

The Rich Man and Lazarus

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[0 : 0 0] We can read God's Word from the Gospel of Luke and chapter 16. Reading from verse 19 to the end of the chapter. Luke chapter 16, where we'll read the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

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And by the angels to Abraham's side, the rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

And he called out, Father Abraham, have mercy on me. And send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.

But Abraham said, Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things. And Lazarus in like manner bad things.

[1 : 2 7] But now he is comforted here and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you, a great chasm has been fixed in order that those who would pass from here to you may not do so.

And none may cross from there to us. And he said, Then I beg you, Father, to send them to my father's house. For I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

But Abraham said, You have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. And he said, No, Father Abraham. But if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.

He said to him, If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. May the Lord add his blessing to that reading of his own holy and inerrant word.

I want this morning to speak about our eternal destiny. And when I was preparing this message, a number of months ago, there was a lot of debate.

[2 : 4 1] Both in television, in the newspapers, and on the radio. Some of you may be listening to Kay Adams in the morning. On two separate mornings, a month apart, much was being said about death.

And what happens immediately after we die. So this morning, I just want to speak about our eternal destiny. Because that, in a sense, is what Sazerah is all about.

We are there to bring the most important news that is in this world today. To our servicemen and women. And that is that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners such as we are.

And there is an urgency in that message to us. For us, especially in the forces. Because many of them are going into some of the most dangerous parts of the world. And as we know, many of them don't come back.

So this morning, in a sense, this is a very easy sermon to preach. Because there are only two places that each one of us go to after we die.

- [3 : 46] We are either going to heaven or we are going to hell. There are only these two places. There is no purgatory. That is a big lie. That is one of the devil's major lies.
- That there is a place halfway between heaven and hell. Where we can purge our sins. And do some penance so that we can get into heaven. That is a myth.
- There is no incarnation either. There is no annihilation. There is only heaven. And there is hell. Now Jesus spoke often of heaven and hell.
- Because he preached on both. And felt it was necessary for him to preach on both. He felt compelled to speak on them. He preached the good news about heaven. He preached the bad news about hell.
- And he couldn't be a faithful preacher. Unless he addressed both. So I want to be faithful like Christ this morning. And I want to speak about both places.
- [4 : 46] What happens? Immediately. Seconds. After we die. This chapter seems to be a chapter that is very strategically placed after chapter 15.
- Where there we have three parables. We have the lost sheep. There were 99. One was lost. We had the lost coins. There were 10. One was missing.
- And then we had the two sons. You had the prodigal son. And the son who had never left his father field. Never outwardly rebelling against his father.
- He never left home. Yet nevertheless he was still lost. Even when he stayed close to his father. So Jesus tells us this parable.
- To warn us of the consequences of being lost. A parable that in some ways I think. When you look at the audience that were in front of them. They were Pharisees.
- [5 : 47] And he's calling out to their Pharisees. That there are dire consequences for those people. Who do not come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. As Lord and Saviour. You need to repent.
- That's turn from your sins. And come to Christ. Now before we look at this parable. I want to ask. Your very simple question. Where are you going to be.
- Immediately after you die. Where will you be. In 10,000 years from now. Where are you going to spend eternity.
- Will it be in heaven. Or will it be in hell. Now this is a parable. Surely. That must speak to every single person. In this building today. Because.
- This is the all important question. Not just for time. But for eternity. So let us look at the outline of this parable. That extends right through to verse 31.
- [6 : 50] Let us look at the outline. Verses 19 to 21. We see two men. Verse 22. Two deaths. Verses 22 to 26. Two destinies. Verses 27 to 31.
- We see a man who's in desperation. So let us begin. Let us begin at verse 19. I want you to see. There are two men. There is the rich man. And secondly.
- There is the beggar. A poor man. And as Jesus is introducing us to this story. He's showing us two very different characters.
- What a contrast. The contrast couldn't be greater. So when Jesus told bad parables. As we read them in the Bible. There were no gray areas. In Christ's preaching.
- There was black and white. And we can see clearly. What Jesus is saying to us. And he begins in verse 19. With the rich man. A fact. The fact was.
- [7 : 46] He was identified as a rich man. Who was living exclusively. For the things of this world. He was a naturally worldly man. But we also see.
- That he was religious as well. But living for this world. Outwardly. He gave every impression. That he loved God. He loved the kingdom of God.

He read his Bible. But that my friends. Was just a facade. When you peel back the layers. And when you pull back the veneer. What we see.

A man's heart. Who is a lover. Of this world. And as we read in verse 13. We see. No man can serve. Two masters.

What does it say? No servant can serve. Two masters. For either we will hate the one. And love the other. Or he will be devoted to the one. And despise the other. You cannot serve God.

[8 : 43] And money. Maman refers to money. You're going to have to make a choice. And the Pharisees had to make a choice. And their choice was. That on the outside.

They appeared to be religious. But yet secretly. They were lovers of money. They were lovers of this world. Now how do we know that? Well verse 14 tells us. The Pharisees. Who were lovers of money.

Heard all these things. And they ridiculed him. Now my friends. Having money is not a sin. Many of the richest men in the Bible. Were great saints.

You see. It's not the possession of money. That's the issue. The issue is the love of money. And of course. Poor people are in the same boat as well.

All we have to do. Is go to the lottery stand. Or whatever. On a Wednesday afternoon. And on a Saturday morning. And we see them there. Cooning. Many who can't afford to do it. But yet who do it. Because they're expecting to make lots of money.

[9 : 40] So Jesus tells this parable. With the Pharisees I believe. At the forefront of his thoughts. You see. Jesus knew that the Pharisees. Lived for the things of this world. And the picture he paints.

Of this Pharisee who's rich. He's a man who's dressed in purple. Now purple was a lavish color. In that day. It was the color that royalty wore.

Because only those who had a lot of money. Could afford purple garments. Especially in silk. It was normally in silk and fine linen. And the cost of dyeing this garment.

Was very expensive. And this is a character. As we look at him. We see. This is someone who lived in splendor. Every day.

He loved the stimulus. Perhaps of others looking at him. And heads were turned to notice. The way he walked. The way he dressed. So what we see here.

[10 : 37] Is a self-consumed. Self-absorbed man. Something else we need to note is. That he was religious. In verse 23. We read. That in hell.

He recognized Abraham. So he knew who Abraham was. And he knew that Abraham. In verse 24. Had a personal relationship with God. Meaning. That he was in the family. Of God.

He was calling Abraham. Father. Yet. As we can see in verse 29. In fact. He was someone who knew his Bible. In fact.

Verse 21. Would indicate that he. Believed in the Bible. But sadly. His heart. Was far away. From God. He loved the world.

He loved the things of the world. And as we look at this character. My friends. We ought to be repulsed. By this man. Now the second man.

[11 : 32] That's found in verse 20. We read. As a poor man. And here we see. The. The great contrast. Between the two characters. Apparently. In the Greek.

The word beggar. Here means. A person who is in. Abject poverty. In other words. He hasn't got a brown penny. To rub together. He's reduced. To a life. Of begging. And he's reduced.

To depending. On other people. Now his name. Was Lazarus. Which means. God is my help. Or God has provided.

Here is a man. Who's living. Depending upon God. Looking to God. To meet his needs. Jesus. And God. Is his provider. Because he knows.

He knows. That he cannot meet. His own needs. But he puts his faith. And his trust. In the Lord. Notice in verse. Four. In verse 20. He's laid.

[12 : 28] At the gate. Of the rich man. Now he couldn't walk there. He was obviously. Carried to the gate. He couldn't walk. From me to me. Hunger. Was obviously. His constant companion.

He would have been happy. Just to eat the scraps. From the table. That fell. From the rich man's table. So you see. What Jesus is doing here. He is painting. A pitiful situation.

And he's. Showing us. The contrast. That is. Between these two characters. One living for this world. And one living. For the Lord. Now is that not.

A picture of the reality. Of life today. There are those of us. Who are Christians. There are these two categories. Of people in this church today. Those who are living. For Christ. And those who are just.

Living for the world. Self-absorbed. Who are not. Believers. In the Lord Jesus Christ. So you see. This is strong words. That we have.

[13 : 22] In front of us here. Regarding the rich man. And the poor man. Now I want you to notice. Secondly. There are two deaths. In verse 22. Different as though.

Their lives were. Their deaths were different. As well. Now. As we know. Not all deaths. Are the same. Now the poor man. Died. And was carried. Into Abraham's bosom.

Now notice. The first death. The poor man died. We don't see any mention. Here. Of a burial. Notice. Notice. There is no funeral.

No eulogies. But my friends. Notice this. The attention of heaven. Was upon this man.

Because we were told. We were told from scripture. That he was carried. Into Abraham's bosom. By the angels. My friends. Although Lazarus died.

[14 : 20] Without the attention of man. Heaven. Heaven noticed. Angels were dispatched. To usher him. Into the very presence of God. As the catechism says. The souls of believers.

At their death. Are made perfect. In holiness. And do immediately. Pass into glory. Their bodies. Resting in their grave. Yes. United to Christ. Until that great day.

Of resurrection. Now notice. The other death. This rich man. Also died. But notice. He was buried. And we could carry.

We could add. Merely buried. Or just buried. Because. That seems to be the picture here. There is no evidence. Of heaven. Taking note. Of this man's death. No angel from heaven.

Was dispatched. To take him. To Abraham's bosom. You can imagine. What this guy's funeral. Would have been about. He was obviously. Someone who was well known. In the community.

[15 : 16] He would have been well attended. What eulogies. Would have been poured. Onto this man. Especially by his five brothers. And the community. Would have been there. In strength. Because he was a great member. Of the community.

One of the leaders. In the synagogue. Served in the temple. But when he died. My friends. The bible says. That he was. Merely buried.

What will it be like. My friends. When you die. What's it going to be like. Will you be noticed. By the angels. In heaven. Will you be carried. Into heaven.

By the angels. Or will you be passed over. And carried. Into that place. Called Hades. I want you to notice. In the third place.

That there are. Two destinies. Mentioned here. And I believe. That this is the very. Heart of this parable. What Jesus. Is wanting. To convey.

[16:14] To us here. And he's wanting. To get the attention. Of these Pharisees. And he's wanting. Them to realize. That when we die. There are.

Only. Two destinies. That await. Those. Who die. Either to be cast. Into a lost. Eternity. In hell. Or to be.

Taken into the kingdom. Of heaven. Now notice. The two destinies. Mentioned. In verse 22. The poor man died. And was carried.

By the angels. Into Abraham's bosom. Abraham's bosom. Really is a figure of speech. Representing heaven. In other words. The eternal home. Of the saints of God.

Conveying close. Tight knit fellowship. With Abraham. Abraham. Just as in the picture. We had. In the upper room. With Jesus and John. When John nestled. In Christ's bosom.

[17:12] This was. This poor man. In close. Intimate. Fellowship. With Abraham. Who was in close. Intimate. Fellowship.

With his Lord. This perhaps. Raises a question. In your mind. I don't know. Will we know each other. In heaven. Well. Let me answer.

By using Spurgeon's comment. Spurgeon was once. Asked. Will we know one another. In heaven. He said. Of course. We know one another.

Down. We know one another. Down here. We will be bigger fools. Up there. The answer is. Yes. We will know each other. We will really know. One another in heaven. All our misunderstandings.

And all of that. Will evaporate. And we will know. As we are known. And there will be a close. An intimate fellowship. With one another. And that. Is something.

[18:07] I think. That is indicated for us. In this illustration. But there is a second destiny. And again. I believe. This is the main import. Of this parable.

There is a place. Called hell. We read in verse 23. And in Hades. Being in torment. He lifted up his eyes. And saw Abraham. Far away.

And Lazarus. In his bosom. Now as we look. At verses 23 to 26. I want to mention. Six truths. That speak to me. As I look at this.

About hell. And I do that. Intentionally. My friends. Because there might be. Some in this church. Today. Who are not. Christians. Who do not know. The Lord Jesus Christ.

As their Lord. And Savior. And I lovingly. My friends. From the very depth. Of my heart. Want to get this message across. I know I can't convince you.

[19:03] But I trust. That the Holy Spirit. Will convince you. Of your need. To flee to Christ. This is urgent. So I want to lovingly. Throw this passage.

In front of you. To direct you. To the Lord. So that. My friends. When you die. You will not be cast. Into this awful place.

That the Bible calls. Hell. So the first. Truth about it is. That it is. A real place. Verse 23. Confirms that. It hates being in torment.

He lifted up his eyes. My friends. It's a real place. Like Stardewi. Is a real place. It's a place. That's on God's map. It's a place.

Where everyone. Who dies. Without Christ. Are going to. In fact. It could not be. Any more real. The Bible.

- [20 : 00] Calls it. The abode. Of the dead. In this context. Hades. Is the place. Of the unsaved. Dead. As Matthew. 11. 23. And Luke.
10. Verse 15. Says. It's a bottomless pit. It's a land. Of darkness. It's a fiery hell. Secondly. Hell.
- Hell. Is an immediate place. Look at the sequence. That unfolds. At the end. Of verse 22. Where we read there. The poor man died.
- And was carried. By the angels. To Abraham's eyes. But. The rich man. Also died. And was buried. And in age. Being in torment. He lifted up his eyes. And saw Abraham. Afar off. And Lazarus.
- By his side. He died. He was buried. In hate. He lifted up his eyes. One after the other. And he looked around. And he saw the.
- [20 : 53] Inside. The inside. Quarters. Of hell. And as we said already. There is no intermediate place. No. There is no holding position.
- He died. He died. Even before. He realized. Perhaps. That even the doctors. Realized. That he had already died. Or his family. That to me.
- Is a fearful thought. My friends. No time to repent. No time to turn to God. No time to say to God. Oh I'm sorry. I did intend to repent. Immediately.
- Die. Immediately. Finds himself. In hell. He lifted up his eyes. In torment. My friends. This is someone. Who was not unconscious.
- No. No. No. No. He was not in soul sleep. He was not in limbo. He wasn't annihilated. He is alive. He is awake.
- [21 : 52] He is in hell. My friends. His senses. Have never been more stimulated. Than they are now. Are you hearing. What the Bible is saying. Thirdly.
- It's an isolated place. What an isolated place. Place. We read that verse 23. He saw. Abraham far away. And I think the emphasis here. Is on the far away.
- There is this great chasm. This great separation. Between heaven and hell. And there is no going. Between the two. And one Corinthians.
- In Revelation. Tells us. Who the occupants. Of this place will be. Who your companions. Will be in this place. Every fornicator. Every idolater. Every thief.
- Every murderer. Every drunkard. Every reveler. Every swindler. Every cowardly person. And the list goes on. In other words. Who will be there? The scum. Of all. The centuries.
- [22 : 47] Will be there. Now the fourth mark of hell. We are told. It's an agonizing place. He cried out. Father Abraham. The day of mercy has passed. He could have had mercy.
- He could have had grace. But the door is now firmly closed. Send Lazarus. To dip his finger. In water. To cool my tongue.
- My friends. We are talking here. This is not symbolic. It's not symbolic fire. It is real fire. Literal fire. It's a real place. Yes.
- I know there are many preachers. In this world. And I come across them. In the military. Who will tell us. That this is not a place. At all. But my friends. The Bible is clear. It is a place.
- It's identified. As the place. Of torment. Who is telling us this. My friends. It is the Lord Jesus Christ.
- [23 : 41] And Jesus. Does not tell lies. Does he? And he repeats it. Time and time again. We see it in Matthew 12. We see it in Matthew 5. We see it. The words that he uses.
- Sapphire hell. Burned with fire. And brimstone. We see that in Revelations 20. That's the dominant theme. Of this place. A fire that will never be extinguished.

Not in 6,000 years. Not in 6 million years. It will go on forever. And ever. And ever. And Jesus is here.

Warning you and I today. He's warning the Pharisees. Who are before him. What a towering warning this is. And every one of us. Need to examine ourselves. To make sure.

That we are in the faith. We've got to make our calling. And our election sure. Examine yourself. To ensure that you're in the faith. And if you're not in the faith.

[24 : 37] Flee to Christ. Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. The Bible says. The fifth mark. We see here. We see what lives on the other side of the grave.

Oh my friends. What a picture. A haunting place. Where our minds. Your mind will never be more active. That's the picture we see. Not just here.

He says. Child remember. In verse 25. But if you go back to Matthew 9. And you go back to the last chapter. Of Isaiah. Where it's first recorded. Where the worm dieth not. And the fire is not quenched.

The worm of conscience. Bringing back all the memories. Of a lifetime. That is a fearful thought. Our conscience being awakened. Being reminded.

Of all these times. When you heard sermons. From faithful ministers. Preaching this pulpit and others. About the need to flee to Christ. Now. All these gospel sermons.

[25 : 34] All the advice. From mothers and fathers. Who are godly folk. Who have gone before us. You'll be reminded of all that. Sixthly I want. You to see hell. As an inescapable place.

Meaning that all. Who enter there. My friends will not leave. There are no holidays. You've heard the expression. Holidays from hell. I'm sorry.

Not there. You will never leave that place. Notice verse 26. There is a great chasm. And that chasm is fixed.

Never to be removed. The place of the damned. It's a permanent. Eternal. Position. For the damned. My friend.

No purgatory. As. As. As. As. Proverbs 28 says. All. Hope. Perishes. That's a fearful thought. When you've been there.

[26 : 35] For 10,000 years. Not bright shining. Not bright shining as a sun. But in torment. You see this man didn't intend to go to hell.

He thought he was going to heaven. Yet when he opened his eyes. In hell. In hell. He realized. He realized. What he was. And I pray that this will not be true of any of you.

Any here today. Perhaps. You don't mean to go to hell. But my friends. Let me tell you. Hell is populated.

With countless Pharisees. Who never intended to go there. But that's where they woke up. Finally one desperation. You see two men. Two deaths.

Two destinies. In verse 27. A man in desperation. He seems to have some evangelistic zeal. At the end of his day. He wants to send someone. To tell his brothers. About their need to repent.

[27 : 34] And turn to Jesus. And rest of your mind says. We don't need to send Lazarus. They have all they need to know. From Moses.

And the prophets. In other words. The word of God is sufficient. It's as if he's saying. The bible is not enough.

Send Lazarus. If someone comes from the dead. They'll believe. No my friends. Verse 21. Verse 31. They would not believe. Supposing a miracle was performed.

You see. Wanting to see a miracle. Is nothing more than an excuse. Not to believe. The power of the written word. Is all that is needing. The sufficiency of scripture. As we heard in the children's talk.

Is all that's needed. You see. Lazarus. Did rise from the dead. In Jesus' day. But they didn't believe. What we need. Is not miracles.

[28 : 30] But faith in the word of God. So in closing this part. Let me ask you. Where will you be. Immediately. After you die. What will you see.

On that great day. Will it be the flames of hell. Forever. Well my friends. The bible says. That the lord. Takes no pleasure.

In the death of the wicked. And this morning. My friends. The offer of the gospel. Is extended. To every single person. In this building. And what the bible.

Is saying to you today. Is to repent. That means. To turn from your sins. And believe. In the lord. Jesus Christ. As lord. And saviour.

And my friends. If you were to repent. And believe. There would be great celebration. In heaven. Over all. Over one sinner. Who believed. You know what the bible says.

[29 : 27] My friends. It is. Whosoever. And that whosoever. Includes you. Whosoever. Shall call.

On the name of the lord. Shall be saved. My friends. That is a truth. And the gospel. Invitation. Is extended.

To you. Here today. In Stornoway Free Church. Can I urge you. To leave this building. Playing to God. That God would change you. So that when you leave.

You will be different. From the time you came in. But I know that only God. Can do that. The Holy Spirit. Convicting you. And convincing you. Of your sins. So pray. That God would do that.

Because what we have here. Is the most important message. There is in this world today. And that is that. Jesus Christ. Came into the world. To save sinners. Such as you are. And he is willing.

[30 : 24] And he is ready. To do that. May the lord bless these thoughts. To us for Christ's sake. But I want in closing. Just very briefly. To give you. An update. On the work of Sazer.

The lord has certainly blessed us. In this past couple of years. Days they will burn up. Even if. The lord. The lord of lich. The lord of the And the Lord has.