
ye shall know
the truth, and
the truth shall
make you free.

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MORE THAN A DROP OF WATER ON LAZARUS' FINGER **LUKE 16:19-31**

Jim Everett

Second article in seven article series on the subject of "Conditional Immortality" by those who believe in annihilation of the evil on judgment day.

This account conveys an existence beyond the grave, during which, time continues on the earth — the well being of the rich man's brethren on earth was of grave concern to him, lest they should also come to this place — **vv. 29-31**.

Why do "annihilationists" demote the story of the rich man and Lazarus from inspired truth to folklore or mythology? Obviously, because it says some things they refuse to accept. It says, first of all, that there is existence after death. It not only says there is existence but that there is conscious existence. And then it affirms that there is some degree of suffering on the part of the unrighteous which is ongoing, though this context does not deal with "eternal punishment." Jesus' teaching here takes direct issue with the "conditional immortality" view of man.

So-called "scholars" who believe in "conditional immortality" first deal with the passage by referring to it as a "parable." That is nothing new — The Watchtower has been doing that for many years. The purpose of labeling it in that fashion is to imply that it cannot be a true picture of life after death. However, if we were to grant that it is a parable, the parables Jesus taught were always fact or true to fact, else a parallel could not be drawn — parables parallel truth so that from an established, accepted truth, disciples

could learn spiritual truth.

Since calling it a parable is not nearly adequate to destroy its credibility, they intensify their attacks by saying that Jesus borrowed the story from the folklore of the Jews. Fudge says, *"Morey acknowledges that Jesus borrowed this story from a common rabbinical tale of the time and that it should not be pressed into a literal preview of the world to come"* (Afterlife pp. 30f, 84f, as quoted in The Fire That Consumes, p. 126.) Fudge admits that the Jews' folklore and Jesus statements in **Luke 16** are not exactly the same: *"There are differences between these stories and Jesus', of course, and therein lies the Lord's uniqueness. But the basic plot was well-known folklore,"* (p. 127). Fudge refers to From who cites a discourse of Josephus concerning Hades which, he says, paints almost precisely the same picture as the account in **Luke 16**. Then Fudge says, *"He (From) concludes that Jesus was clearly using a then common tradition of the Jews to press home a moral lesson in a related field."* However, Fudge admits that the account in Josephus is generally admitted by his own scholars to be spurious (p. 127), and, in so doing, annuls his own proof.

When the opponent of hell has finished with this context, the rich man doesn't need for Lazarus to come and dip his finger in water to cool his tongue, for he has totally extinguished the flame. The rich man just thinks he exists and that he views Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Furthermore, the rich man really isn't suffering, for there is no existence after

death — you see, he doesn't understand that his soul has been extinguished along with the body. However, I consider the most serious consequence of their position to be a necessary charge of either dishonesty or ignorance against Jesus Himself. They must accuse Jesus of, either ignorantly or intentionally, using a lie to try and impress a moral truth when they say that He used mere tradition of the Jews drawn from folklore and mythology.

It is not just the Lord's uniqueness that makes the account in **Luke 16** different — it is His understanding as God of what is beyond the grave. It is impossible for me to believe that Jesus used a lie to teach a moral truth — such an affirmation is totally incongruous and illogical. It is not from deeper wells of wisdom that men draw their conclusions denying hell as eternal punishment — it really springs from the waters of modern, materialistic concepts that will douse, not just a fiery hell, but the very flames of inspiration. When one begins to question reliability of certain sections of scripture to establish credibility of his position, he needs to understand that he has forsaken God, the fountain of living waters and hewn out for himself broken cisterns that can hold no water (**Jeremiah 2:13**). He dilutes the very truth he uses to sustain his own belief system. One cannot attack the credibility of the scripture on one point and use it as support for his belief system on another.

**Jim R. Everett; taken from
insearchoftruth.org**

WHAT A BOAT RIDE!

"On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, Let us cross over to the other side. Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, be still! And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!" (Mark 4:35-41 NKJV).

The parables of Jesus showed His authority as God's Son; the teaching Jesus did came from above. "He that hath an ear, let him hear" was not an idle suggestion; it was (is) a command vested with heaven's authority. Now Mark moves from the parables of Jesus to His miracles. Jesus' miracles, too, were expressions of heaven's authority. We

learn that Jesus is Lord over creation, over darkness, over sickness, and over death. The setting is the Sea of Galilee, a perfect backdrop to display Jesus' power over nature.

Jesus' popularity increased the need, at least from time to time, to seek solace alone, even if it meant getting in a boat and sailing away from the crowds of followers. Those who know tell us that the Sea of Galilee is 700 feet below sea level and is surrounded by hills on each side. As winds swept across the waters, waves would crash over the sides of the fishing boats. Jesus' boat was filling with water; yet, the Savior was sound asleep. And why not? Trusting in His heavenly Father would make sleep come easily and without fear. The disciples, though, were thinking otherwise. We are going to drown; don't you care? Why would these professional fisherman be afraid of a storm; why this storm? Jesus told the demon to *"be quiet"* (**Mark 1:25**); now He speaks the same words to the storm: *"Peace, be still!"* And it was so.

What happened on this occasion was only the beginning. When reading the rest of Mark's letter, we know that the disciples and many others failed to see the power of God being lived out in the person of Jesus. Fear means a lack of faith (**Mark 5:15, 36; 6:50; 10:32; 16:8**). *"Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"* Were the disciples beginning to understand who Jesus was? The only answer can be: This is God in the flesh. This is the Christ, the Messiah. God alone can still the sea. *"You who still the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the peoples" (Psalm 65:7). "You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them" (Psalm 89:9).* The question *who is this* continued to be asked in Mark's narrative. *Who is this* is the question we need to ask still today.

Notice again **Mark 4:36**: *"And other little boats were also with Him."* Who were these people? Don't you imagine that they were afraid in the midst of the storm? Can you see them watching this Teacher who claimed to be from God? So they watched and saw and heard and were relieved when the sea calmed down. Let us watch and see and listen. Then, when the storms come, and surely they will, we can find rest and peace in Jesus. But only in Jesus

Randy Harshbarger

By Grace through Faith!

As one reads the writings of most denominational teachers these days we see phrases such as "by grace alone" and "through faith alone". One would think that with all of the intellect these folks have at their disposal, which is obviously considerable, they could see the folly of what they write. Look, if "grace

alone” could save anyone then all men would be saved for the scriptures teach in **1 Timothy 2:4** *“(God) will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”* Yet Jesus said in **Matthew 7:13**, *“Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it”*. Not all men will be saved! Unless Jesus is a liar then something more than grace is needed and “grace alone” is a false teaching.

We also read in the writings of uninspired men that we are saved by “faith alone”. This is just as absurd as being saved by “grace alone”! If ANYTHING ELSE is necessary then it cannot be by faith alone. Grace is necessary, so it is not by “faith alone”.

This confusion could all be avoided if we would just let the scriptures speak as they do. Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:8**, *“for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;”* Both there! Both essential! Neither alone! AW Tozer was right! “To escape the error of salvation by works: we have fallen into the opposite error of salvation without obedience.” Obedience isn’t legalism: it’s a symptom of genuine salvation!

Cleveland Reddinger

JESUS CAME TO SAVE THE WORLD

Jim Stauffer

John 3:17 *“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”*

This verse follows the best known verse in all the Bible. It reminds us of a very great deed done on our behalf by the very Son of God. He gave up His place at the right hand of God the Father in heaven to come to earth, live as a pauper, helping people on earth at the time and ultimately giving Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of all men.

Will we waste or disrespect this gift? Paul reminds us our salvation, eternal life with God in heaven is, after all a gift (**Eph. 2:8; Rom. 6:23**) The writer of the Book of Hebrews warns us of the consequences of such, **Heb. 10:28** *Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?*

Have we come to accept as a fact that all men

have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (**Rom. 3:23**)? If it is established in our mind that sin is the reason there is eternal punishment why would we not do what we could to eliminate that from our future? If we have read and understood the promises of God to take us home to heaven with Him when Jesus comes, why would we not do everything in our power to make that come true for us?

Let the Lord explain it to us. In **Mat. 15:9** He chastised the religious leaders of His day for teaching for doctrine the precepts of men. This follows a specific story He relates to show them they honored their own traditions above the actual word of God. Why would someone do that?

In light of the fact that we have all sinned and without Jesus’ sacrifice are doomed to eternal punishment, why would we not listen to the word of God?

Ask yourself what you know about the plan God and Christ have revealed in the Bible to redeem men from sin. Now ask yourself how you know that. Is it because you have studied and read it? Or is it because someone has told you that and you have trusted them to be right.

When Paul taught the Thessalonians in **Acts 17**, many objected to what he said because it was different than what they had always believed. They ran him out of town. He then went to Berea and taught the same thing there. He said of those people, *Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11)*

Even the apostle did not expect people to just accept what he said without some verification it came from God. When he taught Jews he used their Old Testament Scriptures to teach them about the Messiah and His plan of salvation. Among both the Jew and Gentile he demonstrated the power of the Holy Spirit to confirm his word as true (**1 Cor. 2:2-4**).

Our opening text tells us the purpose of Jesus coming to earth was to save the world. He is the propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of all mankind; our Advocate with God the Father (**1 John 2:1,2**). So, His desire is not to judge the world but rather to save it. However, that eternal punishment we spoke of earlier will come to those who have not been saved and will come at the hand of the One God has chosen to judge the world in righteousness, the One He raised from the dead (**Acts 17:31**).

You see, He did not come for the purpose of judgment, but judgment is necessary to determine who has been obedient to His will instead of their own. *And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, (Heb. 5:9).*

Psalm 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

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Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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BILL MILLER TEACHER

WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS: CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP
RON PECK TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:
SOME PEOPLE ARE JUST WRONG



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10