

The Rich Man And Lazarus

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[0 : 0 0] Well, good evening. It's wonderful to be with you this evening and we pray that the Lord! bless our time together. But we'll begin our public worship of God this evening by singing! to God's praise in Psalm 91. Psalm 91, which is a page 187 of the larger book. Psalm 91. He that doth in the secret place of the Most High reside, under the shade of him that is the Almighty, shall abound. I of the Lord my God will say, he is my refuge still, he is my fortress and my God, and in him trust I will. Assuredly he shall be saved and give deliverance from subtle fowlers snaring from the noisome pestilence.

His feathers shall be hide thy trust under his wind shall be, his faithfulness shall be a shield and buckler unto thee. Thou shalt not need to be afraid for terrors of the night, nor for the arrow that doth fly by day while it is light, nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness secretly, nor for destruction that doth waste at noonday openly.

He will sing these verses, verses 1-6 of Psalm 91 to God's praise. He that doth in the secret place of the Most High reside, under the shade of him that is the Almighty, under the shade of him that is the Almighty, He shall abide. I hope the Lord my God will say, He is my refuge still, He is my refuge still, He is my fortress and my God,

And in him trust I will. Assuredly he shall be saved, Thank you.

Thank you.

[3 : 5 6] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. always at noon day over thee well let's come together in prayer let us pray eternal and ever blessed Father Lord we give you thanks that we find ourselves here in your house singing praises and worshipping a most glorious God we give thanks Lord that as we look to you we see a gracious and a merciful just and loving God a love which we see so evidently in the sending of your only son, him who knew no sin, who became sin for us so that in him that we may be made righteous so we thank you for that gift, we know each and every one of us here are entirely undeserving of all that you've given to us especially that gift of your son but we know that from before time began you instituted that salvation plan that plan which runs through your word as a golden thread from the beginning of Genesis through to the end of Revelation as we turn each and every page as we look at it this evening and as we consider passages before us as we consider them in our own quiet time in our own family worship in our own time where we chew upon that word where we go away from your place and we meditate upon the word we pray that we would be able to see

Christ crucified on each and every page that everything that we read would point us to the atoning work on the cross Lord so we thank you that we have your word so readily available to us we give thanks Lord that we find ourselves here in a place where we don't fear the persecution that others do we don't fear that the doors would be opened here and that we would be told to leave and that we would be told to shut down any future services here but we pray and bring before you those who are not so well off as ourselves we pray for those nations all those four corners of your vineyard where it is not the case where they maybe meet this very moment quietly underground behind closed doors with fear not only of having their meetings closed but their very lives are at threat Lord so we pray for them we ask that you would be comforted with the promises that you've given us where two or three are gathered and that you are there we give you thanks for that promise and ask that that amongst all other promises the psalmist does so well that we would be remembering them and we would say but you said and we would remember all the wonderful promises that have been put before us in your word so we ask Lord that as we gather that you would speak to us afresh this evening that the word which we will read of and the word which will be expounded would be a blessing to those that hear it

Lord but it would also be something that arrests the hearts of those who do not yet know you we pray Lord that there would be hearts those hearts of stone would indeed be transformed into hearts of flesh and that we would be able to see many more not just in this congregation but across our islands turning to you seeking you in all things not seeking to do as the world would suggest where we go about our own business we carve out our own identities and we do everything that pleases us but that we would be turning to you in everything that we would be asking you to lead us and guide us each and every day we bring before you the congregation here Lord in Calvus we give you thanks for them we thank you Lord that the word is faithfully preached here Lord and that you're able to do a work in this congregation Lord we pray for the the congregation during this time of vacancy and ask Lord that you would be with them as they discern who they may wish to call a man of your choosing

Lord so we pray that you would set it upon the hearts of that man of your choosing to come in to this flock to shepherd the flock here to be able to share the word diligently and faithfully from this people Lord and we pray that it would indeed be somebody that is got that desire to ground everything that they do in your word and in your word alone not to seek to do what man wishes to do but they would seek to see your will done on earth as it is in heaven Lord so we pray that in everything whether it's from the preaching of your word whether it's from a prayer meeting whether it's from the office bearers gathering together that they would be doing so in a way that sees you glorified in all that we do as we look at that first catechism our chief end ought to be to glorify you and to enjoy you forever

[10:33] Lord so we pray for the congregation here Lord we pray for those who are unable to be with us this evening you know them Lord we pray whether it's through illness whether it's through any other means Lord we pray that you would be with them that you would comfort them in times of difficulty those that are vulnerable those that are maybe in hospital at this moment we pray for them we ask that you would indeed be with them but we especially bring before you those this evening who have had no desire to be here those who woke up this morning with no thought of you and will put their heads down on their pillows this evening again with no thought of you we pray for them Lord I ask that you would make yourself known to them that you would reveal your peace to them you would reveal your light to them and you would remind them and that you would show them the sin in their own lives that sin that cannot be dealt with by self cannot be dealt with by even attending church cannot be dealt with by attending a certain number of prayer meetings there is nothing that we can do to attain that salvation

Lord but we ought to be turning to you giving thanks for all that you've done crying out for mercy as the psalmist said in Psalm 51 have mercy upon me oh God Lord that's all we ought to say but it's not according to us it's according to your steadfast love and your abundant mercy so we pray for those who don't know you Lord ask that you would make yourself known to them we bring before you our neighbouring congregations on our islands Lord those that have a communion at the moment and ask that you bless them bless the congregation here in a couple of weeks and calling the cloud as he seeks to share and to lead through the services through that weekend Lord we give you thanks that we can put these dates in our diary Lord where we continually examine ourselves as we see that separation we see that fencing of the table we see those who are trusting in you and those who at that moment do not

Lord so we pray indeed for the communion seasons across our islands pray for those ministers who faithfully carry out their duties in that regard so we pray for them Lord we bring before you all of our vacant congregations we bring before you the congregation in Crossabost at this time as well Lord and ask that you would be with them Lord that you would be with them over these weeks and months ahead ask Lord that you would be with Calum Ian as well that you would comfort him at this time and the wider family Lord and that you would indeed be with him at this time Lord we give you thanks that no matter where we find ourselves whether we are on the top of the mountain whether we are in the depths of the valleys we can come to you that you're not a distant God you're a God that is near and as the psalmist says a God that hears hears our prayers I love the Lord because my voice and prayers he did hear and we thank you that you not only hear them but you answer each and every one of our prayers we may not always understand the answers Lord but we know that you're perfect and although we may not understand we know that everything is in your hands and in your timing Lord so we bring that congregation before you especially Lord but we think of all other vacancies at this time and in our denomination

Lord and ask that you would indeed raise up men to go into the ministry to be able to share your word to shepherd your flocks across every corner of your vineyard we bring before you Scott and Gordon at the moment in our presbytery actively engaged in ministry Lord and I pray as well for my own application as well Lord and ask that you would go before me in everything as I seek to be obedient to your call as well Lord but we pray that there would be many more coming up to faithfully go in to have your word preached that we would be able to see a revival in our islands here Lord that we would be able to see many more souls saved and souls that would not just sit at home and that would be active though that would be seeking to disciple those as we look to that great commission that they would go and make disciples of those whether in school whether in the workplace whether from a pulpit

Lord wherever it may be we pray that you would raise up faithful Christians to go and do your work we ask Lord that your word would be indeed the catalyst to do your work Lord so be with us just now Lord forgive us for all of our sins go before us in all that we do in Christ's precious name we pray Amen we'll sing again this time from Psalm 67 Psalm 67 again if you've got the same book here it's on page 126 Lord bless and pity us shine on us with thy face that the earth thy way and nations all may know thy saving grace let people praise thee Lord let people all thee praise oh let the nations be glad in songs their voices raise that justly people judge on earth rule nations all let people praise thee Lord let them praise thee both great and small the earth her fruit shall yield our God shall blessing send

[16 : 16] God shall us bless and shall him fear unto earth's utmost end so we'll sing the whole of this Psalm 67 to God's praise Lord bless and pity and shine on us with thy face God clear thy way and nations all may know thy saving grace let people praise thee Lord let people of only praise oh let the nations be glad in songs their voices raise thou just people charge all their true nations all let be of grace thee

Lord let them praise people great sons all the earth the the child yield our God shall bless things end God shall us bless shall live be hear come earth and all send!

If you could turn your in your Bible to the New Testament and the book of Luke we're going to look at Luke chapter 16 and we'll just read the whole of the chapter so Luke chapter 16 and we'll read from the beginning of that chapter chapter 16 and he that's Jesus said also unto his disciples there was a certain rich man who had a steward and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods and he called him and said unto him how is it that I hear this of thee given account of thy stewardship for thou mayest be no longer steward!

then And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

Then said he to another, And how much ow'st thou? And he said, An hundred measure of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

[20 : 18] And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely, for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or as he will hold to the one and despise the other, ye cannot serve God and mammon.

And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, that God knoweth your hearts.

For that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were unto John, Since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

[21 : 46] And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail. Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery.

And whosoever marrieth her, that it was put away from her husband, committeth adultery. 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 that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abram's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and see 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.

[22 : 58] But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil thinks, that 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 they pass to us that would come from hence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, Father, that thou wouldst 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 he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. Amen.

So, we'll sing these verses, verses 8 through to the end of verse 12 of Psalm 90, to God's praise.

For in thy anger, O Lord of grace, you pass unto our head.

Yet not the strength of such old men, but peace and ever good, all is through God's holy
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 According to thy fear, so is thy love, the glory of us.

Our heart is in the light, to heaven on earth, and so on, and so on.

As we see, and as we come to look at the passage of the rich man and Lazarus, Lord, we pray that we would not just look at this as a distant story that doesn't relate to us, but that we would be prayerfully asking you to reveal yourself to us in the passage, Lord.

That you would speak to us, that you would arrest our own hearts, and that we would be able to come away from this place. That we would maybe even read the surrounding passages, all with a view to gaining a greater understanding of who you are, and what you've done for us in our own lives, Lord.

So bless our time together that is remaining, and ask, Lord, that you would be with us in all that we do. In Christ's precious name we pray. Amen. Well, just for a short time that we have left this evening, I want us to look at that second story that we really looked at in Luke chapter 16.

It's really from verses 19 through 31 of the passage. So Luke chapter 16, really from verse 19 through to 31, and I want us to just really consider this parable that has been put before us this evening.

[30 : 46] It's maybe one that's well known to us, it's maybe one that we know of and we've read a number of times. But I think it's always helpful to continually come back to these well known passages and ask that the Lord would again illuminate them to us as we read them.

But I just want to start off thinking one of my favourite movies, some of you may recognise this quote, but one of my favourite movies was from the film Gladiator, which is I think over 20 years old now.

But one of the quotes within that film was, what we do in life echoes in eternity. And I think it was originally a quote from Marcus Aurelius.

But as I was preparing this and reading through these verses, it struck me how appropriate that quote is. Not just for that film and what it spoke of, but in our own lives as well.

And as we look to this parable, what do we see? Well, we see a huge reversal of fortunes for those that we read of, the rich man and Lazarus.

[31 : 48] But I read the whole of the passage, I read the whole of chapter 16 and if you think verses 1 through 8 of Luke 16 and then 19 through 31, these two parables start with the same words that Jesus uses.

It says, there was a certain rich man. We read that about the first of the parables and then we read that about the second one here, the rich man and Lazarus. And both deal with that theme of wealth.

And it's not just physical money, it's also other wealth that we have. The word mammon that is used is also referring to the other gifts that we have, not just financially related.

But the first of those parables shows how wealth can be used for one's welfare. And the second, which we're going to focus on here, is how wealth can pave a way for disaster.

And the parables themselves, they raise really key questions, especially this one of the rich man and Lazarus. We won't go through all of these, but they do raise questions in our own hearts of what is hell like?

[32 : 54] What does an eternal death look like? How should we even read some of the imagery in this parable? What does the Lord expect of the wealthy? How does he wish us to treat one another, especially in areas where we see people have needs?

And how will he evaluate the stewardship of our lives? What we do with the blessings that God has entrusted us with will often indicate whether we have neglected these wealth, the wealth that we've been given in our lives or not.

This rich man was blessed. But I don't think as we read this, we could see he used his money wisely. And one of the most challenging lessons we see in this parable especially, is that we have a very limited time to decide on these two very different approaches to life.

These two different approaches culminate in two completely opposing final destinations. And it teaches us that the way in which we use our privileges and the blessings in life is often an indicator of how we can expect to experience eternity.

I don't want us to mistake what was said there. The way we live this life will not determine where we spend eternity, but whether we have accepted salvation that is found by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone, will determine whether we spend eternity like the rich man or like Lazarus.

[34 : 24] And a question maybe for us all to ask in our own hearts as we read this and we challenge ourselves, as I was challenged through preparation, as you're studying to prepare a sermon, you're first and foremost preaching to yourself.

But one of the questions that came up to me was, do we often take the opportunities to show God's love by helping those that we see that are struggling? It may not be the exact same scenario that we see here, but we know there are people in our own lives, possibly even in our own homes, and as a question to ask, do we take the opportunities to show God's love by helping them?

They may not be far away, just like Lazarus wasn't far away from this rich man. Are they possibly even outside your own house? Are they just outside the building in which you worship?

And it's something I want us to consider as we just look at this passage in the time that we have remaining. Something else we also need to consider as we look to this passage is eternity.

And I often mention, I lead our YF, and I'm going to our youth fellowship afterwards, but I'll often mention to the young ones of our need to focus on eternity. I know as young people it maybe feels so far away and distant, but it's really not.

[35 : 39] We ought to have a longing for heaven where we spend time worshipping our Lord. We will be spending that time perfectly worshipping our Lord. But our time here on earth is so short.

So we need to be continually remembering that eternity is not far. We need to think of our own eternal destination, but also those around us, those that are close to us, and those that are maybe not so close to us.

But in this tarot we don't just see this sight of eternity. No, Jesus also paints a very vivid picture of what a lost eternity looks like. And the word itself, hell, we don't often see, especially if you listen to, not within our own denomination, but if you look and you listen across the pond to some preaching that you hear, very rarely is the word sin or hell preached.

More often than not, it's a very light gospel that we'll often hear sometimes. But the reality is, there are only two destinations.

And this parable is very clear that there are only two. But if we are to consider God's word, we need to look at all of God's word. Not just those that we like to hear.

[36 : 54] Not just those things that we think will bring people in to hear. We need to be serious about what we're doing and rightly dividing God's word. And the serious and stark way that Jesus speaks of a lost eternity in this parable should absolutely grab each and every one of us and arrest our hearts and grab us and get our attention.

There really are just two destinations after this life. There is heaven and there is hell. And for those that are maybe not yet believers amongst us and are possibly at a moment where you're en route to a lost eternity, this parable should really be that jolt that reminds you that you need to be correcting things in your own life and you ought to be turning to the Lord with eternity firmly in view.

And Jesus tells us this parable here today as we read it in Caleons because he loves us enough to tell us when we're off course. Just think of a doctor.

If you're living an unhealthy life and they tell you of the perils of that unhealthy life, you don't just leave it there, they will also show you the remedy. They will show you how to correct things in your life.

And it's the same here. Those of us that are not yet Christians have an opportunity this very day to make things right with the Lord. And when that doctor or physician or nurse, whoever it is you see, tells you how you ought to correct your unhealthy lifestyle, you don't get angry at them.

[38 : 22] You don't refuse to go and pick up the medication that they've prescribed. No, you accept that advice. You take it on if you're wise and you heed the advice that they give you. And it's the same here with this passage.

We ought to heed the warning of this parable today. Because once we reach this final destination, that's the end. There's no going back to the doctor to say, I didn't take that medication and I'd like to be prescribed some more.

Things have gotten worse and I want to change things again. I'm really focused on it now. Once we reach this eternal destination, it's over. And we'll see that as we come through this passage.

There is no turning back as this rich man also found out. Today, however, is an important day. The question to ask is what destination are you heading to this evening?

What way of living have you chosen? There is still some time, this very hour, to respond to God appropriately. There is time to respond to his love which we see from this passage.

[39 : 26] But I want us to take a little bit of time just to really look at effectively two points. I want us to briefly look at these two men's lives. And then I want to spend a little bit more time looking at these two deaths.

So we're going to look at the lives of these two men, look at their deaths and see how they then cross over. And there couldn't be a greater contrast between them in both life and in death.

One is living in regal splendor with fine clothing, not just any fine clothing. But we read in the passage there that they are wearing purple clothes. And this was something at the time that was normally reserved for royalty.

This rich man ate sumptuously every day. It wasn't just on the odd occasion. It wasn't just at Christmas time or at a party or the communions. No, he ate sumptuously every day.

The other person, this man, we're told, Lazarus, was a poor man covered in sores. His ulcers covered his body. And he would have very much been seen as unclean to those that were around him.

[40 : 31] He seems to be starving as he wants nothing more than to crawl under the rich man's table and pick the scraps off the table which have fallen off. So he, this Lazarus, by all accounts, is a homeless man at the gates of a no doubt palatial home with only the dogs showing him a drop of compassion.

Anyone walking by and looking on would think that only one of these men has been blessed in life. Surely it was the rich man. Now I'm seeing a young person here.

I'm seeing, I think it's Anna. Is that right? Is that your name? Is it Anna? Now you don't need to speak to me, but you can give me a thumbs up or a nod here. I want you to help me teach something to the older folk here. I can see that you've got clothes, but when you go home, do you have a drawer full of clothes?

You've got lots of clothes and cupboards full? You absolutely do. And food? Do you have food in your fridges and in cupboards? There's probably a secret cupboard you're not allowed to go to. But you've got food as well.

And if it's raining outside, this is the last question. Do you have a roof over your head? Do you have a bed to sleep in? Thank you very much. Now, why do I ask Anna these questions?

[41 : 45] And the real reason I want to ask these questions is I don't want us to look at this parable and think ourselves completely unlike this rich man. We are far more like this rich man than we ought to think.

Don't think yourself maybe closer to Lazarus. The vast majority of us, if not all of us here today, we've got clothes, we have warmth, we have shelter, we have food, we will eat sumptuously, no doubt, every day having food for us.

We've got that shelter, we've got clothes. We are far more aligned to this rich man than we maybe think. So I don't want us to read this parable and think, well that's not me. I'm not living in this royal palatial home.

We are far more like the rich man than we maybe ought to think. Many would have envied this rich man's high-rolling lifestyle. And it's similar to our own day.

There is a lust. You don't have to look into a newspaper too far or on the news. You see this lust for fame, reality shows, this celebrity lifestyle. Gathering lots and lots of possessions is what we're encouraged to do in this world.

[42 : 53] It's the same, not much has changed in a couple of thousand years when we look at this parable. The other man, however, Lazarus, though seemed on the face of it to have very little blessings in life, that is of course not how it is.

Not everything is as it seems. I mentioned earlier about the dogs that were licking the sores. The dogs at this time, I don't know if any of you have dogs, but they're not the same as they were back in the time that this parable was written.

They weren't pets like we think of today. No, they weren't regarded as man's best friend. These were almost like wild dogs that rummaged around looking for food much in the same way that Lazarus did.

Yet it was these animals. These animals are the ones that showed more affection and compassion on Lazarus than the rich man did. There would have been plenty of people walking by Lazarus, yet he gets zero compassion from them.

What we see here is that our status in this life is not an indicator of our status in the next. One of the commentators I was looking at, he's written a really good book just on this parable.

[44 : 07] It's a man called Brownlow North. If you want to look that up. Brownlow North. He says this and I quote, The rich man had everything but God.

The beggar had nothing but God. And each was content with his portion. Lazarus had God and was content. And the rich man was content without God.

That's the reality of these, the lives of these two men. They were both content with where they were. Now I just wanted to just briefly focus there on the lives of these two men.

But I want to spend most of our time that we have remaining considering the very important deaths of these two men. The first thing that we see when we look at these two men in death is that their circumstances completely reverse.

The once rich man is now poorer than he could have ever imagined. He had built his identity and his status on the fragile and temporary things of this world.

[45 : 08] All those things that will pass away were moth and rust destroyed. Nothing he had, neither his home, his clothes, everything else that he had, none of it could come with him.

He wasn't aware of the perilous foundations which he was standing on. They were crumbling beneath his feet. Yet he thought never to consider the things of God when he was alive.

He only saw himself and only thought of himself. Just as our own world today wants us to live, we're encouraged to look after ourself. We're encouraged to promote self, love yourself.

You do you is what we're encouraged to do. Live your own life. Don't think of anyone else, just live your own life. Lazarus however, who incidentally I've really not mentioned here. I'm happy to be corrected if this isn't true, but I think it's true that of all the parables that Jesus shares, this is the only one where someone is named in a parable.

And as I was studying, I was looking at the name of Lazarus just to see what it means. And it's the translation from the word Lazarus, another Hebrew word similar to it is Eliezer, and it means whom God helps.

[46 : 22] So unlike the rich man, Lazarus had built his foundations on solid ground. It may not look like that in his life, but his grounds were built on solid rock, not the sinking sands that the rich man had.

In life, Lazarus could only rely on no one else to help him. He depended solely on God. He has literally no one to turn to, not even the rich man whose gates he was at.

He only had his almighty God. And in contrast, the rich man, who interestingly remains nameless, spends his entire life focused on himself.

Verse 25 shows that he received good things in life, but that was all the good that he was to feel. For when he dies, he leaves it all behind.

Death snatches everything away. Death snatches everything away that this man had built, and had built his life on. He left it all behind.

[47 : 27] And it's the same for us. Again, don't distance ourselves from this rich man. A question to maybe ask yourself, a little question to go away with, is what are the main priorities in your own life?

Is it money? What's like this rich man? Is it your career? Is it hobbies? What are the things that you prioritise more than your time with the Lord?

Lazarus on the other hand built his life on a dependence on God, the only one who helped him. And we see this remarkable reversal of fortunes that we read of.

The rich man, who in verse 22 received a proper burial, goes to hell. A place of misery and torment, both physical and emotional anguish.

Remember though, he doesn't go to hell because he is rich, but because his foundation and his prime focus in life was on his wealth and his possessions. His hope was firmly rooted in that which he could accumulate here on earth, not those treasures that he ought to have been laying up in heaven.

[48 : 34] Now we're not told if Lazarus in this passage was buried, but it was made clear that he is carried by angels to Abraham's side. What a wonderful picture that is.

He was now no longer suffering. He was no longer in pain. He no longer relied on the dogs to soothe his sores. These angels take Lazarus away to the place of unending joy with his Lord.

Take him to a glorious banquet. One which he was unable to attend and enjoy in his life. But in death, he is seated at the most glorious of places. No longer looking for the crumbs at the bottom.

He is seated there at the banquet. Similar to the rich man, Lazarus did not enter into everlasting life because he was poor.

No, it was because he had his hope firmly secure in Christ and in Christ alone. For Lazarus, there was no more pain, no more sores, no more hunger.

[49 : 35] He is comforted, as we read of there in verse 25. He is all that he needs from his abundantly merciful God. You know however what we see in verse 24.

I will just read verse 24. And he cried and said, this is the rich man. 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.

And he said, I am tormented in this flame. The rich man has changed in some ways, but not in others. You see, they are immediately after death.

This is what happens. Both believers and unbelievers immediately after death have a conscience and an awareness of their eternal status. And enter at once into either suffering or blessing.

Abraham knew that Lazarus was in a better place than he even asks. In verse 24 there as we read, send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water.

[50 : 41] Yet interestingly, he's not changed in other ways. He still seems to think he's above Lazarus in some ways. Send him, send that one that we know. He wants Abraham to send Lazarus to comfort him in his agony.

As if Lazarus was somehow a servant or a worker within his house. We know the almost chilling and sobering response that Abraham gives him.

Beginning of verse 25, Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things. He says, Son, though physically he was a child of Abraham, he was not one of Abraham's true offspring.

The window of opportunity to change the destination in eternity for him had closed. That chasm between heaven and hell had been fixed. It's fixed.

In other words, it's intended by God to allow no crossover at all. The question that was before the rich man in life is before each and every one of us here today.

[51 : 44] Do you know the Lord? Have you put your trust in him? The rich man chose to ignore this question in life. But friends, today don't be like this rich man.

Don't think you're not like him. We're all far more aligned to this rich man than to Lazarus today. You don't need to go there in your Bibles. But Matthew 7, verse 21 to 23 says, Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

But he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils.

And in thy name done many wonderful works. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work of iniquity.

How are you using your position, your status, your privileges, all that you've been given by the Lord? How are you using it today? Is it used for yourself?

[52 : 47] Or do you seek to see God glorified with all that he's given to you? Now this rich man had every opportunity to love God and to love the poor man that was at his doorstep.

Who interestingly, in verse 24, he clearly knows him by name. He asks him to send Lazarus. He knows fine well of who this man is. This was not just somebody who arrived at the gate the day before.

He knew Lazarus by name. He knows him. It's not that he was oblivious to him. He's not ignorant of Lazarus. He knew his name. He knew his plight in life. Yet he ignored him.

Now I don't know each of your situations or who the Lord has possibly laid at your own doorstep. But we ought to pray for those that we encounter. And that we would show our love for Jesus by loving that person.

Whatever it may be. Whether it is to invite them in for food. Whether it's to help them in any other way. We should be mindful of those that we see around us that are in need. It might be someone in your own family.

[53 : 47] It could be somebody here in the congregation that you know. But whoever it is. Whether they be hungry. Whether they be looking for spiritual encouragement. Whatever it may be. We ought to be showing God's love to them.

Pray for them. And use the gifts of the Lord. The gifts that the Lord has provided to you to help them. And just think of money. Does the money that pass through our hands get used to glorify God and see him glorified?

Or does it get used for that material satisfaction that will one day be left behind for someone else? Who chosen God or Mammon? We remind ourselves, verse 13 of the passage.

No servant can serve two masters. But either he will hate the one and love the other. Or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God or Mammon.

Would you, as we see in Psalm 84, Would you rather spend one day in the courts of the Lord than a thousand elsewhere? Where are your priorities in life? 2 Corinthians 5, 15 says, And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.

[55 : 02] That is the mark of a child of God. That he no longer lives for himself, being the centre of their own little universe. Those of us that are believers know that we are saved by faith alone.

But of course, the faith that saves is never alone. The fruits of that faith should also be visible. And the question again, I would ask, what are you doing with the Lazarus that's in your own life?

What we do doesn't determine our destiny. But it does indicate the road that we may be on. So the rich man has been told here that this chasm is fixed.

And it cannot be crossed. So what next? What about his loved ones? Well, verses 27 through 31, just at the end of the passage there. The rich man here implies that if only he had more information, he would never have ended up in the torment.

If only he would just come and speak and make an appearance to us, then we would have trusted and believed. But many, an atheist, might say that God didn't give them enough of a reason to believe in him.

[56 : 06] But is that the case? We don't have to spend kind of too long on our beautiful island here. I'm not saying anything about south of the border where I'm from, but Callum's is also beautiful.

But you don't have to spend too long on our islands here to see the wonders of God's creation. Both in its power, the weather, which we often see a little bit too much. But also in the intricacies in the animals and the way in which we see the glorious sun.

I think we were speaking about that on the way in the beautiful sun this afternoon. You can see the intricacies as well. But God's eternal power and his divine nature have been clearly seen.

We see them each and every day. So we can't turn around and say, if only we'd known. Plenty of people will say just now, if only the Lord had given me a sign or had shown me something.

We have plenty before us. Dale Ralph Davis, one of the commentators says, the rich man tries to argue with Abraham here. Just in this passage here, he asks again for Lazarus to be sent.

[57 : 12] He tries to argue with Abraham that sending Lazarus back would convince his brothers. Somehow this rich man will not take anyone's word for it. He's not only lost, he's also obnoxious.

But he will be putting Abraham right. If only you've done this. Go and do this. Then my family will believe. He has told him in no uncertain terms that this will not convince them.

And it's a reminder to us that we need to know the gospel and what it tells us about who God is. This man seems to have known about Moses and the prophets on some level.

But that alone does not save us. We've got to personally trust in Christ himself. R.C. Sproul said once that either we live by faith or else we die in our sins.

It's as simple as that. Those really are the only two alternatives. The rich man though is blaming the fact that there was no road to Damascus moment for him. He doesn't see the failings in how he lived his life.

[58 : 16] This rich man worshipped his wealth, not God. He ignored his neighbour, a neighbour that he knew every day. And he did not walk humbly with the Lord as he ought to have.

Now death reversed his rich status. And just look at verse 31. That passage there which we read where Abraham says, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

That's not just a hypothetical comment that's been made there. This is something that we know actually happened. Jesus did bring someone from the dead. He'd been dead for three days.

Who interestingly is also named Lazarus. Which we looked at earlier means whom God helps. And how did the religious leaders respond to that resurrection? Did they marvel and say sorry to Jesus for doubting him?

No. They set out to kill him. So seeing the life and death of these two men, where do we go from here this evening in 2025 in Calumnes? Well, with much that we read of and much that we look at in the Bible, we ought to be going to the cross.

[59 : 26] And we look to Christ on the cross. He was the only one who showed love, mercy and walked humbly with his God perfectly.

And being the only one qualified to do so, he went to the cross as our substitution, perfect and without blemish, to take away the sin of the world.

So, God has made a way for those who seek forgiveness. But there is no salvation for those who don't. This rich man is in hell.

Not because he's rich. But because he chose to build his life around something apart from God. Lazarus is in heaven. Not because he was poor. But because he looked to God in his life.

And he leaned heavily upon God in his life. And just as we begin to come to a close, one thing I want us to note, just as we read this passage and just at the tail end of it, we see here that Lazarus is not alone.

[60 : 28] He's with Abraham. But the rich man is. Lazarus had that company of Abraham and the saints in glory. Yet the rich man is painfully alone.

Nothing is said about another soul around the rich man. He stood all alone. All he saw was those in glory. And it's a frightening image for us.

We often hear our, you'll hear sometimes in our lost world at the moment, people will say, well I'm just going to have a party in hell with all my friends. That's not what we see here.

They're desperately, desperately alone. And one of the commentators puts it like this. The true picture painted by Christ is that that person will be tormented with loneliness.

That person will be all alone. They will see no one. They will sense no one. They will be cut off from others. They will be in a desolate and bleak place on their own.

[61 : 28] So to those that are really not yet believing, I urge you to come to the Lord. Repent of the sins in your lives and consider where your eternal destination is.

And I would urge you to maybe read this passage again. Think about this parable and what it means in your own life. The word of God is alive and is able to change us from within.

So let the scriptures lead you. Let them lead you to Christ and what he did with his perfect life and his perfect death. Now a couple of quotes I want to close with at the end.

John Bunyan, well known for primarily Pilgrim's Progress. But he wrote this when he was thinking about hell. He said, consider what a miserable reflection this will have on your soul to see your friends in heaven and yourself in hell.

Your father in heaven and yourself in hell. Your mother in heaven and yourself in hell. Your brother, your sister in heaven and yourself in hell.

[62 : 31] Your children in heaven and yourself in hell. Consider what a miserable reflection that would be. Like Lazarus though, if we lean heavily on Christ this evening.

And not just this evening but always. We will be with these people in heaven rather than apart from them. And it's my prayer that you would not be like this rich man. For you would today come to the Lord in your sin.

Knowing that without his offer of salvation you would be rightly condemned at the day of judgment. Like this rich man. And I'll leave you again, that Brownlow North I mentioned. His book is a wonderful book.

And I'll leave you with something that he says just as we close. He says, Oh, what eager, longing, earnest, heartfelt prayers are the prayers that are offered up in hell.

With what strong crying and tears and in what soul agony are they uttered. How truly do the lips that pour them forth feel their need. And how anxious are they to get their prayers answered from hell.

[63 : 36] Answered they can never be. The prayers and the sense of need are both alike unavailing. They are too late. Don't leave it too late.

Today is the day of salvation. Don't let another sun go down a beautiful day today. Don't let that go down without making your calling and election sure. The truth of this parable cannot be mistaken.

There is an eternal death as we see. But there is also the hope. That wonderful hope of an eternal life. One writer said, Other men see only a hopeless end.

But the Christian rejoices in an endless hope. Amen. And may the Lord bless these very short reflections on his word. We'll close with a word of prayer before we sing.

Jesus God, again we give you thanks for your word. As you've spoken to us this very evening.

[64 : 36] We thank you for this parable. This story that has been shared with us. And it may be one that's very familiar to us Lord. But we pray that as we leave your house this evening. That we would examine our own hearts.

Examine our own lives. Examine the way in which we deal with the riches which we have. That we would not distance ourselves from this rich man. That we would actually closely align ourselves with him. As we all likely will eat well.

Clothed well. Rehoused. We pray that we would be aligned to him. And that we would not be neglectful of those that are around us that are poor and needy.

To feed. To clothe. Whatever it may be Lord. Speak to us this very evening Lord. So we thank you that we can indeed look at this word. And we pray that it would indeed transform our lives.

Would be mindful that eternity is nearer than they can imagine Lord. And that we are separated solely by those who know you. And those that as we heard of at the end. Are too late in realising that truth Lord.

We will conclude with the last three verses of Psalm 72. Psalm 72 will sing these last three verses.

To all eternity. The whole earth let his glory fill. Amen. So let it be. We will sing these three stanzas. The end of Psalm 72 to God's praise.

And holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
holy
The God of Israel, for He alone
the wondrous world, the glory not itself.

Amen. Now we conclude with the verses at the end of the book of Jude. Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory, with great joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time, now and forever. Amen.