

The Rich Man and Lazarus

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[0 : 00] I'd like us to turn once again to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 16, and reading at verse 19. Luke 16 and at verse 19.

There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, who feasted sumptuously every day.

And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores. You know, when the Lord told his parables, and he told many of them, he had two real thrusts toward his parable.

One was to speak to the outcasts of society. The publicans, the sinners, the outcasts of society.

And he preached to them that the ungodly and the sinner had a place in the kingdom of God.

[1 : 24] But they were to beware of the unrighteous mammon. They weren't to give their hopes and aspirations to ambitions, which would simply fulfill the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life.

To the scribes and Pharisees, he preached the parables as warnings. To the ungodly and the sinner, he preached them as a lesson of life.

To the scribes and Pharisees, he preached warnings. Although the scribes and Pharisees continued to find fault with all that the Lord did, he continued to warn them.

And he warned them that their lives were built on the God mammon.

That although they knew the scriptures, they didn't live their lives according to the scriptures. Although they knew the letter of the law, they didn't keep the spirit of the law. And so the Lord again and again warned them that they were whited sepulchers.

[2 : 43] Everything on the outside looked very clean and bright and upright. But internally, they were full of putrefying sores.

And that's really the difference between a hypocrite and a sinner. Hypocrite is one who thinks his life is okay. He presents a goodly vision for the world around him.

And he really has nothing to go to God to seek for any forgiveness. Whereas ungodly in the sinner, brought under conviction of sin, sees immediately.

As many examples in the New Testament show us. That there was only one hope for them. That God would be merciful to those who were sinners.

Now, sometimes this parable is called the parable of dives and Lazarus. Now, the word dives comes from the Latin. And it speaks about someone being very rich and opulent, very wealthy.

[3 : 53] And so whether we talk about the rich man and Lazarus or dives and Lazarus, it is the same story. And I call it a story, not a parable. Because it appears that the Lord doesn't say anything about it being a parable.

He says, there was a rich man. And so this was a story about two people that the Lord knew of and that he was here speaking about.

We're told that the rich man died. And Lazarus also died and was carried to Abraham's bosom.

As I said earlier on, it was symbolic of being carried into heaven by the angels. But why was the rich man lost and the poor man saved?

There are many good rich men and many bad poor men or people. And so the fact as to whether we're rich or poor really has no bearing upon this parable.

[4 : 59] Although sometimes those who are in very poor circumstances thought that perhaps if their lives had been so bad in this life, that the next life was bound to have something better for them.

But that's not what the Lord here is saying. No one was ever simply lost because they were rich.

And no one was ever given heaven for simply being poor. Both were in the place where God in his providence had placed them.

The rich man in God's providence had been given riches and he'd been given an inheritance and he'd been given plenty of God's blessings. And part of the problem, difficulty is for those of us who are Christians, we think that if we're good Christians, God will reward us in some material way.

And it's a totally wrong way of looking at life. We think if we don't receive the good things of life, then somehow we are not being good as far as God is concerned and that he's punishing us in some way or other.

[6 : 18] But again, the Bible never speaks of rewards or losses in those terms. So both were given their place in life to honour God and to glorify God and to make their lives in this world so that they would be testimonies of God's grace towards them.

What they did with their lives and resulting in their subsequent destinies was up to them.

The rich man had every good thing in abundance as we've already been seeing. While the beggar, full of sores, was poor and hungry, probably friendless and tormented in mind and body.

But life, with all its joys and all its sorrows and difficulties, soon passes. And we enter into a new existence where none of the difficulties, this valley of tears is no more.

And we enter into an existence which is governed by the way that we've lived our life here on earth.

[7 : 44] Whether we've committed our lives to God or whether we've committed our lives to ourselves. Remember the parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee.

The Pharisee prayed to himself and looked up to heaven and said, Thank you, I'm not as other men, especially as that tax collector over there.

The tax collector looks inside himself and sees himself as he truly is and says, God be merciful to me, a sinner. And that's the only difference that will really count at the end of the day.

Whether we've put our hope and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to be our surety and our hope. Whether we're depending upon what we are and what we've done and what we have hoped to have achieved to our own praise during our lifetimes.

And so they were both given ample opportunity to glorify God. To be led by the Holy Spirit in each of their shares of trials and temptations and blessings.

[9 : 00] And so the scene is set. Rich man, poor man. How they lived their lives was going to determine where destiny for eternity.

But we're told the beggar died. And was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The one who on earth had nowhere to lay his head. Who was always hungry.

Who was probably dressed in rags. Received very little kindness from anyone. Was welcomed into the church of the firstborn in heaven.

There God wiped away every tear from his face. And there he was welcomed into the throne room of God. And taken to the very fountain of the waters of life.

And there to be fed and watered at the very fountain of the waters of life. His light affliction.

[10 : 09] Which was but for a moment if we consider the difference between time and eternity. Worked for him. Far more eternal and exceeding weight of glory.

But why? Why? Why did Lazarus go to heaven when he died? Was it because he suffered all his life and was poor all his life?

And he received none of the good things in his life? No. He suffered because he thirsted after God. In his life he saw that life had no meaning for him.

That life instead of being something to complain about. And envying others who were better off than themselves. Saw that life had really nothing to offer him. That only God in heaven was his hope and his reward.

See many have suffered as much and more than Lazarus. During their lifetimes. Suffering on its own has never taken anyone to heaven.

[11 : 20] Very often it hardens the sufferer. But suffering as a talent. Given by God to sharpen our desire for him.

Given as a talent. Whereby he expects us to be exercised. With our suffering. Can work for us.

Far more than anything. Of the blessings. Of life. Can very often do. To be in a bad place. Materially and physically.

Is not a curse. Very often. It's a blessing. Whereby we find that. This life. And. What it has to offer.

Are really nothing. And it's only as we. Look to Christ. And see in Christ. All our joy. And all our reward. That our lives are turned around.

[12 : 22] And we find. That hope. And that life in Christ. That shall never end. But if we refuse. To see God's hand.

In our sorrows. All that happens. Is that we harden our hearts. If we. See. Ourselves. As. Being. Poor.

And downtrodden. And seeing others. Who are. Better off than ourselves. And we envy them. And we. We curse. Our own. Situation. And our hearts.

Will harden. Against God. Many. Many people have experienced. Sickness. And bereavement. And sorrow. And trials. With little respite. Year after year.

And through it all. Perhaps hearts. Have been hardened. More and more. Remember Pharaoh.

[13 : 17] All that he. Experienced. In Egypt. How every. Trial. Caused his heart. To be hardened. More. Until eventually.

His own. Child. Was taken. Because of his rebellion. And. His. Obstinacy. Before God. And that's the way. To be with us.

If we see ourselves. As. As receiving. Evil. From God. Perhaps. Even. Like. Naomi. Call me not.

Naomi. Anymore. Call me. Mara. We see there. Someone whose heart. Was hardened. Against God. Even though she. Returned to Bethlehem. The barley harvest.

Which was. Eventually. To be. Her redemption. Yet. On her coming back. To. Jerusalem. Her heart. Was hardened. And she found herself.

[14 : 13] Distanced from God. And. Complaining that God's hand. Had gone out against her. And that's how it can be. Or we suffer. That's how it can be. When life's trials.

Seems so difficult. To deal with. But really. They are a talent. To be exercised. By us. And to those. Who have. God shall.

Give more. In abundance. But that's how it was. With Lazarus. It's true. His sorrows. Didn't take him to heaven. But he learned.

That life. Didn't last. It was only. A temporary existence. When time was no more. When the temporal.

Was passed away. Only. The spiritual. Remained. The Holy Spirit. Led them to the Christ. Of the Bible. No one else can do it.

[15 : 10] None of us. Whether we are suffering. Or whether we are greatly blessed. In material. Goodness. Are ever. Led. To the Christ. Of the Bible. In and of ourselves. By what we've heard. Or by.

Or by what. People we. Meet with. Or live with. It's only by the power. And the indwelling. Of the Holy Spirit. That we are. Brought. To believe. In the Lord Jesus Christ.

Only by his power. And it's there. That we must go. If we seek eternal life. It's the God. We must go. Seeking. The indwelling. Of the Holy Spirit. To enlighten our minds.

Into the knowledge. Of the truth. And to. Renew our will. And to enable us. To embrace Jesus Christ. As he's offered to us. In the gospel. It's only. The Holy Spirit.

That can do these things. That's. His mission. To make known. Christ to us. To open. Our minds. To our own. Misery. Our own.

[16 : 05] Wastefulness. In this life. Our prodigality. In this life. And. To turn. To God. In Christ. And he does that. He makes us. Willing.

In the day. Of his power. And from that thing. For Lazarus. All things. Passed away. And behold. All things. Became new.

All the. Suffering. All the evil. That surrounded him. Was no longer. A consideration. He looked past. Those things. He looked. To the Christ. Who was.

To be his savior. And he was. Happier. And richer. Than die. As ever was. Enduring. His. Rich. Life.

Full of. Food and clothes. Just one thing. In the passing. Neither. Of these. Two people. Would have changed. Their situation. During.

[17 : 01] Their lifetimes. Dive. The rich man. Was perfectly content. With the way. He was. Content. To be without God. Content. To live the life.

He was living. Content. To be surrounded. By friends. And family. And riches. And. Whatever else. The poor man.

Was also satisfied. He was satisfied. With Christ. Satisfied. That the Holy Spirit.

Had revealed. Christ. To him. Satisfied. That this world. With all its trials. Difficulties. Was not something. That was going to last.

Forever. And that there was. A heaven. Waiting. Waiting. For him. But how can I say. All that.

[17 : 56] About Lazarus. How can I say. That. Lazarus. Finding nothing. In this world. In which he lived. Found Christ. And was satisfied.

In him. And by him. God. Because. Because the scripture. Tells us. That no man. Comes to the father. But. By Christ. That there is no name.

Given amongst men. Under heaven. By whom. We must. Be saved. Whatever other religions. There might be. Whatever other gods. There might be. There is only one.

Living in true God. The God of Abraham. The God of Isaac. The God of Jacob. The God and father. Of our. Lord Jesus Christ. He is.

The only true. And living God. And all other gods. Are idols done. Which blinded nations fear. But our God.

[18 : 53] Is the God. By whom the heavens. Created were. So how can we say all this. About Lazarus. And be assured. That Lazarus was saved.

Because as I said. The scriptures tell us. No one. Knows the father. But. The one. To whom. Christ.

Takes. The father. There is no other way. To the father. But by the son. No one else. Who knows the father. But the son.

And. Those to whom the son. Reveals the father. In God's providence. Anything can take a man. To God. To God. Read there.

In. Ecclesiastes. Of Solomon. King in Jerusalem. The preacher. A man who. Went. A long. Way. Astray.

[19 : 47] A man. Who. Who tried. Every aspect. Of. Of pleasure. In this life. Whether it was pleasure. Or. Or wealth. Or knowledge.

Or. Or folly. What. He tried everything. And all these. Were. A chasing after the wind. Meaningless. Life became for him. Meaningless.

Until. At the end. Of the book. Of Ecclesiastes. He says. What is. The whole. End of man. To serve God. And to keep.

His commandments. And there is. No other chief end of man. We know that. From your first catechism. To. Enjoy God. Man's chief end.

Is. To serve God. And to enjoy God. And to know him. Not only in time. But also. For eternity. So it can take.

[20 : 47] A Solomon. To Christ. It can take. A Lazarus. To Christ. Whether it's. The. Abundance of riches.

In the case of Solomon. Or whether it's. The abundance of. Burdens and cares. That takes. A person to Christ. Anything. Can be used. By the Holy Spirit.

To make us. Willing. In a day of his power. And if. We really want. To be saved. And surely. None who. Come to this. House. Of prayer. And worship.

Lord's day. After Lord's day. Would want. Anything else. About yourself. Or your loved ones. And families. But that. You would be. In.

That family. Members. Of the family. Of God. Joined together. In brotherly love. And sisterly love. Joined together. In worship. And in praise.

[21 : 42] And in glory. To God. If anyone. Had taken the time. To. Talk to Lazarus. And they would have found. That his. Love for God.

And his joy. In God. Was paramount. You know. If you. Think again. Back. To your catechism. What is. What accompanies. Justification.

Adoption. And sanctification. What gifts. Does God give. To his people. To those who are subject. To those. Great. Blessings. Assurance. Of God's love.

Peace. Of conscience. Any one of these. The world. Would give. Everything for. Assurance. That God. Would love them. A peace of conscience.

In a world. That is. Is troubled. By his conscience. Day after day. Hour after hour. Joy. In the Holy Spirit. To know. That the Holy Spirit. Indwells us.

[22 : 37] Is guiding us. Directing us. Educating us. Increasing our grace. So that we. We grow from those. Who are doubting. To full assurance. Of faith. And a perseverance.

That will continue. Throughout our days. For the perseverance. That we somehow. Work up in ourselves. And exercise in ourselves. But the perseverance. Which God guarantees to us.

That he will never let us go. He has a love for us. That will never release us. A love for us. That will continue to strive with us.

Who shall separate us. Paul says. From love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus. Those are the great benefits. That each and every one. Who is in Christ Jesus.

Knows and experiences. And that. Was the end. Of Lazarus. That was his. The experience he had. During life. And which continued.

[23 : 33] And grew. And abounded. More and more. Throughout the endless ages. Of glory. And what of the rich man. Who were told. The rich man.

Died. And was buried. And in hell. Lifted up his eyes. In torment. And saw Lazarus.

Far off. Neither wealth. Nor privilege. Nor influence. Nor prestige.

Could save this man. From dying. Many people. Try. Everything. They can.

They'll try. Every drug. They'll try. Every operation. They'll try. Every design. Known. To man. And some. Pretended to.

[24 : 31] By man. Believe it. And try. To extend. Their lives. And their existence. Here in this world. But nothing. Can save us. From dying. The devil.

Does. Try. And dispel. That thought. From all our minds. Stop men and women. From thinking. About death. Thinking.

About a God. Who will. One day. Judge. The guilty. Thinking. About. The. Verse. In the Lord. In. Hebrews.

Which speaks about. As appointed unto. Once. And to all men. Once to die. And after that. The judgment. These are texts. The devil doesn't want us. To think about. He wants to think about.

Only life. And to put off. Those things. Till another day. When you're older. When you've achieved. Something in your life. When you're in retirement. Whatever it might be.

[25 : 25] The devil is quite happy. As long as you put it off. He wants you. To prevaricate. He wants you. To put things off. He wants you. To go on. Blindly. Into the future.

Without making any plans. And. Preparations. Somebody once said. A long time. We make preparations. For everything. Make preparations. For our exams.

Make preparations. For going to university. For getting married. For. Our work. Even for our retirement. But never for death.

It's the one thing. That we know. Will happen. Something that will. Overtake. Each one of us. And yet. It's perhaps. The one event. In our life. We make absolutely.

No. Preparation for. But it is appointed. Unto all men. Who wants to die. And after that. The judgment. The day.

[26 : 24] The day. For many of us. I suppose. Might seem. A long way off. And this. Rich man. Was young. No doubt. He was strong.

And healthy. Dressed. In fine linen. And purple. Surrounded. By flattery. And friends. And every. Goodness. That money. Could buy.

But death. Came just the same. Grew from a young man. To a middle aged man. To an old man. And then. Eventually. Died. How many times.

Have we heard it said. Of others. Anything fresh today. Yes. Someone's died. There's a death in the village. Young. And old.

Sick. And healthy. You've all experienced it. Your own homes. And among your own families. And friends. People taken out of time. And into.

[27 : 25] Eternity. The Lord reminds us. Elsewhere. Lay not up for yourself. Treasures. On earth. Where moth and rust.

Doth corrupt. And where thieves. Break through. And steal. But lay up for yourself. Treasures. In heaven.

Where moth and rust. Do not corrupt. As long as. We are here. On mercy's ground. We can be saved.

As long as we're here. Here in the gospel. As long as we're here. With. A faint. However faint. Desire it might be. To. Hear the gospel.

And to be saved. And to. Be numbered. Amongst the Lord's people. There is hope for us. But as the tree falls. So. Shall it lie.

[28 : 26] Every one of us. Who are being saved. Are sinners. Sinners. Saved by the grace.

And the mercy. Of God. Of God. In Christ. Christ. Came not to call the righteous. But sinners. To repentance.

The. Label. And that was. Unjustly applied. To the Lord. He is the friend. Of publicans. And sinners. As though. That was some sort of.

Derogatory statement. It was a badge. He wore with honor. He is a friend. Of the outcast. Of sinners. Of the ungodly. He wants.

To make them. His people. Members. Of his body. But time is no man's servant. Each day. Each week.

[29 : 24] Each month. Each year. It brings us closer. To the time. When we shall. Have to stand before. On the great. White throne.

Today. It's still a throne of grace. A throne of mercy. But the time. Will come. When it will be. A throne of judgment. Today.

We're asked. To. Bow the knee. And. To. Confess our sins. And. To glorify him.

The day will come. When the throne of judgment. We'll have to bow the knee. The one who has. Received a name. That is above every name. The name of Jehovah.

Every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess. That. Jesus is Jehovah. To the glory of God.

[30 : 23] God. And then we will know. That the. Man of sorrows. The one who was acquainted with grief. Did it all for us. And if you are in him.

You rejoice. If not. You will know. Only. Sorrow. And. Solitude. Remember.

Chalmers. Words. Just in closing. Chalmers. Chalmers. Thomas Chalmers. I'm sure you all know. One of the. The. Great men. Who began the free church. Was.

An unconverted man. When he began his ministry. In the parish. Of Dilmany and Fife. And he thought. And I suspect. Many are. Beginning to think.

In the same way today. That. He could do what he wanted. For the week. And then. Perhaps for. Two or three hours.

- [31 : 20] On the Saturday. He could prepare his sermons. For the Sunday. And that's all. That was required. Of him. And he spent many years. In that parish. Just living that way. Engaged. As professor of mathematics. In St. Andrew's University. And so. His life was full. One day. He was. He decided. He. Thought.
- He was on his deathbed. And it was during that illness. That. He was brought to see. The reality of things. And he came to see it.
- In the terms. Of his own interests. Of his own life. The brevity of time. And the endlessness. Of eternity.
- How short. Time is. And how endless. Eternity. Will be. Will be. And why should we.
- [32 : 15] Waste our time. With. The things of time. To the neglect. Of the things. Of eternity. For now.
- Is the accepted time. Today. Is the day of salvation. May the Lord. Bless these thoughts. To us. Let us then conclude.
- Our worship. Sing to God's praise. In Psalm. 73. On page 316. Psalm 73. At verse. 23. Nevertheless.
- Continually. O Lord. I am with thee. Thou dost me hold. By my right hand. And still. Upholdest me. We'll sing to the end. Of the psalm. To God's praise.
- Standing to sing. Amen. Nevertheless. Continually.
- [33 : 15] O Lord. I am with thee. Thou dost me hold.
- Thou dost me hold. By my right hand. And still. Thou holdest me.
- Thou with thy counsel. While I live. Will thee conduct.
- And guide. And do thy glory. Without the word.
- Receive thee. To abide. Whom have I in.
- [34 : 18] The heavens high. Thou dost me hold. O Lord. The heavens high. The heavens high.
- The heavens high. And in the earth. Whom I desire. Beside thee.
- There is none. My flesh. My flesh. And heart. Doth faint.
- And fail. But God. Doth fail. Me never. For of my heart.
- God is the strength. God is the strength. And ocean. Forever.
- [35 : 21] Forever. For who they land. Thou. Forever. But far from thee.
- Forever. Forever. Forever. Perish. And let.
- youtube. Amongst the monday.
- To be mere fan Of the constone. As surely it. It is. Good. For me.
- that I draw near to God. In God I trust that all my works I may declare abroad.
- [36 : 32] And now may grace, mercy and peace in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God rest on you and abide in you now and always.
- Amen.