

THE RICH MAN, LAZARUS AND HELL
DR. ROGER BARRIER
Luke 16:19-31
S-1795

(“Lazarus, The Rich Man and Heaven” is for next Sunday.)

In the midst of our short series concerning, “Life Lessons from New Testament Characters,” we come to the Rich Man who went to Hell. We have learned from the Good Samaritan and the Gadarene Demoniac in previous weeks. Our series concludes next week with an inspiring look at Heaven from the life of Lazarus. *Sermon notes, videos and audios of these sermons as well as hundreds more are available on “PreachItTeachIt.net.”*

What happens when we die? Just ask children; they aren’t short on ideas! But, most of them only speculate. On the other hand, Jesus doesn’t speculate. He knows. He has been there. In Luke 16 He pulls back the curtains on eternity.

- The Rich Man And Lazarus are incredibly divergent characters.

Banquets and Clothes and “Ptochos” (πτωχος) and Paupers
Pharisees and Listening (Luke 16:14)
Palace “Gates” and Crumbs

- The Rich Man Died And Was Buried. The Poor Man Died And Was Carried—To Abraham’s Side.

Bosoms and Laps
Sumptuous tombs and last Dimes
“Kolpos” (κολπος) and Places of Honor
Torment and Surprises

- The words, “Father Abraham,” caused goose bumps to climb the spines of Pharisees. Their theology said that Rich Jews were especially blessed by God! That’s why they were rich. They certainly didn’t go to Hell!

- Now, Let’s Talk About The Reality Of Hell.

Matthew 25:41, 46: "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels'.... Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

Two Extremes

The “Thinker”

Suffering and Torment (Mark 9:47-48)

Sadness and Regret (Matthew 25:30)

Spiritual Darkness and Physical Aloneness (*Matthew 25:30*)

Multiple Levels and Different Degrees (Revelation 20:10, 12: and 2 Peter 2:4)

Forever and Ever (Matthew 25:46)

(By the way, God never intended for anyone to go to Hell (Matthew 25:41). In fact, the Bible teaches that Hell was enlarged to make room for those who were choosing to go there.)

- “Is Hell really fair?” “How could a loving God send anyone to Hell?”

Two answers are helpful.

One revolves around the justice of God. We all sin and fall short of God’s glory (Romans 3:23). The “wages” we earn for our sin are spiritual death in Hell (Romans 6:23).

The second answer revolves around the overwhelming love of God. That’s what the cross is about. Jesus didn’t come to earth to die on a cross for the fun of it. He came to our rebellious race of humanity which traded paradise for curse and damnation. Jesus came to reverse the curse and rescue us from the damnation of Hell. He came as our substitute and took our punishment in order to satisfy justice. That’s love.

- Abraham’s reply makes it sound like rich go to Hell while the poor and suffering go to Heaven. But, notice that Abraham said not a word about how or why they came to be where they were. These are two isolated, individual cases which are neither universal nor normative for us.
- God spoke to the rich man three different times and he just wouldn’t listen. He spoke through material blessings ... through Lazarus ... and through a man’s death.
- Abraham: “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

There was another man named Lazarus who resurrected from the grave and the Jewish leaders tried to kill him in order to silence his testimony (John 11-12).

“One day the Lord Jesus stood up in the Temple and he cried out with a loud voice, ‘If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scriptures have said, “out of his inner most being shall flow rivers of living water”’” (John 4:13-14).

TAKE AWAYS

What we highly esteem may be detestable to God (Luke 16:14).

What God highly esteems is attention to His Word (Luke 16:29-31).

Those who submit to the Scriptures will always come to Christ (John 5:39-40).