

“Life, Death, & Eternity”

Luke 16:19-31

September 24, 2023

Luke 16:1-18

- 11 "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you?"
- 12 "And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?"
- 13 "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."
- 14 **Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money**, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him.

Luke 16:19-31

- 19 "Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day.
- 20 "And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores.
- 22 "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried.
- 23 "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.
- 24 "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'
- 25 "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.'
- 26 "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.
- 27 "And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house —
- 28 for I have five brothers — in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'
- 29 "But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'
- 30 "But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!'
- 31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

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LIFE

1. "a rich man" – purple robe, fine linen under that.
 "habitually" – never missed a day.
 λαμπρῶς – luxuriously.
 εὐφροσίνῃ – to rejoice, make merry, good frame of mind.
 "Life is good living here in the lap of luxury." It could not get any better.
2. "a poor man" – could not walk. Had to be carried and laid at the gate of the rich man.
 "Lazarus" – "the Lord helps."
 "covered in sores" – maybe like bed sores.
 "starving" – looking for table scrapes from the table of rich man.
 "dogs" – coming for scrapes. Instinctively licking the sores. If a dog smells a wound, he is going to be driven by instinct to clean it. Dogs lick their own wounds because their saliva has antimicrobial and clotting properties. When they see or smell a wound on someone, they're aiming to help the wound heal faster.

- **Note:** The dogs outside the gate showed more compassion than man inside the gate.

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DEATH

1. "poor man dies" – no mention of burial like rich man. They probably dragged his body outside of Jerusalem and dumped it on the fire that burned the garbage.
 - But his soul is carried away by angels to the side of Abraham.
2. "rich man also died" – but he was buried. No doubt big funeral. Can't you just hear it? – "friends and relatives all sing his praises. Wonderful man in the city. Did so much for the community. So successful. Fine, upright man. Very religious. He went to that big mansion in the sky. He is looking down on us now and smiling." Just a bunch of soupy, sappy, talk.
 - But **DEATH** changes things.

***For the unbeliever, this life is as close as they will get to heaven. For the believer, this life is as close as they get to hell.**

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23 "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom."

Heb 9:27

27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

Rich man was no doubt shocked where he was.

Matt 7:21-23

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord, I will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter."

22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'

23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

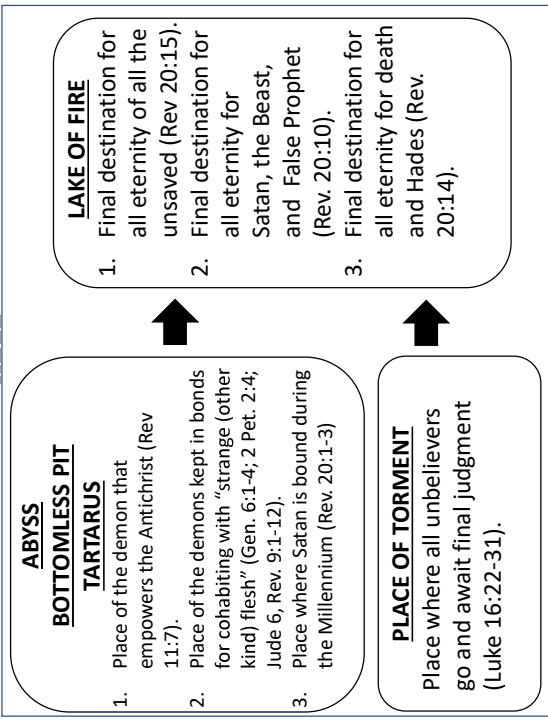
- The poor man was in heaven, right next to Abraham.
- The rich man was immediately in torment in Hades, a compartment of Hell that is the temporary holding place for unbelievers.

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- The moment they take their last breath, they wake up in 2 totally different places.
 - There is no purgatory, there is no annihilationism, there is no universalism, no soul sleep, no 2nd chances. No one ceases to exist.
- C.S. Lewis wrote in one of his writings of walking through a cemetery & noticing a particular grave marker that READ "Here lies an ATHIEST - ALL DRESSED UP & NO WHERE TO GO"**
- LEWIS says that he wanted to add / OH HOW HE WISHES THAT WERE SO.**
- John Lennon – "Imagine"
- Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people living for today.
- Rob Bell – "Love Wins"

HELL



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- Remember that this is a parable. A story to illustrate a point.
- Nowhere in Scripture does it say that unbelievers will see into heaven, nor that believers can see into hell and have conversations.
- But this is a condensed story, and for the sake of expediency it is told like this.
- To the Pharisees listening to this, this makes no sense. Their "Health and Wealth" movement would say that the rich man, (a sign of God's blessing) and his health (another sign of the blessing of God) should be the one in heaven.
- And the poor, unhealthy man, Lazarus, should be in hell.

But . . .

James 2:5

5 Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

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- 23 "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.
- 24 **"And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'**
- 25 **"But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.'**
- 26 **"And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.'**
- 27 "And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house —
- 28 for I have five brothers — in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'
- 29 "But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'
- 30 "But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!'
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- This is real torment, real thirst which desires real water, from a real finger, to touch his real tongue. So there are real flames.
- Spirit beings can't burn, but they can experience torment on the same level that physical beings can.
- 2** **Things 1:7-9**
- 7 when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,
- 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.
- 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,**
- **Note:** The rich man wouldn't give Lazarus a crumb, but he wants Lazarus to give him a drip.
- 25 – Those in hell can remember the past – part of their torment. Notice how things have been reversed.
- 26 - Eternity is permanent. Worst part of hell is there is no hope.

27 "And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house — to my father's house —

28 for I have five brothers — in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

- Again the rich man doesn't get it. Still sending Lazarus on errands.
- He is only concerned about the torment and suffering. Not salvation, not Jesus being the Messiah, not sin, not God, etc.
- **Note:** There are a lot of things you can do in hell - see, hear, feel, recognize, remember, speak, reflect, plead, suffer, and think ahead. But the one thing you cannot do in hell, and that is get out!

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ETERNITY

"Father Abraham" – the rich man is a Jew. This is a lesson directed at the Pharisees.

- **Note:** Abraham was a rich man. His money did not keep him out of heaven.

Gen 13:2

2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold.

- But I want you to notice something very important here and that is this rich man never changed. **Notice 3 things:**

1. He does not address God. No interest in God or Christ. It is Abraham that will save him. Ex. 'Mary save me.' – Pope John Paul II
- *Pharisees thought they were guaranteed entrance into heaven because of their physical relationship to Abraham.
2. There is no repentance here of his former life. He is still ordering Lazarus around. He doesn't get it. Sorry, those days are over! You are in no position to order Lazarus around.
3. He doesn't cry out to be saved and to repent. People in hell, though miserable, only have a desire to get physical relief, not to cry out to be saved. They didn't bow the knee to God and His Son in their past lives and have no desire to do it now. 'Hell is locked from the inside.' (C.S. Lewis) "We don't want God in here." They only want to escape suffering.

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"Moses and the Prophets" – God's Word. O.T. contains everything needed for salvation – faith, believe, trust, sin, forgiveness, blood sacrifice, grace, repentance, holiness, justice, wrath, righteousness, substitution, imputation, reconciliation, heaven, hell, judgment.

- They heard God's Word read every Sabbath.
- 26 - Miracles and spiritual experiences may draw lots of attention but they were not designed to lead people to Christ.
- That is the fallacy of the "Signs and Wonders Movement."
- Jesus performed tens of thousands of signs in Israel. He always accompanied them with teaching from the Word.
- 31 - Another Lazarus would be raised from the dead a short time later (Jn. 11), and the Pharisees wanted to kill Lazarus and Jesus.
- It is the Word that God uses to convict sinners. Not buildings, music, emotional services, clever speech, gimmicks, programs, signs, miracles.

"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

Application

1. "Whatever Happened To The Doctrine of Hell?"
2. This life can be a very poor indicator of what happens in the next life. Therefore, don't be fooled.
3. It is not money but the love of money that can send people to hell.
4. Money can help send people to heaven; or it can help send people to hell.
5. If you are armed with the Word of God, you have the most powerful tool available to bring someone to Christ.

Heb 4:12

12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.