

Paradise

Luke 16:19-31

Introduction: As Jesus was dying upon the cross, He turned to one of the thieves and said, “**Today** you will be with Me in *Paradise*” (Luke 23:43). Jesus told the thief He would be with him in Paradise that day. Where is this place and who goes there?

I. A location in Hades (literally, the “all receiving” place).

A. Paul tells of a Christian who was in Paradise (2 Cor. 12:2-4).

B. Lazarus was with Abraham in Paradise (Luke 16:22).

C. Jesus was in Paradise for 3 days (Acts 2:27, 31).

D. Paradise is described as a glass sea in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 15:2).

1. Paradise is located before the throne of God (Rev. 4:6).

2. On the judgement day, those in Paradise will be delivered to be judged “according to his works” (Rev. 20:12-13).

II. How does one get to Paradise?

A. Upon death, we will change (1 Cor. 15:35-38, 42, 51-54; Phil. 3:20-21).

B. We’ll be escorted by an angel (Luke 16:22).

III. Those that will be found in Paradise.

A. The church (Acts 2:47; 2 Pet. 1:10-11; Acts 4:12).

1. Including those who offend and practice lawlessness in His kingdom (Matt. 13:40-43). Remember, Paradise is not the eternal reward.

2. We are assured there will be a judgment day (Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 4:17).

a. It is not just a day of sentencing (Rom. 14:9-12).

b. A judgment will be made, and a verdict will be rendered (Rev. 20:12-15). Note those in Hades are not being judged until that day.

3. If we understand that those in torment have sealed their own fate (Rom. 2:12; Eph. 2:12; 2 Pet. 2:4-9; Jude 6), then those in Paradise are the ones who don’t know their fate (1 Pet. 4:17-18; Matt. 7:21-23).

4. Some of the Lord’s parables allude to a lawless person(s) in the kingdom being judged to hell in the end (Matt. 22:11-13; 25:30; 13:47-50).

B. Those “in Christ” and “who are Christ’s” (1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:23).

1. Christians

2. Those who lived righteously under the Old Law or in the Patriarchic age.

IV. Will all Christians be in Paradise?

A. Not necessarily. Those Christians who have turned their backs on God would certainly know their fate (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31).

B. Such unjust Christians could certainly find themselves in the torment side of Hades (2 Pet. 2:9).

Conclusion: It might seem unfair or illogical for a person bound for Hell to wait for judgment in Paradise. But then again, when did man's logic usurp the ways of God (Isa. 55:8-9)? Be assured that Paradise is the place where those who love the Lord will wait until the Resurrection and Judgment to come.