

LUKE 16:19-31

- I. This narration followed Christ's instruction to His disciples to be faithful in material things but not make idols of them. **LUK 16:1-13.**
- A. That provoked the Pharisees who justified their covetousness. **LUK 16:14-15.**
 - B. It was a baseless conceit of the Jews that riches equated with eternal favor. **1PE 1:18.**
 - C. This account was designed to cast down that vain imagination.
 - D. Even Christ's disciples were affected by such false notions as equating *gain with godliness*. **LUK 18:23-26 c/w 1TI 6:5.**
- II. **vs. 19-23.** Two people are here considered: a rich, luxurious man who is unrighteous and ends up in hell; and a poor, afflicted righteous man, Lazarus, who ends up in glory.
- A. It is a general observation that great wealth is associated with the unrighteous more than the righteous in this world. The unrighteous have less scruples of conscience but also tend to have a sharper business acumen than do the godly. **LUK 16:8.**
 - 1. Cain was a man of industry; Abel a godly herdsman. **GEN 4:2.**
 - 2. Cain's descendants were noted for building, business and artisanship (**GEN 4:16-26**); Seth's descendants for preserving the religion of God.
 - 3. However, it is the poor who most commonly have faith and eternal reward. **JAM 2:5.**
 - B. The rich man was gloriously apparelled, but finery does not equate with righteousness. **LUK 7:25-26; HEB 11:37.**
 - C. All the wealth that a man amasses in this life avails nothing at death. You can't take it with you. **1TI 6:7; LUK 12:19-21.**
 - D. Wealth is not evil of itself. But wealth that is obtained unrighteously, hoarded and withheld from those in genuine need speaks of great evil and lasting misery. **LUK 6:24; JAM 5:1-5; 2:13.**
 - 1. Lazarus was not a vagrant who wouldn't work. c/w **2TH 3:10.**
 - 2. Indifference to the truly hungry will be an article of the final judgment. **MAT 25:41-46.**
 - 3. The dogs were a sign of death. c/w **EXO 11:6-7.**
 - E. Both men died. The grave is no respecter of persons; it is the great leveller of men. **JOB 21:23-26.**
 - F. Note that Lazarus was not only poor, he suffered bodily affliction also, but only for a season.
 - 1. The godly may suffer with afflictions of the flesh, sometimes for their own good. **PSA 119:71, 75; 2CO 12:7.**
 - 2. But their afflictions are temporary, that glory may seem all the better. **ROM 8:18; 2CO 4:16-18.**
 - 3. The blood of atonement shall one day redeem our bodies from all their ills. **MAT 8:16-17.**
 - 4. After death, Lazarus' body was relieved of torment, but the rich man's torment was just starting for eternity.
- III. **vs. 22-31.** Lazarus died to be carried into comfort in Abraham's bosom. The rich man died and woke to torment in hell immediately, prompting his petition to Abraham.
- A. There is conscious existence after death. This opposes the belief of soul-death or soul-sleep. **LUK 23:43.**
 - B. Hell cannot be restricted to mean only the grave, as some have asserted.

1. Hell is a nether region of descent for the wicked after death. **ISA 5:14; 14:9.**
 2. It is a place and state of conscious torment for the wicked dead. **EZE 31:14-16; 32:21, 30-32; JUDE 1:7.**
 3. It is a place of unquenchable fire. **MAR 9:43-48.**
 4. The torment of the wicked is eternal. They are not annihilated as some have asserted. **REV 14:9-11; 20:10.**
 5. Jehovah's Witnesses affirm that the account of the rich man and Lazarus is only a parable and there really is no conscious suffering after death.
 - a. Jesus is not here using the things of this earth to represent spiritual or eternal things as He does in parables. He is speaking of eternal things themselves.
 - b. The JW position means that Jesus was using a lie to teach truth.
 - c. Ezekiel, who warned of conscious misery after death, was also deemed to be speaking in parables. **EZE 20:49.**
- C. Some have affirmed that Abraham's bosom was some nether region of temporary existence for the righteous dead until the resurrection of Jesus Christ released them so they could go to glory.
1. Moses was in glory BEFORE the resurrection of Christ. **LUK 9:30-31.**
 2. The paradise which Jesus promised THAT DAY to the thief (**LUK 23:43**) is rightly associated with Abraham since the promises of everlasting inheritance were to Abraham and his seed, Jesus Christ. **GAL 3:16.**
- D. The rich man called Abraham "Father."
1. Pedigree from Abraham is no guarantee of God's favor. **LUK 3:8; JOH 8:37, 44.**
 2. The day of judgment will not be a happy one for those who have placed all their hopes in their Jewishness and the false righteousness of riches rather than in the righteousness of Christ. **LUK 13:28; REV 3:9.**
- E. The rich man petitioned Abraham to send Lazarus to comfort him or warn his brethren to repent. **vs. 24-30.**
1. This is a pitiful proof for the doctrine of prayers of the living to dead saints, inasmuch as none of the rich man's petitions were answered and all parties involved were dead. Building a case for praying to dead saints from that of a damned sinner in hell whose petitions were denied is rather strange.
 2. Abraham made it clear that there is no transportation from one place to another in the afterlife. This opposes the ideas of soul migration, reincarnation, witchcraft and necromancy.
 3. Rather than send Lazarus, Abraham commended them to the Scriptures, which are sufficient to warn men to repentance. **vs. 29-31.**
 - a. Miracles and sensationalism will produce no real conversion in anyone whose heart is not already receptive to the Scripture. The miraculous plagues of Egypt did not convert Pharaoh.
 - b. It is always better for the living to seek the Scripture, not revelation or influence from the dead. **ISA 8:19-20.**
 - c. The resurrection of Lazarus and Christ made no difference to the wicked portion of Israel. **JOH 12:10-11; MAT 28:11-15.**
- IV. May it be a comfort to those who fear God and love Him more than material riches, that the riches of Christ in glory await. We should invest accordingly. **JOH 14:2-3; MAT 6:19-21.**