

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 16

The Rich Man and Lazarus

The Rich Man and Lazarus

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word

Objective To present the reality of Heaven and Hell to the students and to show them the futility of living for today versus living in light of eternity.

Key Verses

Luke 16:19-31—Main Teaching Passage

Matthew 6:19-21

Mark 8:36

Memory Verse - Mark 8:36

“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

Hook

Review last week’s memory verse, Luke 15:10.

Tell the students that in today’s study we will be learning about Heaven and Hell.

Ask the students to describe what they think Heaven will be like. Make sure to correct any misconceptions that they might have (e.g. we will sit on clouds and play harps).

Then ask if they believe that Hell is a real place. Ask them to describe what they think Hell will be like. Again make sure to correct any misconceptions that they might have.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK Luke chapter 16 is a multi-part teaching from Jesus to the disciples. Throughout the chapter He tells several parables about serving God wisely. The Pharisees overhear this and begin to mock Jesus, who replies by telling a story about two men, one named Lazarus, and another unnamed rich man.

There is debate about whether or not this is a parable like those told in the beginning portions of Luke 16, or if this is a real story. The greatest argument for this being a real event is that in no other parable are people ever given names. For Jesus to directly refer to the poor man by his first name indicates that this was a true story used as an analogy.

In the story both men die, Lazarus is taken up to be with Abraham in glory, but the rich man is cast into Hades, where we are told he suffers torments. The rich man looks up to Abraham and cries out for mercy, asking that Lazarus would be sent with just a drop of water to quench his thirst. The rich man is told that there a fixed chasm between Hades and Abraham's bosom, and there is no crossing over.

The rich man then implores Abraham to allow Lazarus to return back to his living brothers to warn them about the reality of an eternal afterlife. Abraham again responds that this is impossible. He tells the rich man that his brothers have all the warnings that they need given to them in the Scriptures (the law of Moses, and the prophets) and that if they will not heed God's word, then they will not even believe if someone rises from the dead.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

In the Bible we are warned several times about having the proper perspective about the way we should view money, the way we should view life on earth, and the way that we should live in light of eternity. In the Gospel of Matthew we are told "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." In Mark 8:36 we are told, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

In the story we are told in Luke 16 we see the reality of these warnings played out for us. We see a rich man who lacked nothing but didn't listen to or trust the Scriptures, and a poor beggar, a man named Lazarus, who had no food, no house, and was very sick. Lazarus however, loved God.

LOOK (Continued)

When they both died, the rich man who had been incredibly blessed during his life found himself in Hades. The description we are given of Hades is particularly unpleasant. We are told that the rich man is hot, thirsty, and desperate that no one else would ever end up where he is. We are also told that our eternal destination is fixed, and one set it can't be changed.

The rich man was so focused on the physical world around him that he ignored the truth about God and about Heaven. He was so worried about eating good food and living in a big house, that he missed out on the best of heaven.

The Bible tells us that we are all sinners, and that because of our sin we all deserve to end up in Hades. It doesn't matter if we are rich or poor, male or female, American or Australian. The Bible tells us that consequences of sin is the eternal separation from God. We are told however that, like Lazarus, we can spend eternity in Heaven. If we trust in the Scriptures, the very word of God, believing that Jesus Christ is Lord, that He died on a cross for the forgiveness of our sins and that He rose from the grave, conquering death for all time, then we are given the promise of Heaven. If we allow Jesus to be Lord of our lives, and not be ruled by the things of the world, then we never have to fear or worry. We can know that we will be with Him forever.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life.

TOOK

Talk through the reality of Heaven and Hell with the students. Reassure them that salvation is available to all who call on the name of the Lord.

Invite the students to trust in the Scriptures, and to trust in the Lord and be saved.

Pray: Thank the Lord that He made a way for us to be saved from an eternity in Hell. Praise Him for His loving kindness toward us.

Parent Question: Why did the rich man go to Hades, and why did Lazarus go to be with Abraham?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Luke 16 by David Guzik

The story of Lazarus and the rich man.

1. (19-21) Lazarus and the rich man on earth.

“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.”

a. **There was a certain rich man:** Jesus did not present this story as a *parable*, and in no other parable did Jesus actually name an individual (as the poor man is here named). We have every reason to believe that Jesus gave us an actual case history, one He knew from His eternal perspective.

b. **Clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day:** The rich man’s wealth was evident by his **fine linen** clothing (luxurious and expensive), and by his excess with food (most people in that culture **fared sumptuously** only a few times a year).

i. **Fared sumptuously:** “The word used for feasting is the word that is used for a gourmet feeding on exotic and costly dishes. He did this *every day*.” (Barclay)

ii. The rich man is unnamed, but was traditionally given the name *Dives*, which is simply Latin for *rich*.

c. **A certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs:** Not far from the rich man – at **his gate** was a desperately poor and sick man. The rich man didn’t *do* anything against Lazarus, except neglect and ignore him.

i. “Here are two men, and day after day there is not the space of twenty yards between them, yet a distance like the sea divides the two.” (Morrison)

ii. “The name is the Latinized form of Eleazar and means *God is my help*.” (Barclay)

iii. **Fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table:** “Food was eaten with the hands and, in very wealthy houses, the hands were cleaned by wiping them on hunks of bread, which were then thrown away. This is what Lazarus was waiting for.” (Barclay)

iv. **The dogs came and licked his sores:** Jesus described the misery of the beggar in these strong, nauseating details.

2. (22-23) Lazarus and the rich man in Hades.

“So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”

a. **So it was that the beggar died...The rich man also died and was buried:** Both men eventually died. Lazarus did not even have the honor of a burial in this life, yet heaven honored him, being **carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom**. The rich man had the honor of a burial, but no angelic escort or pleasant destination.

i. It would seem obvious that when the beggar was **carried by the angels**, it was his *soul* or *spirit* that was carried; the immaterial and eternal aspect of his being. Except for the angel’s carrying work, the same was true of the rich man. His body was **buried** and remained on earth, but *he* was **in torments in Hades**.

ii. “The idea of Abraham’s bosom can be explained in one of three ways.” (Pate)

- The idea that in death, the righteous are gathered to the patriarchs in the faith (Genesis 15:15, 25:8).
- The thought of a parent’s love and care, as in John 1:18 (*The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father...*).
- The idea of sitting at the place of honor at a banquet, as in John 13:23

iii. We should not think that Lazarus was saved by his poverty, any more than we should think that the rich man was damned by his wealth. Lazarus must have had a true relationship of faith with the true God, and the rich man did not. Their life circumstances made that faith easier or more difficult, but did not create it.

b. **And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom:** The rich man was not far from Lazarus; yet he was a world apart. His place was full of torment and pain, while Lazarus enjoyed the comfort and care of Abraham.

i. “Having punishment without pity, misery without mercy, sorrow without succor, crying without compassion, mischief without measure, torments without end, and past imagination.” (Trapp)

c. **Being in torments in Hades:** In this story Jesus described a place He called **Hades**, which seems to have been the common abode of the dead. The rich man and Lazarus were not in the same place, but they were not far from each other. It may be best to say that they were in two areas of the same place (Hades), one a place of torments and the other a place of comfort (**the bosom of Abraham**).

i. From this story of Jesus, we find some hints regarding the world beyond as it existed in the past and as it exists now. From Jesus’ description, one may say that at that time – *before* the finished work of Jesus on the cross – that the spirit or soul of the human dead went to a place called Hades. Some in Hades rested in comfort; others suffered under torments of fire.

ii. **Hades** is a Greek word, but it seems to carry much the same idea as *Sheol*, a Hebrew word with the idea of the “place of the dead.” *Sheol* has no direct reference to either torment or eternal happiness. The idea of *Sheol* is often simply “the grave” and the understanding of the afterlife in the Old Testament is much less clear than in the New Testament.

iii. **Hades** is technically not *hell*, or what is also known as the *Lake of Fire*. That place is called *Gehenna*, a Greek word borrowed from the Hebrew language. In Mark 9:43-44, Jesus spoke of *hell* (*gehenna*), a Greek translation of the Hebrew “Valley of Hinnom,” a place outside Jerusalem’s walls desecrated by Molech worship and human sacrifice (2 Chronicles 28:1-3; Jeremiah 32:35). It was also a garbage dump where rubbish and refuse were burned. The smoldering fires and festering worms of the Valley of Hinnom made it a graphic and effective picture of the fate of the damned. This place is also called the “lake of fire” in Revelation 20:13-15, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).

iv. **Hades** is something of a waiting place until the day of final judgment (Revelation 20:11-13). Yet since Jesus’ finished work on the cross, there is no waiting for believers who die; they go directly to heaven, to the presence of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6-8). It is reasonable to think that when Jesus visited **Hades** as part of His redemptive work (Acts 2:24-27, Acts 2:31) and when Jesus preached in Hades (1 Peter 3:18-19), that Jesus set the captives in Hades free (Ephesians 4:8-9, Isaiah 61:1). Jesus’ work and preaching offered salvation for those like Lazarus, who in faith awaited it (Hebrews 11:39-40), and it also sealed the condemnation of the wicked and unbelieving.

3. (24-26) The rich man’s plea.

“Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’”

a. **Father Abraham, have mercy on me:** The rich man was definitely a descendant of Abraham, and the great father of faith did not disown him. Yet having Abraham as father was not enough to escape his torment in the life to come. Now the rich man was the beggar, pleading with Abraham.

i. Again, the rich man was not in torment because he was rich; but because he lived a life apart from love and trust in God, and this was demonstrated by his life. Abraham himself was richer than the man in this story of Jesus.

b. **Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue:** Even in the afterlife the rich man thought of himself as superior and as Lazarus as his servant. This shows that death did not take away his sense of entitlement and station in life.

i. “And he could not plead he was ignorant of Lazarus, for he recognized him at once in Abraham’s bosom. It was not want of *knowledge*, then, but want of *thought* that was the innermost secret of his tragedy.” (Morrison)

ii. Death also did not take away the rich man’s sense of *desire*, only the fulfillment of that desire. This was true torment, and he was desperate for even a *drop* of relief.

c. **Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things:** Through his earthly life the rich man enjoyed all the good things of life; yet did not share them or use them to prepare for the life to come.

i. The rich man is therefore a *contrast* to the previous parable of the unjust steward ([Luke 16:1-12](#)). The unjust steward used his present position to prepare for his next position; the rich man did not.

d. **Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot:** Though the rich man could see and speak with Abraham, he wasn’t close to him at all. There was a **great gulf fixed** between them, and their destinies were fixed for all time.

i. We remember that all this happened to the rich man’s spirit or soul, the immaterial part of his being. His body was still buried, yet he did not cease or suspend existence or awareness.

ii. We see no idea of soul sleep or annihilation; not of spiritual progression or reincarnation. Also, “There is no hint here of purgatory or remedial cleansing. The chasm was fixed, it is assumed, by God.” (Pate)

4. (27-31) The rich man thinks of his brothers.

“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five

brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

a. **I beg you therefore, father:** It is again emphasized that now the *rich man* is the beggar, not Lazarus.

b. **Send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them:** It is again seen that the rich man *still* thought of Lazarus as a servant to him. He asked Abraham to send Lazarus on another assignment (perhaps in a dream or vision), this time for the benefit of his **five brothers**.

i. Obviously the rich man remembered and cared about his relatives even when he passed from earth to the life to come. His memory was not wiped clean or given a new consciousness.

c. **Lest they also come to this place of torment:** *Now* the rich man cared about others not going to **torment**. He lived his life utterly unconcerned of this, either for himself or for others. If he himself could go to his brothers, he would; but he seemed to understand that this was also impossible, so much so that he did not even ask for it.

i. The mention of the five brothers is the first indication that the rich man thought about anyone except himself. Unfortunately, his concern for others came when it was too late to do any good.

d. **They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them:** Abraham pointed out that the rich man's brothers had all the necessary information to escape the torment of Hades. Listening to **Moses and the prophets** and doing what they said to do was enough.

i. **Abraham said to him:** "Luke uses the historic present tense for Abraham's reply: 'Abraham says, "They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.'"" (Pate)

ii. "When God's whole creation having been ransacked by the hand of science, has only testified to the truth of revelation – when the whole history of buried cities and departed nations has but preached out the truth that the Bible was true – when every strip of land in the far-off East has been an exposition and a confirmation of the prophecies of Scripture; if men are yet unconvinced, do ye suppose that one dead man rising from the tomb would convince them?" (Spurgeon)

iii. "If the Holy Scripture be not in the hands of God enough to bring you to the faith of Christ, then, though an angel from heaven, then, though the saints from glory, then, though God himself should descend on earth to

preach to you, you would go on unwed and unblest.” (Spurgeon)

e. **No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent:** The rich man immediately objected, knowing that his family did not take **Moses and the prophets** seriously. He desperately hoped that if someone came from the dead, it would be more convincing than the Word of God. Yet it would not be more convincing, because if they would not believe because of God’s Word, **neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.**

i. The rich man knew what his brothers must do, and what he *did not* do: **repent**. He mistakenly hoped that a spectacular appearance of one from the dead would persuade them; but Abraham knew it would not. After all, the unbeliever thinks the Bible *already* speaks too much of judgment and hell; they don’t want to hear more of it, even if the messenger came from the world beyond.

ii. Of course, Jesus did rise from the dead; yet many did not believe then. Additionally, a man named Lazarus also came back from the dead ([John 11:38-44](#)) and the religious leaders did not believe him; they tried to kill him ([John 12:9-10](#)).

iii. With this story Jesus showed the weakness of trusting in signs to bring people to faith. It is easy to think that if people saw a spectacular enough sign, they would be *-compelled* to believe. But what creates faith unto salvation is hearing the Word of God ([Romans 10:17](#)); a sign may or may not have a role in that work. God, working through His word, has power unto salvation. “He declares that the sacred writings are in themselves as powerful as anything like the delivery of their message by one risen from the dead.” (Morgan)

iv. “Although a churchyard should start into life, and stand up before the infidel who denies the truth of Christianity; I declare I do not believe there would be enough evidence in all the churchyards in the world to convince him. Infidelity would still cry for something more.” (Spurgeon)

v. “I do believe that Lazarus from Abraham’s bosom would not be so good a preacher as a man who has not died, but whose lips have been touched with a live coal from off the altar.” (Spurgeon)

vi. The rich man wasn’t lost because he was rich. He was lost because he did not listen to the law and the prophets. Many will also be lost for the same reason.

vii. **In one way the rich man of Jesus’ story was very different than the religious leaders, the Pharisees. He lived a life of gourmet excess and indulgence, and the Pharisees were rigid and disciplined and super self-controlled. Yet they shared this with the rich man: *they cared nothing for the needy around them, and despised them with neglect.* That’s why they were so offended when Jesus taught and cared for tax collectors and sinners ([Luke 15:1-2](#)). “A hundred miles may separate two rivers, but for all that, they flow from the same lake.” (Morrison)**