THE PATH TO HELL

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THE PATH TO HELL (2)

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FIVE MORE WAYS OF GOING TO HELL

Last time I spoke on five ways of going to hell. The first was suicide, the second was refusing to remove sin, the third was pride, the fourth was adultery, and the fifth was disobeying the gospel. Anyone who does any of these five things, no doubt, will go to hell. Therefore, take heed and examine yourself. You should ask yourself, "Am I walking on the way to hell?"

One can take any way in the world. But concerning the way that leads to destruction, I advise you to be careful and not to run on it, or you will end up in the place of eternal perdition.

I am afraid that among those who are sitting here today, there are still some whose deeds and thoughts are leading them toward hell. Therefore, I want to speak about five more ways of going to hell. If you do not want to go to hell, please do not fulfill these five requirements. However, if you wish to go to hell but do not know the way, perhaps I can clearly present a road map to hell before you so that you may follow it and go to your destination. But how dreary and miserable it is for someone to go to hell. My real intention and desire is that you would turn back and not walk on the way of destruction. Even if you intend to go to hell, even if you have decided to perish forever, I still hope that the Holy Spirit will use the word that I am going to say today to make you feel alarmed and unwilling to be a man of destruction, and make you fear the punishment of hell and be willing to turn back and no longer

walk on the dangerous way that leads to destruction. I beseech you, at this moment, choose which way you want to go.

The First Way to Hell: Covetousness

I want to read a verse from the Bible to prove that coveting after riches is one way of going to hell. What I am going to say is not something spoken lightly; this teaching is truly in the Bible. If it were just my own words, they would not be as sure and factual; but if it is mentioned in the Bible, then it must be very accurate because it is the Word of God. Now let us read the Bible. First Timothy 6:9 says, "But those who intend to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin." Listen! The end of those who covet riches is destruction and ruin. Why are they destroyed? Why do they perish? They perish not because they are sinful and wicked; but because they covet riches. Covetousness is sufficient to bring people into destruction and ruin. What is destruction and ruin? Destruction and ruin are clearly another name for hell. Therefore, please listen! Covetous men will perish; they will go to hell. This is not my word. If it were my word, then on the day of judgment, when you—if there are covetous men here—meet me, you certainly can say to me, "Mr. Preacher, you said that I would go to hell, but now I am here in heaven." Can covetous men go to heaven? You may say that covetous men can go to heaven, but do you all believe it? The Word of God says that those who covet riches will go to hell.

Today is the age of money. We often hear people saying that money is all-powerful, and that having no money is the same as having no power. If one has money, we think he can do anything. Is not money very important? Men often think that "money can move the gods." But what they call god is actually the devil. Therefore, they really mean that money can move the devil! This is true because those who covet riches eventually dwell with the devil forever. Money indeed takes one to the devil!

The Bible teaches us that covetous men will go to hell. Many people are willing, at first, to believe in the Lord Jesus. But covetousness forces them to say, "Believing in the Lord Jesus is good, but I do not have time now; let me wait until the future." Where will you wait? Eventually you will go to hell. You will wait there forever and never have another chance. Are there many sitting

here who are in business? I have met many businessmen, and they have a common excuse: "I cannot be a Christian now because I am a businessman. If I avoid deception while doing business, I will not have anything to eat. Therefore, I cannot believe in Christ." Alas! How cheap is your soul! Are you willing to suffer in hell just for the sake of one meal? Very well, if you choose wealth and forsake Christ, you will indeed have food to eat. But after you have eaten, you will go to hell.

There was a man engaged in a small business. His store only had incense candles and paper money for worshipping idols. After he had heard the gospel, he said, "With a few hundred pennies a day, I can make a living. It is good to believe in the Lord Jesus and be saved, but once I believe in Him, do I need to close my store immediately?" One who believes in the Lord Jesus certainly cannot open a store that sells incense candles and paper money. For the sake of riches—actually, a few hundred pennies a day cannot be considered riches—he would not believe in the Lord. Indeed, eternal life was worth less than a few hundred pennies a day to him. Whenever I walk by the stores, it seems that every store has advertisements posted outside that say, "Great Sale, Great Auctions." What is really on sale? And what is being auctioned away? The soul of the store owner is being auctioned away. One soul has already been auctioned away for a few hundred pennies a day. Was not that soul cheap? Perhaps you would say to me, "That man was really foolish. For just a few hundred pennies a day, he would not believe in Jesus Christ and was willing to go to hell. But my business is worth tens of thousands of dollars a year. Or, my business is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars a year." While your business is bigger than his, is your soul worth only hundreds or thousands of dollars? If this is true, then your soul is also very cheap.

On November 21, 1916, there were two students in a girls' school in Peking. The last name of one was Yang and the other's was Liao. They stayed in school and cooked for themselves. In order to save money, they bought a big vat of alcohol instead of buying a small quantity. Each time after using it, they would melt wax and seal the opening. Due to their carelessness one day, a spark dropped into the alcohol and their whole house caught on fire. They both ran out of the house. Realizing that their purse was left inside the house, they ran back to get it. Consequently, the fire burned their entire bodies, and eventually they died. All the students in the school who saw their pitiful condition wept bitterly for them. On the day I read the news in the newspaper, I could not help shedding my tears with them. Why did these two die? They

died because there were a few dollars in their purse. O money! O money! How many human lives you have taken! The fire of hell is approaching fast. You have the opportunity to be saved today; do not lose your soul for the sake of a little money. Many people take risks, thinking they might gain riches and, at the same time, hold on to their lives. Let me ask you: since you know this is a risk, why take it?

Once a ship hit a rock and started to sink. The owner of the ship said to the sailors, "Please get the life boat ready. I will go down below the deck to take care of a certain matter and come back right away." Why did he go down into the ship's hold? He had a great deal of money in the safe and did not want to let it sink with the ship into the sea. At that dangerous time, he still took a risk to get the money. The ship sank little by little while he was trying to get the money. The ship sank inch by inch while he was still trying to get the money. The ship sank faster than he was able to get his money, so when the sailors saw that he was not coming, they lowered the lifeboat and fled for their lives. In the end the owner did not come. He tried to leave when the water reached his feet, but it was too late and he drowned. Later, when the ship was recovered from the sea, the owner was holding the key to the safe in one hand and clutching a handful of gold coins in the other. He got the money but he lost his life and perished! Is money or life better? Covetousness sent the owner of that ship to hell; therefore, be careful, lest your covetous heart also sends you to that place of eternal suffering.

Here is similar story. Once a ship was sinking, and everyone on board the ship fled for their lives, not caring for their belongings. One sailor was reluctant to see their wealth go down in the sea. He was also reluctant to lose his life. Therefore, he put the best lifesaver around his chest and said to himself, "Now my life is safe; I can spend a little time to make an unexpected fortune." He went into the hold and searched for gold and money, and actually found a great deal. Then he took a big piece of cloth, wrapped up the gold coins and bills, tied it around his waist, and ran up to the deck. By this time the ship had almost sunk. He had no more time to lose so he jumped into the sea, hoping that he could float and wait for someone to pick him up. When he jumped into the sea, to his surprise he did not float on the water; rather, he went straight down to the bottom of the sea like a stone. Did his lifesaver lose its function? Why did he sink? He sank because the gold coins were too heavy. The lifesaver was able to save him, but not able to save him and the gold coins. I hope all of the Christians here will be attentive. Nominally speaking, you

may be believers in Christ, but I do not know whether or not you have really believed. Believing in Christ and covetousness are mutually exclusive. Do not think, "I want to get rich, but I also want to believe in Christ." It is true that Christ can save you. But Christ cannot save you if you do not get rid of your desire to become rich. Christ can save sinners into heaven, but Christ cannot save sinners who take their sins with them into heaven. Either leave your sin of covetousness outside of heaven, or you and your covetous sin will be left outside of heaven.

Among those sitting here today, is there anyone who does not believe in Christ because he is hindered by money? It is true that we were covetous in the past. But Christ has died for all our sins; therefore, Christ has also borne our sin of covetousness. Although you have been a very covetous person in the past, you will surely be saved if you are willing to believe in Christ as your Savior. There is no sin in the world that is too grievous or beyond Christ's saving ability. Christ can save us from all sins, regardless of the type of sin. He died for all our sins and bore the punishment we deserve for our sins; therefore, everyone who is willing to believe in Him can be saved.

Do not be mistaken, however. Although the sin of covetousness is not the direct cause of perishing, a covetous heart is an indirect cause of perishing. What does this mean? Christ has died for us. If we believe in Christ, God cannot cause us to perish for any sin. Therefore, the sin of covetousness means nothing because it has been judged in the Lord Jesus. But what about a covetous heart? It is very powerful. It can prevent you from believing in Christ. It can make you love money more than you love your soul. It can make you seek exclusively for the wealth of the world, so that you have no heart to seek after the heavenly blessing and joy. For the sake of worldly treasure, it can make you lose the taste for spiritual living. Therefore, you will not believe in Christ because of your covetousness. If you believe in Christ, all your sins, not just covetousness, will be forgiven. Believing in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior is the only way for you to be saved. If you do not believe in Christ, regardless of how good you are, your sins will not be forgiven. Therefore, the sin of covetousness cannot cause you to perish because Christ has borne your sins. But a covetous heart can prevent you from believing in Christ and being saved. Such a heart will make you perish.

I have nothing else to say except to beseech you to ask yourself this question: Are you a covetous person? Have you not believed in Christ because

of covetousness? If this is true, please investigate this matter: is money or eternal life better? Unless you are a fool, you will never choose wealth and go to hell. A covetous man will go to hell. Please be careful!

The Second Way to Hell: Persecuting Christians

Let us read a passage from the Bible that was spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build up the graves of the prophets and adorn the tombs of the righteous, and say, If we had been there in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. So then you testify against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets. And you, fill up the measure of your fathers! Serpents! Brood of vipers! How shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna? Therefore, behold, I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth" (Matt. 23:29-35).

In this portion of the Word, the Lord Jesus tells us clearly that those who persecute Christians cannot avoid the punishment of hell. You, who are Christians listening to this word, should not be happy, thinking that all those who persecute you will go to hell. You need to know what it means to be persecuted. Suffering persecution means suffering people's opposition and oppression because of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your practice of righteousness and preaching of the truth. This is the true meaning of persecution. If you suffer people's opposition because of your misconduct, then you are suffering punishment, not persecution. Please be careful; do not confuse punishment with persecution. Punishment occurs because of your sin. Persecution occurs because of your faith in the Lord Jesus. If you are opposed by people because you believe in the Lord, you have glory. If people oppose you because of a defect in your conduct, then do not consider that you are being persecuted. It is more fitting to say that you are being punished.

If there are unbelievers here, please be considerate and do not persecute Christians. If you persecute them because of their bad conduct, no one can say anything. But if you persecute or kill them because they believe in the Lord Jesus, and their conduct is not below the normal moral standard, then beware,

because their God is the Lord of all who will punish sinners. In this portion of the Scripture, the Lord Jesus tells us clearly that the end for these people is hell.

Let us think about this. Should those who genuinely believe in the Lord Jesus be persecuted? They read the Bible every day in order to use the Bible to cultivate their spiritual life. They pray every day for those in authority and for all people, hoping that God will save them. They often go out and preach, exhorting people to rid themselves of their sins, thereby removing not only the sins resulting from the violation of the laws of the country, but also the sins resulting from the violation of God's law. They desire that people would know the true God and believe in the Lord Jesus as their Savior and receive eternal life. Should these people be persecuted? Is it reasonable to persecute such people? You may say that Christians are superstitious. But among four hundred million Chinese, are they the only ones who are superstitious? Perhaps they are persecuted because they frequently say that man is sinful and should rid himself of his sins, repent, and believe in the Lord Jesus. But is there any harm in this preaching? Or do you hate them because you are a sinner and they expose your sins? If you are a thoughtful person and know that you have sinned, you should quickly repent and believe in the Lord Jesus as your Savior. This is reasonable. Why do you persecute them because you are angry at your embarrassment? Many Christians often see people dying without Christ, crying out at the time of their departure from this world, in fear of the coming darkness. These people do not want to die because they are not ready to face death. Under these circumstances and according to the Bible, many Christians can tell these dying persons that, if they are willing to receive the Lord as their Savior and depend upon the Lord's merit completely, they can receive eternal life immediately because Jesus Christ has borne their sins. No one knows how many dying sinners have been comforted and saved by this kind of promise and gospel. Let me ask you, should those who help a dying sinner's conscience obtain peace be persecuted?

Of course, physically speaking, the church has done many outward works. Like yourselves, I am also against this. But there are many genuine Christians who really love the Lord and other people. No one knows how much they have secretly done to help ordinary people. They never sound the trumpet before men to announce their good deeds. Do you think that people who do charitable works without any motive for fame or profit should be persecuted?

Concerning the good works of real Christians, we can say much more, but I think that this is enough.

After all, who has set you up to be a judge so that you can persecute others? Those who persecute others say that Christian morality is degraded and hypocritical; that parochial schools represent a cultural invasion; that some churches' charitable institutions bribe people's hearts; that the strategy of the churches' preaching and spiritual works is to keep people in ignorance. I will not argue with you either about the deeds and motives of Christians or whether or not your statements are true. But let me just ask one question. If you say that the morality of others is degraded, is your morality not degraded? If you say that others are hypocritical, are you without a mask? Are you really better than Christians in all of your deeds and conduct? You have to be qualified before you can persecute Christians. Unless you are better than the Christians, unless you are not guilty of committing the sins that you condemn Christians of having committed, then you are not qualified to persecute Christians. You should persecute yourself first.

After all, the persecution of Christians did not just begin today, but it started a long time ago. The church is greatly blessed because it has received much help from its opposers. Even Paul, the greatest apostle of the church, was one of the greatest persecutors of Christians. Although you may say that you are my enemy today, I do not believe this word. I really hope that one day you and I will preach the gospel together. Speaking of myself, I also greatly opposed Christianity in the past. But today I am a Christian because I have received the salvation of the Lord Jesus who has forgiven my sins. Now I have immeasurable joy and unspeakable peace. I really hope that you will receive the Savior and serve Him with me. It is very worthwhile to believe in Him and serve Him. You can clearly know that your sins have been forgiven, and then your conscience can no longer accuse you. Presently, you can work to save other people's souls; and in the future you will enjoy the blessings of eternal life. Why should you persecute Christians? Please come to believe in the Lord Jesus and be persecuted by others instead!

During the age of the church's persecution, ten believers who refused to deny their faith were escorted by a group of soldiers to the top of a high mountain so that they would suffer unbearable cold and be forced to renounce their faith. But the ten believers, who were naked in the severe cold, sang loudly together, "Ten Christian soldiers are willing to suffer for the

Lord." Since they could not bear the penetrating cold, their voices became weaker and weaker. Due to the cold, one believer left the place where they were testifying for the Lord and ran to be with the soldiers sitting around a fire and tried to get warm. This was his testimony that he had renounced his faith. But at that moment, one of the soldiers took off all his clothes and gave them to the unfaithful Christian. Then he ran to the nine believers, stood with them, and sang loudly, "Ten Christian soldiers..." until he died. He became a Christian. Please be considerate. You do not know when you may also become a Christian, perhaps in a few months, a few years, or just a few hours. No one can tell. You cannot guarantee that you will not become a Christian. So why should you persecute them today? If you persecute Christians, you persecute Christ because Christ and Christians are united into one Body. When you persecute Christians, you are declaring that you do not believe in Christ as your Savior. If you do not believe in Him as your Savior, then you do not have a Savior. If you do not have a Savior, then you should bear your own sins. In other words, you will perish and go to hell because you do not have a Savior. Why should you go to hell? Please accept the Lord Jesus as your Savior today!

The Third Way to Hell: Trampling the Precious Blood

The Bible mentions the word "blood" more than four hundred times. Since God mentions the blood so often, we know that the blood is very important. In the Old Testament the blood of cattle and sheep was mentioned often. This blood was shed in the offering of sacrifices. This pointed to the blood of the unique sin offering in the coming New Testament. The Bible stresses the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This blood signifies the death of the Lord Jesus. When we talk about the blood of the Lord Jesus, we are speaking of the death of the Lord Jesus. The passport to heaven is the precious blood. No one can go to heaven except by the blood of the Lord Jesus. Hebrews 9:22 tells us clearly, "without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." We have all sinned; we recognize this fact. We have sinned very much! When we search our hearts in the deep of the night, does our conscience not accuse us of being sinners? When we think about our past failures, stumblings, falls, and transgressions, is our heart not sorrowful? How much we wish that we did not have those few dark pages in our history. If we think about the coming judgment for sins, do our hearts not tremble? Sometimes we think that a future hell is just in man's imagination. But when our conscience is clear, does

it not tell us that there really is a hell? When we think about this, how can we not be fearful?

Once you realize this, you will know that you cannot go on without a Savior. Even though our sins must be punished, we are unwilling to be punished. But God must punish sins. So what can we do? In this situation we need the Lord Jesus. Man is sinful, and God in His righteousness must punish our sins. Therefore, God sent His Son to the world to be a man, and in the place of sinners, He suffered the punishment that sinners deserve. Man committed the sins, yet the Lord Jesus bore the punishment of sins. This is substitution. Such a substitutionary death is the gospel. Listen! The gospel is not about persuading people to do good, using their own merit to make up for their wrongdoings in order to redeem themselves. God knows that man does not have any merit because man cannot do good. Therefore, He asked His Son to come and shed His blood for men and redeem them from their sins. Now everyone who is willing to depend upon the merit of His blood can obtain forgiveness freely and be justified.

Now let us see what the Bible says about the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. Matthew 26:28 says, "For this is My blood of the covenant, which is being poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Acts 20:28 says, "The church of God, which He obtained through His own blood." Romans 3:25 says, Christ Jesus "whom God set forth as a propitiation place through faith in His blood...in that in His forbearance God passed over the sins that had previously occurred." Romans 5:9 also says, "Much more then, having now been justified in His blood, we will be saved through Him from the wrath." Ephesians 1:7 says, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses." Ephesians 2:13 also says, "But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have become near in the blood of Christ." Colossians 1:20 says, "Having made peace through the blood of His cross." Hebrews 9:14 says, "How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Hebrews 10:19-20 also says, "Having therefore, brothers, boldness for entering the Holy of Holies in the blood of Jesus, which entrance He initiated for us as a new and living way through the veil, that is, His flesh." First Peter 1:18-19 says, "You were redeemed...with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." First John 1:7 says, "The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin." Revelation 1:5 says, "To Him who loves us and has released us from our

sins by His blood." Having read these few verses, we know the reason that the Lord Jesus shed His blood; we also know the value of the blood He shed. His blood is for redemption. If there is no sin, there is no need for redemption. If there is sin, there must be redemption. In order for a person to be redeemed, however, a price must be paid. Therefore, the Lord Jesus died. He died and shed His blood. His blood can grant us forgiveness and make it possible for us to go to heaven.

Now I will talk about another way to hell. This way to hell is nothing less than trampling the precious blood. Please listen to the word of the Bible: "Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without compassion on the testimony of two or three witnesses. By how much do you think he will be thought worthy of worse punishment who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and has considered the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing and has insulted the Spirit of grace?...It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:28-29, 31). These few verses clearly tell us that this kind of people will receive an unspeakable punishment; they will fall into the hands of the living God and be under His wrath. Of course, we know this means going to hell. The Bible tells us that if anyone offends Moses' law, he will die without mercy. Please listen. Whoever sins will die, and God will not have mercy toward them. Many people are kinder than God! They think that God would not punish sinners by sending them to hell. But the Bible says that this kind of person will die without mercy. It continues by saying that anyone who tramples underfoot the Son of God, despises His precious, redemptive blood, considering it insignificant, and rejects the moving of the Holy Spirit, will also go to hell.

What does it mean to trample underfoot the Son of God, to regard the blood of the covenant by which one was sanctified as a common thing, and to insult the Spirit of grace? It means that the Holy Spirit is gracious to man, prompting and telling him that he is sinful. The Spirit is also clearly presenting to man the salvation accomplished by the Son of God, causing him to know the effectiveness of the precious blood that forgives sins, and exhorting him to immediately accept the blood to wash away all of his sins. But some men are not willing; they reject the demands and prompting of the Holy Spirit. They still love sins and like filthiness and consider the precious blood of the Lord Jesus as something insignificant. He may say, "Listening to the gospel is good enough; but asking me to believe is putting too much emphasis on application. Yes, I have sinned but I will only commit the sins

that I committed before. The Son of God loves me and gave His life for me, but why should I care about Him?" If a man says this, he will go to hell because he tramples the precious blood.

There is only one way in the world that can save man. The Lord Jesus died for sinners, shedding his precious blood to cleanse them from all sins. This blood is a guarantee before God that every sinner who believes in Him will be saved eternally. It is as if this blood speaks to God, saying that although sinners deserve to be punished, they have already been punished. Therefore, God cannot punish them anymore. All the sins committed by a sinner from his birth to his death have been punished in the Lord Jesus. The precious blood is the proof that every sinner's sins have been judged and punished. If this were not so why was the blood shed? Therefore, rejecting this blood will cause a sinner to perish eternally. A sinner's sins must be judged. The most important question is whether or not a sinner wants Christ to die for him. If he does not want this, he will have to bear his own sins. Therefore, trampling the precious blood is rejecting the substitutional death of Christ. Since he does not have Christ's substitutional death, he has to die and receive the judgment for his own sins which he deserves. Friends, you have heard about the function of the Lord Jesus' precious blood. Please do not harden your hearts; do not refuse this unique way of salvation. Do not wait until you go to hell and regretfully say, "How I hate myself that I did not accept the Lord Jesus' precious blood. Now I have to suffer here eternally." If you go to hell in the future, you will not go because of your sins, but rather because you rejected the Savior who died for your sins.

The Fourth Way to Hell: Negligence

We have seen many ways to go to hell. All of these ways are easy because it is easy to go to hell. Here is a way that is even easier than the previous ways. We need to read one verse to see the easiest way to hell. Hebrews 2:3 says, "How shall we escape if we have neglected so great a salvation?" If we cannot escape, we will be condemned. Being condemned is to be punished; and being punished is to go to hell. Neglecting God's salvation is another way to hell. I am doing my best to preach the gospel, but you let it go in one ear and out the other. I am speaking earnestly, but you listen carelessly. You neglect. You despise. You have learned that you are a sinner. Yet still you say, "It's none of your business. There is no big difference to me whether or not I am a sinner."

You heard that sinners will be punished and will go to hell, but you say, "Whether I go to hell or not, whether I am punished or not, I don't care. Why should I worry about these things in the future?" You have learned that Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners. He died in the sinner's place and suffered the punishment reserved for them. But you say, "Who cares about Jesus? Whether He died or not, and whether He died in a sinner's place or not, this is insignificant to me. Why should I care about Him? I came here with a peaceful conscience. Why do you preachers have to speak so much to trouble my heart?" You neglect. You disdain. You do not care for anything. Neither salvation nor perdition is important to you. You live carelessly and waste your time foolishly day after day. Hell cannot frighten you, and heaven cannot inspire you. You are really a descendant of Mr. Worryless! The Bible tells you that you cannot escape if you neglect salvation. You need to take heed.

People often ask me, "What must I do to be saved?" I tell them, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." When people ask me, "What must I do to perish?" My answer is, "You do not need to do anything!"

If you want to be saved, you need to believe in the Lord Jesus. Nothing more and nothing less than believing is required. Believe and you will be saved. If you want to perish, you do not have to do anything! You do not need to commit sins, blaspheme the name of Jesus Christ, curse God, do frightening things, commit fornication, be proud, reject Jesus Christ as your Savior, or disobey the gospel! You do not need to do anything: you are qualified to go to hell just as you are. If you want to go to hell, you do not need to do anything. Just a neglectful and disdainful attitude has made you fully qualified to go to hell. You have heard about so great a salvation and know that the Lord Jesus died for your sins, but you pay no attention, giving no heed to these things. It is as if your soul has traversed to some other place. Heaven and hell, salvation and perdition, eternal life and eternal death, spirit and soul, sins, Jesus Christ, His substitutional death—none of these move your heart. It is as if I am preaching to a wooden or stone statue. You ignore easily what you have heard and are totally indifferent to matters of life and death. While you think that you will not necessarily go to hell, you do not have the assurance that you are going to heaven. You live in a dream world. Since you have despised God's salvation, you cannot escape punishment. Please remember, you do not have to do anything. You do not have to commit any more sins to be qualified for perdition. You are already a man of perdition.

In Canada there is a waterfall which is the biggest in the world. People often go canoeing in the river upstream from the falls. However, they need to be very cautious in order to keep from drifting over the falls. A plummeting fall will crush both man and boat. Once there was a husky young man who was canoeing alone in the river. At one point he laid the paddle down and started to doze while the canoe drifted down the river. Since he considered himself to be very muscular, he did not anticipate any difficulty in paddling the canoe to a safe place. He assumed that his strength was mightier than the current! Soon, as his canoe had come very close to the edge of the falls, people on the shore noticed the danger that he was in. They began calling to wake him up. When he woke up, he immediately saw the danger. He started paddling with all his strength to bring the boat back to safety. Despite his great strength, however, the current was more powerful, and his canoe drew nearer and nearer to the danger zone. Finally the people on the shore devised a way to save him. They threw a very long rope toward the canoe, hoping that he would grasp the rope so that they could pull both him and the canoe back to shore. Nevertheless, even though he saw the rope, he seemed to be ignorant of the danger and death that faced him. He heedlessly continued to let his boat drift. Two or three times the people on the shore threw the rope near his boat, but he continued to neglect it even though he saw it. Passively he went to meet death. In the end both the man and canoe plunged over the falls to the depths far below, like falling over a tall cliff. Thus this young man lost his life.

Why did he lose his life? He lost his life because he despised others' deliverance. He neglected their salvation. He was callous to the saving way provided by others. In like manner you need to be careful. Do not live a careless life. Today I have presented God's salvation to you, just as if I had thrown you a rope beside you. I plead that you no longer be foolish and indifferent. For the sake of your soul, receive this salvation promptly and be saved. Why allow yourself to be thrown into hell for eternity? Men are not animals and should not be content to live just for the present age. Why do you so despise the things of the coming age? Please take heed. How can you escape punishment, if you still neglect?

Those who often hear sermons need to be especially careful. While you are studying in school, you have the opportunity every day to hear God's Word. Or you may be a nominal Christian who has heard sermons for months, years, or even decades. As such a person, you need to pay special attention because I fear that you will go to hell more readily than others. You are used to sermons

and have become familiar with the gospel. Nevertheless, you have not believed in the Lord Jesus as your Savior. Since you have heard the gospel repeatedly, you have grown tired of it, saying, "There is not much to it!" Therefore, you despise the message which God has preached to you. You consider the gospel as something trite and hackneyed. You can even utter some words concerning the death of Jesus for man and His salvation for man. Nevertheless, you need to be mindful. Do not neglect God's salvation; otherwise, how will you escape punishment? You may have heard much, but have you been saved? This is a big question. No matter how much you have heard, if you continue to neglect and do not believe, you are in a dangerous position. Please do not fill your head with gospel doctrines so that you can go to hell to tell the people there of your knowledge!

The Fifth Way to Hell: Fear of Man

I will speak of a final way to go to hell. I know that the Holy Spirit is working among us. Many of us have already perceived the reality of the coming age and realize that we should believe in the Lord Jesus to avoid God's punishment and wrath. But there is another danger which we all need to pay attention to. We have known that we should have our sins purged, forsake the companions of fornication, believe in the death of the Lord Jesus for us, and confess Him as our Savior. But there is another big hindrance keeping us from having our sins purged and confessing Christ as our Savior. What is this hindrance? It is the fear of man. Many of you are standing on the border line of believing in the Lord. Just another step will make you believers in the Lord. However, you dare not believe or confess because you are afraid that other people might scorn you or rise up against you. Therefore, we need to read two verses to help you overcome the fear of man.

Proverbs 29:25 says, "The fear of man bringeth a snare." Revelation 21:8 says, "But the cowardly...their part will be in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Those who fear men are those who are cowardly. What will be their destiny? They will fall into the snare of the devil and be bound by him. They dare not believe in the Lord Jesus or confess themselves to be Christians before others. Eventually, they will all be thrown into the lake of fire—hell—together with the devil. The works of the devil give people this fear of man. Through a

fearful heart, the devil keeps his prisoners. He puts this fearful heart inside of man so that man will never dare to leave his domain. In this way man becomes his servant forever. The devil cannot reason with man because many times, even if he tried, the reasons would not be convincing. Man often realizes that it is foolish to serve Satan. He realizes that there is no real joy in living in sins. Even if the flesh enjoys temporal pleasure, the conscience is always under prolonged condemnation. He realizes his degradation in humanity and corruption in morality. When he considers his life after death, he senses even more darkness. When pondering his future judgment, he trembles with fear. No matter how much he tries to free himself and rid himself of the bothersome problem of hell, the existence of hell is deeply rooted in man's life. He can neither wash away the thoughts nor drive them out. Sometimes he may be happy because he can successfully argue in theory that hell does not exist. Nevertheless, when he searches his heart at midnight, when he is weak physically, or when he is sick unto death, his conscience still tells him deep within that there probably is a hell and that he cannot escape! Do you think man does not know that serving Satan and committing sins will lead him to the place of eternal punishment? After hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus' death for man, do you think he does not know that he should receive Christ as his Savior and confess His name before men to escape the future punishment and present oppression of sins? Even Satan knows that he cannot reason with man concerning these matters. When it comes to matters of his own gain or loss, man knows which side is more reasonable. Nevertheless, Satan is very crafty. He knows that he cannot prevail in doctrine so he adopts other means to keep man as his prisoner. Even though he fails in many ways, he is still able to do one thing.

He speaks to those whose hearts have been touched, saying, "Believing in the Lord Jesus is good, but are you unafraid of men's opposition? You are a wife, and your husband dislikes religion. Are you unafraid of his opposition? He often commits sins. If you do not go along with your husband, will he not scorn you? You will probably be rejected the first time you mention such a matter. Are you unafraid of him?"

Maybe in your family you are a son, and your parents, grandparents, and other adults such as your uncles, etc., are all adherents of Confucianism. They all greatly oppose Christ. If they learn that you have believed in Christ, they will either be infuriated or persecute you fiercely and greatly affect your future. Or they will scorn you, saying, "Someone like you wants to be religious?"

Satan shows you the dark side of your family to make you afraid and to stop you from confessing the Lord Jesus as your Savior.

Maybe you are a student, and many in your school do not believe in Christ. They always chide, mock, and despise those who believe in Christ. Whenever you think about this, Satan will say to you, "Consider this: if you tell them that you have believed in Christ, they will probably give you the same treatment as they have given to the other Christians. Can you bear this? If you were also a despiser and mocker of believers of Christ, it will be even more embarrassing! You used to mock others and now you too are a Christian! The one who mocked others will now be mocked! How can you bear this?" Satan makes you afraid to receive Christ as your Savior.

Maybe you have a friend who strongly dislikes people who believe in the Lord Jesus. Maybe you have a fiancé who is strongly against Christ and even very worldly and cold toward Christ. If they hear that you have believed in the Lord Jesus, they will stand against you. Perhaps you may even lose their favor. Satan presents all these pictures to you to make you so afraid of your dear friends that you dare not confess the Lord as your Savior.

Satan might say to you, "If you have decided to believe in the Lord Jesus as your Savior, I have no way to stop you. However, why do you have to confess the Lord Jesus as your Savior before men? This will cause too much turmoil. Why not just believe stealthily and be a secret Christian? If you do this, you can believe in the Lord Jesus and no one will mock you. Will this not serve both purposes?" But, the Bible says, "For with the heart there is believing unto righteousness, and with the mouth there is confession unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10). If we want to be a Christian, we must confess Christ as our Savior before men. We cannot be a secret Christian.

Sinning is indeed a shameful thing; but what is the shame for one to believe in Christ and be rid of his sins? It is truly a shame to be a slave of the devil and do the things of darkness. What is the shame to be a child of the heavenly Father and put on the garment of light? If it is right to believe in Christ, then we ought to believe. If it is right to confess Christ, then we ought to confess. How can we not believe in the One we ought to believe in and not confess the One we ought to confess just because of our fear of men? We should not be cowardly. We should not be afraid to testify that Christ is our Savior just because many people, ones both familiar and new to us, are here. If you truly

love your household, you should be the pioneer in believing in the Lord Jesus so that they might also have the opportunity to believe in Christ. If you hide yourself and refuse to be an open testimony, how long will they have to wait until another member of your household chooses to be a pioneer and leads them to believe?

I remember a story of a bookseller who went to the countryside to sell Bibles. When he went into a house, he would speak some of the stories in the Bible to the people in the house. The mother of one family bought a New Testament. She paid for it with money she had earned through her own labors. She took this New Testament and kept it in her house so that she could read whenever she had some spare time. Later her husband came home. He was a foreman. He was often drunk and in poor conduct. When he saw the new book in the house, he asked his wife, "Where did this new book come from?" After hearing the answer from his wife, he was greatly infuriated because he thought his wife had wasted useful money on a useless book. His wife responded, "Not every penny in this household belongs to you. As your wife, at least half should be mine." Her husband then said, "Well, in that case, half of the book is mine." So he tore the book in half and kept it in his pocket. Then he angrily went back to his work. Soon, he was dispatched to work in a remote mountain area, and he was depressed. He remembered the book in his pocket, took it out, and started to read. He had taken the first half of the New Testament. He started to read from Matthew 1 and continued chapter after chapter. Finally he came to Luke 15 and read the story of the prodigal son. He saw how pleasant the prodigal son's original condition had been. Then he saw how the son left home, sinned, suffered, repented, and finally decided to come back home. He read the story with great interest. But just at this place, the book was torn in two. The last sentence in the final page was the first half of verse 20: "And he rose up and came to his own father." There was nothing after this! He wanted to know the end of the story. He did not know whether or not the father accepted the son. He wanted to know how the son's story ended, but he was afraid to ask his wife for the second half of the book. He was afraid that she would scorn him. At the same time his wife was reading this story at home. She knew that there was a father with a loving heart toward his prodigal son. But why did the son leave? What happened to him? Why did he finally come back home? She knew none of the answers. She wanted to ask her husband for the first half of the book but she was afraid that her husband might reject her. Each of them was afraid of the other. He dared

not ask her, and she dared not ask him. Daily they saw each other, but neither dared to speak the words within them. Finally her husband could not stand it any longer and he asked his wife, "What is the conclusion of the story about the prodigal son?" Immediately his wife asked him, "How does the story of the prodigal son begin?" After their discussion the Holy Spirit opened their eyes, and they saw that they too were prodigal sons. They had spent all that they had and were afflicted by their sins. Therefore, they needed to quickly come back to the father's house. The couple, with tears in their eyes, then knelt down before God, confessed their sins, and received the salvation which God had prepared in the Lord Jesus.

Are not many of your fears vain fears? God is working in your heart. How do you know that he is not also working in the hearts of your family? I know of many stories where both the husband and wife decided to believe in the Lord Jesus, but neither one had the courage to speak to the other about their faith in the Lord. Later when they did speak to each other, they found that their spouse had been waiting to approve them. Even if the other side does not approve, the Lord Jesus has died for you. He has suffered immeasurable pain for you and borne your sins so that you might receive eternal life. At the very least, you have a duty to confess Him before men!

I think all of us have heard the story about an ungrateful daughter. Over ten years ago, there was a family that was quite rich. The family consisted only of a mother and her daughter. One day while the daughter was still a baby, there was a fire in the house. The mother was outside, helplessly watching the house burn down. All her wealth turned to ashes. Suddenly she remembered that her daughter was sleeping upstairs. Because of her love for the daughter, she rushed into the house in spite of the fierce fire and threw her out safely. The daughter was unharmed but the mother's hair was scorched and her whole body seriously burned. She was bedridden for several months because of her injuries. She lost all of her former attractiveness and her wealth. She was forced to do menial work, washing clothes and embroidering, to support herself and her daughter. Eventually, however, she was able to send her daughter to school. Even though she was poor, she adorned her daughter with new clothes. One day when she was going to the place where she washed clothes, she met her daughter walking with her classmates. She called to her daughter and talked to her. Then the daughter and her classmates started to walk away. While the mother was standing there watching her daughter's back with pride, the friends asked her daughter, "Who is that woman you

talked to?" Just imagine. How could a dignified student admit that a woman with shabby clothing, a bald head, a scar-filled face, and clothes in her hands to be washed was her mother? Would she be ridiculed by others if she admitted it? She replied, "She is my housemaid." But her mother heard this word! She could no longer continue to wash clothes. She went home, laid down on her bed, and became very sick. Later when her daughter came home, no matter how the daughter tried to comfort her mother, the mother's heart had been broken, and she could not be comforted. Who can comfort a broken heart? She remained sorrowful until she eventually died.

Do you know that the Lord Jesus died for you? If not for the purpose of saving us, why did He need to be born and to be called illegitimate by others? Why did He experience indescribable sufferings in the world? Why was he accused of being demon-possessed? Why was His sweat like drops of blood? As the Son of God, why was He judged by man? Why was He mocked, struck, and slapped, suffering unspeakable humiliations at the hands of men? If not for sinners like you and me, why did He wear a thorny crown, and why was he nailed to the cross to die? What men now attack and mock is the truth of Christ's redemption by the blood and the truth of His death for us on the cross. If not for the purpose of saving us, why on the one hand was He crucified on the cross and shed His blood, and why on the other hand was He despised and scorned by others? Was He not full of wisdom and able to speak on matters of ethics, philosophy, and principles of morality like no one else? If He had chosen to speak such things He would have been a most welcome person. Why was He unwilling to be welcomed, but willing to suffer and be humiliated to the point of death? If not for the purpose of saving us, He gave up His life in vain. Truly there is no reason, except for the reason of saving you and me. Therefore, He condescended to a lowly state and bore the pain that no one else in the world has ever suffered for the sake of saving you and me.

Today, regardless of your philosophy, you take pride in declaring it. But if you say that you confess the Lord Jesus as the Savior, you will see that others will despise you. It seems that the name of Jesus is inseparable from humiliation. Confessing the Lord Jesus is not an easy matter. Yet how can we hardheartedly deny the One who died for us in order to temporarily save our face? He humbled Himself to such an extent. How can we hardheartedly refuse to testify of Him as our Benefactor because we want to keep our temporary glory? How hardhearted are we? We detest the ungrateful

daughter, but we should not forget ourselves. Yet, human feelings often tell us that it is all right for us to deny Christ.

The devil sees that he has failed. But in the matter of keeping people in fear, he often triumphs. I do not know how many people just like you have perished. They knew that they should believe in and confess the Lord Jesus as their Savior. However, they did not dare believe and confess because of the fear of men. They have perished and left the world. They went to hell because of their cowardice. Why should you make the same mistake? The dead are dead already, but we should be careful. How contemptible is a timid person who knows that he should do the things of righteousness but does not move because of timidness. Is this not contemptible? We despise cowardly people. When it comes to believing in Jesus, we should not be cowards and eventually find ourselves in perdition. Now is there anyone who would like to believe in the Lord Jesus as your Savior? If there are some, please stand up and be a testimony before all men.