

Parable of rich man and Lazarus

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Date: 16 July 2017

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[0 : 00] The Parable of the rich man and Lazarus. There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

And it came to pass, as the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried.

And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And 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 thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things.

[1 : 25] But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed. So that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can he pass to us, that would come from thence.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, Father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house. For I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

And Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham, that if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. May the Lord add his blessing to that reading of his own in heaven and holy word.

Amen. I'd like to look at this parable this morning. It is, as I mentioned to the children, one of the subjects that I think has been prevalent in the newspapers or the television, and many different folk have been speaking to the media about death.

[2 : 55] And it's probably because of the tower. But that's not quite accurate either, because this thing's been going for a while. And David Robertson, our own minister, he's had a blog on it as well recently.

And Kay Adams has had at least three programs on the subject of death. And other than David Robertson, I've never heard such rubbish on this subject as I have on the radio and in various magazines.

They seem to be missing the point that God's word speaks to us about our eternal destiny and about what happens immediately after we die.

I want to speak to them this morning about our eternal destiny. In many ways, I suppose you could say it's an easy sermon to preach in some ways, because there are only two destinies that the Bible speaks of.

It is either heaven or hell. These are the two options. There are no other options. There is no purgatory. There is no incarnation. There is no annihilation.

[4 : 02] There is only heaven or hell. Now, Jesus, the greatest preacher that ever is preached, he often spoke on these two subjects.

In fact, he spoke more on these subjects than any other subject as you study the Gospels. When he preached on heaven, he also felt he had to preach on hell.

And he did that extensively. He preached about the good news. He preached the bad news. The good news about heaven. The bad news about hell. And he couldn't have been a faithful preacher unless he spoke on these two subjects.

And I pray that the Lord would enable us this morning to hear what the Bible says, what Jesus says, in relation to this subject this morning.

This chapter seems to be strategically placed. In chapter 15, you read the account. There are three parables there. There's the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son.

[5 : 08] In chapter 15, we see God welcoming and loving and receiving sinners. That is the main message of Luke 15. The second message of Luke 15 is, of course, that he's speaking to the Pharisees.

And he's talking to the 99 sheep. There was one lost. But there was 99. Who never outwardly strayed from the flock. There were nine coins which were in darkness.

There was one son in the son of the parable of the prodigal son. Who stayed at home. Who didn't rebel outwardly against his father. Yet still lost.

Even when he stayed close to his father. So Jesus tells this parable. And he wants to warn every one of us. Of the consequences of being lost.

A parable that in some ways is calling out, as we read the portion of scripture here, to the Pharisees. There are dire consequences of not coming to know Jesus as our Lord and our Saviour.

[6 : 17] And he wants these Pharisees as he wants us to awaken us out of our lethargy. Out of our darkness. And he wants us to repent and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our only hope for eternity.

So we must repent. Now before we look at this parable. I want to ask you a question. Now obviously I don't know the congregation. But can I ask you a question? Where do you stand this morning? If death should come, where would you stand? We don't know when the call of death will come. But we know that it will come.

Unless Christ comes before them. Where will you be? 10,000 years from today.

Where will you spend eternity? Will it be in heaven? Or will it be a lost eternity in hell? So this parable. Must and should speak.

[7 : 19] To every single one of us in the audience. And to me this morning. Because this is the all important subject.

For time. And for eternity. So let us look at the parable. And we look at it in this way. Verses 19 to 21.

We see two men. We see in verse 22. Two deaths. In verses 22 to 26. There are two destinies. And in verses 27 to 31.

We see a person there. Who is in desperation. Because he is in torment. So let us begin. At verse 19.

I want you to see. Two men. One is in verse 19. The rich man. And the second is in verse 20.

[8 : 18] Where we have the beggar. A poor man. And this story begins. With Jesus. Introducing us. To two very different characters.

Two very different men. The contrast couldn't be greater. And when Jesus. Tells us. How about. Or when Jesus is preaching.

There are no gray areas. It is black and white. Not polarized. So that. You can see clearly. What Jesus.

Is saying to us. And he begins in verse 19. With the rich man. Now a fact that was. Identified. In this way. He was a man that was living.

For the things of this world. He's a naturally. Worldly. Man. But we're also told. That he's a Pharisee.

[9 : 17] He's a religious man as well. Verse 14. And the Pharisees also. Who were covetous. Heard all these things.

And derided him. You see. You see. Outwardly. They gave the impression. That they were godly. Outwardly.

They gave the impression. That they loved the kingdom of God. Outwardly. They read the Bible. But as you pull. You see. It was just a facade. And as you pull.

The thin veneer. Of their lives. You really see. Them for what they are. Their hearts. Are far from God. They are lovers of the world.

They are lovers of money. And as verse 13 tells us. You cannot serve God. And mammon. Mammon being money. You have to make choices.

[10:13] You either love the one. And hate the other. There is a choice to be made. You cannot serve God. And mammon. Or money. Or the things of this world. You have to make a choice.

And the Pharisees. Made a choice. And their choice was. To live for the things of this world. Although they were religious. They would fantasize. About money. They would.

They would. Want to build up their empires. Now. Let me tell you. Money. Having money. Is not a sin. Many of the richest men. In the Bible.

Were the godliest men. In the Bible. So it is not having money. That is a sin. What is a sin. Is when that money. Takes over your life. Even the poor people.

I mean. I don't know about you. But in the one S. You can see. Tuesday. On a Wednesday. And on a Saturday. At the lottery stands. They have a love. For money.

[11:10] And for the things of this world. And that tells. Its own story. Of where they stand. We read of this. Rich man. That he dressed in purple. Now. Anyone who wore purple. In these days.

Obviously. Had to pay a high price. For the linen. And the silk. Which was dyed. In purple. And very often. What they did. Was they strutted about. Like peacocks. They wanted people.

To notice them. For their dress. And they had this. Obtulent display. Of money. As they. Showed off. All that they had. Lived in splendor. Every day. Loving the stimulus.

Of people. Watching them. For who they were. These men. Were. Self consumed. Self absorbed. Self absorbed. And we're living. In a society. That's so self consumed.

And so self absorbed. These days. Are we not? Something else. To note. He was a very. Religious man. In verse 23. And in heaven. Lifted up.

[12:06] His eyes. In torment. And seared. Abraham. Afar off. And Lazarus. In his bosom. He knew. Who Abraham was. He thought. He had a relationship.

With Abraham. He thought. He was a Jew. He thought. He had a relationship. With father Abraham. Sadly. His heart. Was not. Where his head was.

He had head knowledge. But he had no. Heart knowledge. And because. He had no. Heart knowledge. He was lost. Sadly.

He was a lover. Of this world. And verse 15. Says. Those who justify themselves. In the sight of men. And that's. What this man. Was doing. And this is the first man. We see.

In this. Parable. And we should have. No truck. I hope. You're repulsed. By such a character. But then. We have the second man. Found in verse 20. He's a poor man.

[13:02] And he has a name. And his name. Is Lazarus. And what a contrast. Between the two characters. He is so poor. That he is. Called.

A beggar. Now. If you go to the. Meaning. Of the Greek. What it says. About this beggar. It's not someone. Who has a television. Who's living in. You know.

Some sort of poverty. And very often. A self. Imposed poverty. But this is a man. Who is in. Abject poverty. That is the meaning. Of. This word.

Beggar. In this context. He is in. Abject poverty. He doesn't own a brown penny. As they used to say. This is not. Poverty. Like some of us. Term poverty.

But this is someone. Who has nothing. But. His. Name. Is. Lazarus. Which means. God. Is.

[13:57] My. Helper. And God. Has provided. For this man. Because he's dependent. Upon God. He's looking to God. To meet his needs.

And God. Is. Providing. He knows. He cannot meet. His own needs. But he's trusting. In God. Now. Notice. In verse 20.

He was laid. At the gate. Of the rich man. Now. As you read. The story. You realize. That. There was no way. He was able. To walk.

To this place. He obviously. Had to be carried. To the gate. Of the rich man. Man. With scraps. And crumbs. That fell. From the rich man. Table.

Anything. To satisfy. His hunger. And even. The dogs. Came. And licked. His wounds. Can you see. What Jesus. Is doing here.

[14:52] He is painting. A pitiful. Picture. A pitiful. Situation. And what a contrast. He is showing us. Between these two. Characters. And the other. Has little.

Or nothing. Of this world. But he is. Looking. To his God. He is looking. To his Savior. And my friend. You know.

When you think. Of the. Situation. Of the world. Today. Is this not a picture. Of what we see. Around us. And perhaps. It's a picture. Of what we have.

In the church. In this world. You see. There are only two. There are those. Who are in Christ. Or those. Who are not in Christ. Believers. And believers.

There are only. These two. Types of people. Those who are living. For the things. Of this world. Or those. Who are putting. Their trust. In the finished work. Of our Lord.

[15:47] And Savior. Jesus Christ. And what we see. In this parable. Are strong words. To every single. One of us. To make sure. That we. Are making. Our calling.

Is. I want you. To notice. In the second place. Two deaths. Different. As though their lives were. So. Are their deaths.

They are different. Not all deaths. Are the same. We know that. So in verse 22. We read. Now the poor man died. And we read.

He was carried. Into Abraham's bosom. Notice the first death. The poor man died. There's no mention. There's no mention. Of a burial. There's no mention.

Of a eulogy. You will notice that. The rich man died. As well. And there was a burial. For the rich man. But what we do notice. About the poor man.

[16:44] Is that he was. Noticed. By heaven. And we read. That his soul. Was taken. Into. Abraham's bosom. And we all know.

What characters. And look. The souls. Of believers. At their death. Are made. Perfected holiness. And do immediately. Pass into glory.

Their bodies. Strongly united. The Christ. Resting in the grave. Until that great day. Of resurrection. And that is the picture.

We have. Of this. Man. Lazarus. The poor man. Immediately. Going into glory. But what a contrast. In this second death.

Notice the other death. The rich man. Also died. Now that's not surprising. But notice. That he was buried. You could probably. Have. Merely buried.

[17:41] He was. Buried. But we notice. That. Heaven. Is. Does not. Take note. Of this.

The angel. Of death. Came to him. And brought him. To a lost. Eternity. And you can imagine. The kind of funeral. This rich man. Would have.

He was always dressed. In purple. Elaborate. Ornate. A funeral. Commensurate. To his standing. In life. Attended by his.

Five brothers. He was. He was. A businessman. He was. A respected leader. In the synagogue. And in the community. One of the leaders. In the synagogue. Who served.

In the temple. But yet. When he died. He was. Merely. Right. My friend. Can I ask you. A question.

[18:37] What's it. Going to be like. For you. When you die. Will you. Will you be noticed. By heaven. Or will you be. Passed over.

And cast into. A lost eternity. That's a serious question. Now I want you to notice. In the third place. That there are two. Destinies. My friends. This is the heart.

Of the family. There are two. Destinies. Destinies. And what Jesus. Is wanting. To convey. To you. And I. This morning.

Is that. There are two. Destinies. That await. Each one of us. There is. There is. The kingdom. Of heaven. And there is. A lost eternity.

In hell. Now notice. The two. First. Mentioned. In verse 22. Where we do. There. And the poor man. Died. Abraham.

[19:32] Is. Is. Is. A figure. Of speech. For. Heaven. Representing. Heaven. Or the eternal. Home.

Of the saints. Of God. And what that does. It's. Conveying for us. A tight. Knit. Fellowship. With Abraham. The pictures. That came to my mind.

When I read that. Was. John. In the upper room. Nestling. In Christ. There. Resting. His head. On Abraham's bosom.

This was the poor man's destiny. He had fellowship. With Abraham. Who had fellowship. And a close relationship. With his God. This perhaps raises a question.

Will we know each other in heaven? Your valid question to ask. For me the answer is yes. Yes. I see no other. Answer.

[20:29] But that. This is what Spurgeon said. Spurgeon was once asked. Will we know each other in heaven? He said. We know each other down here. Are we going to be bigger fools up there?

The answer is no. He said. We will really know one another in heaven. All our misunderstandings. And all that will evaporate. And we will be known. And we will know as we are known. And there will be a close intimate fellowship.

With one another. And that my friends. Is what I see indicated. In this image that Jesus is producing for us here. But there is a second destiny.

And again I believe. That the second destiny. Is the main import. Of this parable. There is a place called hell my friends. We read in verse 23.

And in Hades. Being in torment. Just read these words. Being in torment. He lifted up his eyes. And he saw Abraham far off. And Lazarus and his booze.

[21 : 29] Now as we look at verses 23 to 26. I want to mention six truths. Very briefly. About hell. And I do that my friends. Intentionally this morning.

Because there may be some here. In this congregation. Who need to be saved. Who need to come to know Christ. As their Lord and their Savior. And I would not be faithful. In not explaining exactly. What the Bible has to say. About this place. Perhaps you attend. Worship. Public worship faithfully. But lovingly my friends.

And it is in love. I do this this morning. Lovingly I throw this passage. In front of you. To direct you.

So that. You will not die. And go to this awful place.

Called hell. Now there are six areas. That I want to explain. About this place. The first truth really. Is this. That hell.

[22 : 27] Is a real place. Verse 23. Confirms that for us. In Hades being in torment. He lifted up his eyes.

His eyes. My friends. This is not. A concoction. Of man's imagination. Is it? It is a real place. Like. Tarbert. Is a real place.

On the island of Harris. In the world of today. And hell. Is a place. That is on God's map. My friend. And every person.

Who does not know Christ. As his personal savior. That is their destiny. In fact. It couldn't be more real. Could it?

The Bible calls this place. The abode of the dead. And if you read your Bible. In Matthew 11. And in Luke chapter 10. Where you see there. It's called. A real place.

[23 : 24] A bottomless pit. A lake of fire. A place of outer darkness. That's the language. And secondly. Hell. Is an immediate place.

An immediate place. And that unfolds. As we. Go from. Verse 22. To 23. Where we read there. The rich man also died.

And was buried. And in heaven. He lifted up his eyes. Being in torment. And seared Abraham afar off. And Lazarus. In his bosom. You can see how quickly. All this happened. Bang.

Bang. He died. He was buried. And in hideous. He opened his eyes. And he looked around. And he was looking at the quarters.

The inside quarters. Of a lost eternity. He had no time to repent. No time to turn to God. And say. Well I did really mean to repent. And I really.

[24 : 20] Did mean to come to know you. As Lord and Savior. But this is immediate. He died. And immediately. He finds himself. In it. Even before.

The doctor. Pronounced him. As being dead. But his family realized. That he had gone. The soul. Had left his body. He lifted up his eyes.

In torment. Now my friends. Notice. He's not unconscious. He's not in a soul sleep. He's not in limbo. He hasn't been annihilated.

He's alive. He's awake. And he's in hell. My friends. I don't believe. I believe. The senses were never more stimulated. Than they are now.

That for me. Is a fearful. Fearful thought. Thirdly. We're told. It's an isolated place. Verse 23.

[25 : 16] He saw Abraham far away. And Lazarus. In his bosom. I believe. The emphasis. There. Is on the far away. That great.

Chasm. That there is. Between heaven. And hell. One Corinthians. Revelation. Book of Revelation. Explains to us.

The companions. That will be there. With you. If that is. Your destiny. The scum. Of all the centuries. The drunkards. The devilers.

The swindlers. The cowardly. The adulterers. They will all be there. What a dark place. To be in. Fourthly. The fourth mark of hell.

Is that it's an agonizing place. Verse 24. He cried out. Father Abraham. Have mercy on me. And said. And said. Lazarus.

[26 : 12] That he may dip. The tip of his finger. In water. And cool my tongue. For I am. Tormented. In this flame. Can you picture. The agony. Of that.

That place. It's a place. Of torment. A place. Of flame. Is it real fire? Yes it is. Yes I know. There are pastors. There are theologians.

Who would stand up. In a pulpit. Say that this is not. A real place. You hear them constantly. But that is not. The word of God. That has not been faithful. To what the Bible. Is saying to us here. And in other places. It's a place. Of fire. Just listen to Matthew 5. Unquestionable fire. Or Matthew. Again 520. Fiery hell. And in 1340. Burned with fire. There are many instances there. We can go to the book of. Revelation. Where we're told. There's fire and brimstone. This is fire. That will never be extinguished.

[27 : 09] Not in 60 years. Not in 600 years. Not in 6 billion years. Jesus is here. Warning the Pharisees. Not to go to such a place.

Oh my friends. This is a towering warning. To you and I today. To make certain. Of our own salvation. As the Bible says.

To you and I today. Make your calling. And your election. Sure. There is.

A need I think. For every one of us. To examine. While. If we are in the faith.

In the faith. Hopefully. Hopefully. We'll look at that. In even more detail. This evening. The fifth mark. To see. Is. What is on the other side.

[28 : 07] Of the grave. And Jesus. Is. Painting a picture. For us. Of a haunting place. Where. Our minds. Will never. We'll never.

Be more active. Verse 25. And Abraham said. Son. Remember. Now I believe.

That that is. Memory. Awakened. And I go back. To strengthen. That argument. By going to Mark 9. 42. I think it's 42.

46. No. 46. Where we're told. The warm. Dieth not. And the fire. Is not quenched. And I believe. That is. A conscience.

That is awakening. All the regrets. Of a lifetime. Flowing through your mind. All the sermons. That you heard. All the. Challenges. That were there. For your mom and dad. As you grew up.

[29 : 02] As a child. All the. Encouragement. That you had. To put your trust. In Christ. And yet. You rejected them all. That to me. Is a terrifying thought. Your memory.

Constantly. Alive. Gospel sermons. That condemned you. And there they are. Now. In hell. Condemn you. Even more. Sickly.

I want to see. Hell. As a place. Of no escape. My friends. Every single person. That enters into hell. Will never escape. There are no holidays.

From there. We read. Of holidays. And hell. And my friends. This is. The reality. There is a great. Chasm. Fixed. Verse 26.

My friends. There is no such thing. As purgatory. That my friend. Is alive. From the dead. Alive from the dead.

[30 : 01] All hope. Perishes. Perishes. We read. In Proverbs 28. All hope. Perishes. Now. You remember. John Newton.

Wrote that famous hymn. Amazing grace. And the second verse. I think it is. When we have been there. 10,000 years. That is in heaven. We will be shining. Glorious. As the sun.

But can you imagine. What it is going to be like. In 10,000 years. In a lost eternity. In outer darkness. Where there is weeping. And wailing. And gnashing of teeth. My friends. This man. Did not intend.

To go to hell. He thought. He was going to heaven. He was a religious man. But when he died. He opened his eyes. And all hope. Was gone. And that is the same.

For you and I. Today. If we do. Put our trust in Christ. When death comes. Finally. Now I pray. That. This will be true. Of anyone here today.

[30 : 57] I plead with you. To hear. What Jesus is saying. What I am saying. It is not my voice. It is Jesus. Who is speaking to us. Through his word. That is why I am careful. To use.

The words. Of the bible. Finally. We see a man. In desperation. We have seen. Two men. We have seen. Two deaths.

We have seen. Two destinies. Now let us. Look at verse 27. Where we see. This man. In desperation. Then he said. I pray. Therefore. Father.

I want them. To realize. The importance. Of coming to Christ. I beg you. He says. Send them. They need. To believe.

In the Lord. Jesus Christ. And they are not believing. Because they are. In the same. Position. As I am. I fall asleep. Verse 29. Says. And Abraham.

[31 : 52] And Abraham. Said unto him. They have. Moses. And the prophets. That are here. Then. What does that mean? May it. This my friends. That what we have here.

My friends. Is the word of God. That is all. We need. We don't need. Lazarus. To be raised. From the dead. To come.

And. Presence himself. With us. We don't. Need. A miracle. Of that magnitude. Lazarus.

Did come. From the dead. You remember. And they still. Did not believe. You see. Wanting. To see. A miracle. Is nothing.

More. Than an excuse. Not. To believe. God's word. The power. Of the written word. Read.

[32 : 48] Read your bible. The sufficiency. Of God's word. This. Is. The inerrant. Word. Of God. It is. God.

Who is speaking. To us. Through his word. God. Speaking. To us. Through his word. We don't. Need. Another. Lazarus.

To be raised. Raised. From the dead. What we need. Is not. Miracles. My friends. Will you be. Immediately. Will you. See.

See. The flames. Of hell. Forever. Or. Will you. Be. In the presence. Of. Almighty. God.

My friends. Let me remind you. This morning. That. Jesus Christ. Our. Great. God. And. God. He.

[33 : 44] He. Added. To his. Divine. He. Added. To his. Humanity. In order. To die. On the cross.

At Calvary. He. He. He. He. And. He. He. He. He. He.

He. And. What. We. He. Now. Is. To. He. By.

Faith. You. My. He. He. He. He. He. I.

I. He. He. He. I. He. I. He. He. He. He.

[34 : 39] And we need to realize that. This poor man didn't realize that. And I urge you, my friends today, to put your faith and your trust in the finished work of Christ.

Because if you don't, you are heading for a lost eternity, you're heading for destruction, and you will lift your eyes up in a lost eternity. That's the reality. I can't make it more plain than that. But I can say this to you for your encouragement.

Whosoever will, Jesus says. Now you put yourself in that whosoever. Whosoever will. Or whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

That's a promise. And I would encourage you to go on your knees when you go home today and plead for God's mercy. That he would have mercy upon you. This is a gospel invitation that I give you this morning.

And I am free. Because I believe I've been faithful to God's word in my proclamation of it. Amen.

The responsibility now lies from you.

[35 : 42] And my friends, I plead with you to flee from this wrath that is to come without Christ as your saviour.

May the Lord bless these thoughts to us for Jesus' sake. Amen. Let us pray. Eternal Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for the clarity of your word. We thank you, O Lord, that your word speaks to us with power. And our prayer this morning is that through the power of the Holy Spirit, you would speak to each heart present here this morning.

so that every single one of us might make our calling and our election sure. And if we are not in Christ here this morning, may we flee from the wrath to come.

May we plead with you to have mercy upon us like the public. We leave that destination in our hearts.