

“A Great Chasm Has Been Fixed”

Luke 16:26

August 1, 2021

INTRO: **VIDEO** – *“Daniel’s Zephaniah 1:1 Intro”*

PRAYER

CONTEXT: *A special day & message...*

1. Let me give you a great tip on a guaranteed investment!
2. The Reality of Eternity
3. What Do You Want?
4. The Eternal Fork In The Road...
5. Listen UP... because It’s Almost Too Late

BIG IDEA: *There is an eternal chasm coming*

(True **EXHORTATION** = *1 chasm... 2 camps*)

PREVIEW:

1. Great CHRIST
2. Great CONTEXT
3. Great CONTRAST
4. Great COMFORT
5. Great CHASM
6. Great CONVICTION
7. Great CLARITY
8. Great CONFUSION
9. Great CHRIST

TEXT:

I. Great CHRIST (John 3:16 & John 14:6)

II. Great CONTEXT (Edwards – *Sinners In The Hands*)

- God's Word

- Luke (per the ESV.org) The Global Message of Luke

“The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” ([Luke 19:10](#)). With these closing words to Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector and a man deeply despised by his fellow Jews, Jesus states the message of Luke to the global church today. Christ did not come for the clean and the religious, the upright and the educated—he came for those who know themselves to be lost. Throughout Luke we see Jesus welcoming outsiders into the blessings of grace, while those who appear to be insiders are shut out. This is great hope to those around the world today who feel themselves to be outsiders. It is also a reminder to those who are taking the gospel to the nations that it is generally the socially and culturally marginalized who will be most readily drawn to the gospel. Above all, Luke's Gospel is a call to everyone around the world, whatever our social or moral status, to abandon our futile methods of self-salvation and leave all to follow Christ, the great Friend of sinners ([Luke 7:34; 9:57–62; 18:9–14](#)).

- Luke 16: Christ on cash, idols, & priorities...
- This Parable...
- God's Will
 - Hear
 - Heed
 - Herald
- God's Ways
 - Truth in love
 - Go make disciples
 - BE My witnesses

III. Great CONTRAST

19 "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

QUESTION: How much money did he leave behind???

ANSWER: ...both THEN and NOW... **ALL of it!**

Death is indifferent to demographics! - JDP

[See the stark contrast here:](#)

- Heaven vs HELL
- **Lost vs Found**
- Healthy vs Hurting
- **Standing vs Laying**
- Consumption vs Compassion
- **Greed & Gluttony vs Grace & Godly**
- Sumptuously vs Scarcely
- **Feasting vs Fasting**
- Purple vs Putrid
- **Royal-threads vs Tattered-rags**
- Standing vs Laying
- **Daily Abundance vs Deadly Agony**
- Independence vs Dependence
- **Buried vs Carried** (symbolic)
- Tormented vs Treasured
- **Looking up vs Looking down** (symbolic)
- “Far off” vs “By his side”

(This is [Jesus getting people prepared for death!](#))

In him (the poor man) the grace of God was so entirely hidden, and buried by the deformity and shame of the cross, that to the eye of the flesh nothing presented itself except the curse; and yet we see that in a body which was loathsome and full of rottenness there was lodged a soul unspeakably precious, which is carried by angels to a blessed life. – Calvin

You can have EVERYTHING of this world and NOTHING that really matters, all at the same time... Conversely, you can have what appears to be NOTHING in this world, while having EVERYTHING of true & eternal value! - JDP

IV. Great COMFORT

24 And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.

But now ... the comforts of the rich man are now gone forever, and the joys of Lazarus have just begun... - Barnes

V. Great CHASM

26 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 be able, and none may cross from there to us.'

Fixed = It will forever divide heaven and hell.

- *Fixed* = **BOTH** ways
- *Assurance AND Wrath*
 - See the blessing of eternal security!
 - *No one & nothing can take you out...*

Think about the divides that we've crossed...

The ironic & biblical truth is that the cross of Christ is the key to the uncrossable chasm!

VI. Great **CONVICTION**

27 And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house- 28 for I have five brothers-so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'

MacLaren's Quote:

...to live to self is death... and
if men do not wish to hear, they will not hear.
...*We have as much witness from heaven as we need!*

VII. Great CLARITY

29 But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'

- Start with 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Go to Gen. 1:1 & John 1:1
- Next... Genesis 3 & John 3
- Then... Romans 3:23 & 6:23
- And... Ephesians 2:1-10
- Finally... 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

The human problem is more heart than hearing. - JDP

- *The first will be last & the last will be first...*
- *The exalted will be humbled & the humble exalted*

***** 12 Biblical Signatures of Surrender: *****

- Grace & Worship
- Truth & Love
- Faith & Obedience
- Peace & Joy
- Fruitfulness
- Missional-zeal
- Devotion to Discipleship
- Walking, Working, Waring Witness

COUNT the COST

they who have patiently endured the burden of the cross laid upon them, and have not been rebellious against the yoke and chastisements of God, but, instead, amidst uninterrupted sufferings, have cherished the hope of a better life, have a rest laid up for them in heaven, when the period of their warfare shall be terminated. – Calvin

VIII. Great CONFUSION

30 And he said, '**No**, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

*Many who argue & reject truth in love **here**... even when it's shared from **heaven**... will continue to do so in **hell**.*

- JDP (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4 & 1 Cor. 2:14)

Circumstances in every age show that no terrors, or arguments, can give true repentance without the special grace of God renewing the sinner's heart. – Matthew Henry

Dustin Benge: *We're all susceptible to deception. Our only defense: 1. Live in the Bible. 2. Pursue sound doctrine. 3. Test all things with Scripture. 4. Exercise biblical discernment. 5. Don't jump to conclusions. 6. Seek wise, godly counsel. 7. Pray without ceasing.*

QT: "If you want a Savior from hell BUT not a Savior from your **sin(s)**, you will have a savior from neither!" - Justin Peters

See Scripture's contrast of worldly vs. godly sorrow...

No second chances... man dies once and faces judgment...
No such thing as purgatory!

"There will be many theologians in hell." - MacArthur

IX. Great CHRIST

31 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.'

- **Unbelief is NEVER satisfied!** - JDP
- **Hence... m M m...**

REVIEW:

Life & death are both temporary & eternal... Death is everyone's doorway into their eternity. -JDP

Other Key Biblical Passages:

- *The rich young ruler...* MONEY IS NOT THE PROBLEM!
 - The LOVE of money is the sin and problem...
 - Love of the byproducts of money is the same thing!
- *It's easier for a camel to get thru the eye of a needle, than a rich man to get into heaven...*
- **Acts 5**... lying to the Holy Spirit about money...
- **Judas**... looked good as the trusted treasurer -
- **Demas**... choked out with wants & worries of this world
- **Revelation 2-3**: Jesus exhorting the 7 churches
- *Birds have nests and foxes have holes...*
- **"WHAT DO YOU WANT?"** – *Jesus the Christ*
- *Today is the day of salvation... **repent & believe!***
- See & BE **Titus 1:5; 2:1; 2:15**

CLOSING Thoughts:

Christian-grieving is often deepened because of the torturous & eternal-grieving that we know lost souls will be forever embroiled in.

-JDP

This parable & passage annihilate any hope for annihilationism. -JDP

Miserly & manipulative giving is money loving! -JDP

When you carry your cross thru the gates of eternity,
Christ will exchange it for a crown as you come into heaven.

- JDP

**The American dream is a spiritual
nightmare!** -JDP

One man's short term hopes & dreams are another
man's scraps & crumbs... Yet, (don't miss this...) the
second man's humble blessings, in and thru all of
ETERNITY, can and WILL become the first man's
haunting nightmares. - JDP

**All we NEED is what we ALL need...
The Gospel's "truth in love."** - JDP

Justin Peters said: "I hope these words haunt you..."

I'd like to tweak that just a bit...

"I hope these words help you, if they haunt you."

You see... I don't **WANT** to irritate and infuriate you...
BUT... I'm willing to if that's what truth in love does.
I love you enough to risk you not liking me!

One last thing...

What would you have done if you were living in the country, community, & culture of Hitler's concentration camps? What if your church life was immersed in the middle of Hitler's concentration camps???

Let me tell you what many did... when asked that pointed & personal question, they said: "We sang louder." (Let that sink in)

Now let me ask you again... but before you answer, I want you to know that we are in the exact same boat... only it is culture's concentration camps that surround us... and the numbers of people who are going aimlessly or with a false confidence into a torturous eternity is exponentially higher.

THAT's why Jesus gave us this truth... and that's why I'm teaching & preaching it to YOU.

"It's almost too late!" - JDP

PRAYER

Worship: "Corners" "Build My Life" "In Christ Alone"

“A Great Chasm Has Been Fixed”

Luke 16:19-31

John Calvin's Commentaries

[Luke 16:19-31](#)

19. There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, [306] and feasted sumptuously every day: 20. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, 21. And desiring to be fed from the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: and even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22. And it happened that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23. And, lifting up his eyes in hell, when he was in torments, he seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24. And he, crying out, said, Father Abraham, have compassion on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25. And Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus likewise evil things: but now he enjoys comfort, and thou art tormented. 26. And besides all these things, a vast gulf lieth between us and you; so that they who wish to pass hence to you cannot, nor can they pass to us thence. 27. And he said, I beseech thee, therefore, father, to send him to my father's house: 28. For I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29. Abraham saith to him, They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them. 30. But he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went to them from the dead, they will repent. 31. And he said to him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

Though Luke introduces some things between them, there can be no doubt that this example was intended by Christ to confirm the discourse which we have last examined. He points out what condition awaits those [307] who neglect the care of the poor, and indulge in all manner of gluttony; who give themselves up to drunkenness and other pleasures, and allow their neighbors to pine with hunger; nay, who cruelly kill with famine those whom they ought to have relieved, when the means of doing so were in their power. Some look upon it as a simple parable; but, as the name Lazarus occurs in it, I rather consider it to be the narrative of an actual fact. But that is of little consequence, provided that the reader comprehends the doctrine which it contains.

19. There was a certain rich man He is, first of all, described as clothed in purple and fine linen, and enjoying every day splendor and luxury. This denotes a life spent amidst delicacies, and superfluity, and pomp. Not that all elegance and ornaments of dress are in themselves displeasing to God, or that all the care bestowed on preparing victuals ought to be condemned; but because it seldom happens that such things are kept in moderation. He who has a liking for fine dress will constantly increase his luxury by fresh additions; and it is scarcely possible that he who indulges in sumptuous and well garnished tables shall avoid falling into intemperance. But the chief accusation brought

against this man is his cruelty in suffering Lazarus, poor and full of sores, to lie out of doors at his gate.

These two clauses Christ has exhibited in contrast. The rich man, devoted to the pleasures of the table and to display, swallowed up, like an insatiable gulf, his enormous wealth, but remained unmoved by the poverty and distresses of Lazarus, and knowingly and willingly suffered him to pine away with hunger, cold, and the offensive smell of his sores.

In this manner Ezekiel (16:49) accuses Sodom of not stretching out her hand to the poor amidst fullness of bread and wine. The fine linen, which is a peculiarly delicate fabric, is well-known to have been used by the inhabitants of eastern countries for elegance and splendor;

...a fashion which the Popish priests have imitated in what they call their surplices.

21. **And even the dogs came. It was quite enough to prove the hardened cruelty of the rich man, that the sight of wretchedness like this did not move him to compassion.** Had there been a drop of humanity in him, he ought at least to have ordered a supply from his kitchen for the unhappy man. But **the crowning exhibition of his wicked, and savage, and worse than brutal disposition was, that he did not learn pity even from the dogs** There can be no doubt that those dogs were guided by the secret purpose of God, to condemn that man by their example. **Christ certainly produces them here as witnesses to convict him of unfeeling and detestable cruelty.**

What could be more monstrous than to see the dogs taking charge of a man, to whom his neighbor is paying no attention; and, what is more, to see the very crumbs of bread refused to a man perishing of hunger, while the dogs are giving him the service of their tongues for the purpose of healing his sores?

When strangers, or even brute animals, supply our place, by performing an office which ought rather to have been discharged by ourselves, let us conclude that they are so many witnesses and judges appointed by God, to make our criminality the more manifest.

22. And it happened that the beggar died. Christ here points out the vast change which death effected in the condition of the two men. Death was no doubt common to both; but to be after death carried by angels into Abraham's bosom was a happiness more desirable than all the kingdoms of the world. On the other hand, to be sentenced to everlasting torments is a dreadful thing, for avoiding which a hundred lives, if it were possible, ought to be employed. In the person of Lazarus there is held out to us a striking proof that we ought not to pronounce men to be accursed by God, because they drag out, in incessant pain, a life which is full of distresses.

In him the grace of God was so entirely hidden, and buried by the deformity and shame of the cross, that to the eye of the flesh nothing presented itself except the curse; and yet we see that in a body which was loathsome and full of rottenness there was lodged a soul unspeakably precious, which is carried by angels to a blessed life.

It was no loss to him that he was forsaken, and despised, and destitute of every human comfort, when heavenly spirits deign to accompany him on his removal from the prison of the flesh.

And the rich man also died, and was buried. In the rich man we see, as in a bright mirror, how undesirable is that temporal happiness which ends in everlasting destruction. It deserves our attention, that Christ expressly mentions the burial of the rich man, but says nothing of what was done to Lazarus. Not that his dead body was exposed to wild beasts, or lay in the open air, but because it was thrown carelessly, and without the slightest attention, into a ditch; for it may naturally be inferred from the corresponding clause, that no more attention was paid to him when he was dead than when he was alive. The rich man, on the other hand, buried magnificently according to his wealth, still retains some remnant of his former pride. [308] In this

respect, we see ungodly men striving, as it were, against nature, by affecting a pompous and splendid funeral for the sake of preserving their superiority after death; but their souls in hell attest the folly and mockery of this ambition.

And Lazarus was carried by angels. **When he says that Lazarus was carried, it is a figure of speech by which a part is taken for the whole; for the soul being the nobler part of man, properly takes the name of the whole man.** [309] This office is, not without reason, assigned by Christ to angels, who, we are aware, have been appointed to be ministering spirits ([Hebrews 1:14](#)) to believers, that they may devote their care and labor to their salvation.

Into Abraham's bosom. **To detail the variety of speculations about Abraham's bosom, in which many commentators of Scripture have indulged, is unnecessary, and, in my opinion, would serve no good purpose.** It is quite enough that we receive what readers well acquainted with Scripture will acknowledge to be the natural meaning. As Abraham is called the father of believers, because to him was committed the covenant of eternal life, that he might first preserve it faithfully for his own children, and afterwards transmit it to all nations, and as all who are heirs of the same promise are called his children; so those who receive along with him the fruit of the same faith are said, after death, to be collected into his bosom. **The metaphor is taken from a father [310] , in whose bosom, as it were, the children meet, when they all return home in the evening from the labors of the day. The children of God are scattered during their pilgrimage in this world; but as, in their present course, they follow the faith of their father Abraham, so they are received at death into that blessed rest, in which he awaits their arrival.** It is not necessary to suppose that reference is made here to any one place; but the assemblage of which I have spoken is described, for the purpose of assuring believers, that they have not been fruitlessly employed in fighting for the faith under the banner of Abraham, for they enjoy the same habitation in heaven.

It will perhaps be asked, Is the same condition reserved after death for the godly of our own day, or did Christ, when he rose, open his bosom to admit Abraham himself, as well as all the godly? I reply briefly: As the grace of God is more clearly revealed to us in the Gospel, and as Christ himself, the Sun of Righteousness, ([Malachi 4:2](#).) has brought to us that salvation, which the fathers were formerly permitted to behold at a distance and under dark shadows, so there cannot be a doubt that believers, when they die, make a nearer approach to the enjoyment of the heavenly life. Still, it must be understood, that the glory of immortality is delayed till the last day of redemption. So far as relates to the word bosom, that quiet harbor at which believers arrive after the navigation of the present life, may be called either Abraham's bosom or Christ's bosom; but, as we have advanced farther than the fathers did under the Law, this distinction will be more properly expressed by saying, that the members of Christ are associated with their Head; and thus there will be an end of the metaphor about Abraham's bosom, as the brightness of the sun, when he is risen, makes all the stars to disappear. From the mode of expression which Christ

has here employed, we may, in the meantime, draw the inference, that the fathers under the Law embraced by faith, while they lived, that inheritance of the heavenly life into which they were admitted at death.

23. And, lifting up, his eyes in hell. **Though Christ is relating a history, yet he describes spiritual things under figures, which he knew to be adapted to our senses. Souls have neither fingers nor eyes, and are not liable to thirst, nor do they hold such conversations among themselves as are here described to have taken place between Abraham and the rich man; but our Lord has here drawn a picture, which represents the condition of the life to come according to the measure of our capacity. The general truth conveyed is, that believing souls, when they have left their bodies, lead a joyful and blessed life out of this world, and that for the reprobate there are prepared dreadful torments, which can no more be conceived by our minds than the boundless glory of the heavens.**

As it is only in a small measure--only so far as we are enlightened by the Spirit of God--that we taste by hope the glory promised to us, which far exceeds all our senses, let it be reckoned enough that the inconceivable vengeance of God, which awaits the ungodly, is communicated to us in an obscure manner, so far as is necessary to strike terror into our minds.

On these subjects the words of Christ give us slender information, and in a manner which is fitted to restrain curiosity. **The wicked are described as fearfully tormented by the misery which they feel; as desiring some relief, but cut off from hope, and thus experiencing a double torment; and as having their anguish increased by being compelled to remember their crimes, and to compare the present blessedness of believers with their own miserable and lost condition.** In connection with this a conversation is related, as if persons who have no intercourse with each other were supposed to talk together. When the rich man says, Father Abraham, this expresses an additional torment, that he perceives, when it is too late, that he is cut off from the number of the children of Abraham

25. Son, remember. **The word son appears to be used ironically, as a sharp and piercing reproof to the rich man, who falsely boasted in his lifetime that he was one of the sons of Abraham.** It seems as if pain inflicted by a hot iron wounded his mind, when **his hypocrisy and false confidence are placed before his eyes.** When it is said that he is tormented in hell, because he had received his good things in his lifetime, **we must not understand the meaning to be, that eternal destruction awaits all who have enjoyed prosperity in the world.**

On the contrary, as Augustine has judiciously observed, poor Lazarus was carried into the bosom of rich Abraham, to inform us, that riches do not shut against any man the gate of the kingdom of heaven, but that it is open alike to all who have either made a sober use of riches, or patiently endured the want of them. All that is meant is, that **the rich man, who yielded to the allurements of the present life, abandoned himself entirely to earthly enjoyments, and despised God and His kingdom, now suffers the punishment of his own neglect.**

Receivedst THY good things. The pronoun thy is emphatic, as if Abraham had said: Thou wast created for an immortal life, and the Law of God raised thee on high to the contemplation of the heavenly life; but thou, forgetting so exalted a condition, didst choose to resemble a sow or a dog, and thou therefore receivest a reward which befits brutal pleasures. But now he enjoys comfort. When it is said of Lazarus, on the other hand, that he enjoys comfort, because he had suffered many distresses in the world, it would be idle to apply this to all whose condition is wretched; because their afflictions, in many cases, are so far from having been of service to them, that they ought rather to bring upon them severer punishment. But Lazarus is commended for patient endurance of the cross, which always springs from faith and a genuine fear of God; for he who obstinately resists his sufferings, and whose ferocity remains unsubdued, has no claim to be rewarded for patience, by receiving from God comfort in exchange for the cross.

To sum up the whole...

they who have patiently endured the burden of the cross laid upon them, and have not been rebellious against the yoke and chastisements of God, but, amidst uninterrupted sufferings, have cherished the hope of a better life, have a rest laid up for them in heaven, when the period of their warfare shall be terminated.

On the contrary, wicked despisers of God, who are wholly engrossed in the pleasures of the flesh, and who by a sort of mental intoxication, drown every feeling of piety, will experience, immediately after death, such torments as will efface their empty enjoyments. It must also be recollected, that this comfort, which the sons of God enjoy, lies in this, that they perceive a crown of glory prepared for them, and rest in the joyful expectation of it; as, on the other hand, the wicked are tormented by the apprehension of the future judgment, which they see coming upon them.

26. A vast gulf lieth.

These words describe the permanency of the future state, and denote, that the boundaries which separate the reprobate from the elect can never be broken through.

And **thus we are reminded to return early to the path, while there is yet time, lest we rush headlong into that abyss, from which it will be impossible to rise.**

The words must not be strictly interpreted, when it is said, that no one is permitted to pass who would wish to descend from heaven to hell; for it is certain, that none of the righteous entertain any such desire.

27. I beseech thee, father. To bring the narrative into more full accordance with our modes of thinking, he describes the rich man as wishing that his brothers, who were still alive, should be warned by Lazarus. **Here the Papists exercise their ingenuity very foolishly, by attempting to prove that the dead feel solicitude about the living.** Any thing more ridiculous than this sophistry cannot be conceived; for with equal plausibility I might undertake to prove, that believing souls are not satisfied with the place assigned to them, and are actuated by a desire of removing from it to hell, were it not that they are prevented by a vast gulf. If no man holds such extravagant views, the Papists are not entitled to congratulate themselves on the other supposition. It is not my intention, however, to debate the point, or to defend either one side or another; but I thought it right to advert, in passing, to the futility of the arguments on which they rest their belief that the dead intercede with God on our behalf. I now return to the plain and natural meaning of this passage.

29. They have Moses and the prophets. In the persons of the rich man and Abraham Christ reminds us, that we have received an undoubted rule of life, and that therefore we have no right to expect that the dead will rise to instruct and persuade us. Moses and the prophets were appointed to instruct, while they lived, the men of their own age; but it was with the design, that the same advantage should be derived by posterity from their writings. As it is the will of God that we should receive instructions, in this manner, about a holy life, there is no reason why the dead should assure us of the rewards and punishments of the future state; nor is there any excuse for the indifference of those who shelter themselves under the pretext, that they do not know what is going on beyond this world. **Among irreligious men, we are aware, is frequently heard this wicked saying, or rather this grunting of hogs, that it is foolish in men to distress themselves with fears about a matter of uncertainty, since no one has ever returned to bring us tidings about hell.**

With the view of counteracting every enchantment of Satan of this description, Christ draws their attention to the Law and the Prophets, agreeably to that passage in the writings of Moses:

It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou shouldest

do
([Deuteronomy 30:12-14.](#))

it,

They who ridicule as fabulous what Scripture testifies as to the future judgment, will one day feel how shocking is the wickedness of giving the lie to the holy oracles of God.

From such lethargy Christ arouses his followers, that they may not be deceived by the hope of escaping punishment, and thus fail to improve the time allowed for repentance.

Abraham's reply amounts to this: By Moses and the prophets God had sufficiently made known to his people the doctrine of salvation, and nothing remains for us but that it obtain the assent of all.

So thoroughly infected is the mind of man with a depraved curiosity, that the greater part of men are always gaping after new revelations.

Now as nothing is more displeasing to God than when men are so eager to go beyond due bounds, he forbids them to inquire at magicians and soothsayers respecting the truth, and to consult pretended oracles after the manner of the Gentiles; and in order to restrain that itching curiosity, he promises, at the same time, that he will give prophets, from whom the people may learn whatever is necessary to be known for salvation, ([Deuteronomy 18:9,15.](#))

But if the prophets were sent for the express purpose; that God might keep his people under the guidance of his word, he who is not satisfied with this method of instruction is not actuated by a desire to learn, but tickled by ungodly wantonness; and therefore God complains that He is insulted, when He alone is not heard from the living to the dead, ([Isaiah 8:19.](#))

The division of the word of God, which Abraham makes, into the Law and the Prophets, refers to the time of the Old Testament. Now that the more ample explanation of the Gospel has been added, there is still less excuse for our wickedness, if our dislike of that doctrine hurries us in every possible direction, and, in a word, if we do not permit ourselves to be regulated by the word of God. Hence too we infer how solid is the faith of Papists about purgatory and such fooleries, when it rests on nothing but phantoms. [311]

30. Nay, father Abraham. This is a personification, as we have said, which expresses rather the feelings of the living than the anxiety of the dead. The doctrine of the Law is little esteemed by the world, the Prophets are neglected, and no man submits to hear God speaking in his own manner. Some would desire that angels should descend from heaven; others, that the dead should come out of their graves; others, that new miracles should be performed every day to sanction what they hear; and others, that voices should be heard from the sky. [312] But if God were pleased to comply with all their

foolish wishes, it would be of no advantage to them; for God has included in his word all that is necessary to be known, and the authority of this word has been attested and proved by authentic seals. Besides, faith does not depend on miracles, or any extraordinary sign, but is the peculiar gift of the Spirit, and is produced by means of the word.

Lastly, it is the prerogative of God to draw us to himself, and he is pleased to work effectually through his own word.

There is not the slightest reason, therefore, to expect that those means, which withdraw us from obedience to the word, will be of any service to us.

I freely acknowledge, that there is nothing to which the flesh is more strongly inclined than to listen to vain revelations; and we see how eagerly those men, to whom the whole of Scripture is an object of dislike, throw themselves into the snares of Satan.

Hence have arisen necromancy and other delusions, which the world not only receives with avidity, but runs after with furious rage. But all that is here affirmed by Christ is, that even the dead could not reform, [313] or bring to a sound mind, those who are deaf and obstinate against the instructions of the law.

Footnotes:

[306] "De pourpre et de soye;" -- "in purple and silk."

[307] "Quelle sera hors de ce monde la condition de ceux;" -- "what will be out of this world the condition of those."

[308] "De l'orgueil de sa vie passee;" -- "of the pride of his past life."

[309] "A bon droict on dit simplement, L'homme, encore que cela ne convient qu'a l'ame;" -- "we properly say simply Man, though it applies only to the soul."

[310] "D'un pere terrien;" -- "from an earthly father."

[311] "Veü qu'elle n'est appuyee et fondee qu'en des apparitions et vaines imaginations d'aucuns cerveaux esventez;" -- "since it rests and is founded only on apparitions and vain imaginations of certain giddy brains."

[312] "Les autres, que Dieu parlast a eux du ciel en personne;"-- "others, that God would speak to them from heaven in person."

[313] "Ne s'amenderont point, mesmes quand les morts viendroyent parler a eux, et les advertir;" -- "will not reform, even though the dead should come to talk to them and warn them."

MacLaren's Expositions

Luke

DIVES AND LAZARUS

[Luke 16:19](#) - [Luke 16:31](#).

This, the sternest of Christ's parables, must be closely connected with verses 13 and 14. Keeping them in view, its true purpose is plain. It is meant to rebuke, not the possession of wealth, but its heartless, selfish use. Christ never treats outward conditions as having the power of determining either character or destiny. What a man does with his conditions settles what he is and what becomes of him. Nor does the parable teach that the use of wealth is the only determining factor, but, as every parable must do, it has to isolate the lesson it teaches in order to burn it into the hearers.

There are three parts in the story-the conduct of the rich man, his fate, and the sufficiency of existing warnings to keep us from his sin and his end.

I. Properly speaking, we have here, not a parable-that is, a representation of physical facts which have to be translated into moral or religious truths-but an imaginary narrative, embodying a normal fact in a single case.

The rich man does not stand for something else, but is one of the class of which Jesus wishes to set forth the sin and fate. It is very striking that neither he nor the beggar is represented as acting, but each is simply described. **The juxtaposition of the two figures carries the whole lesson.**

It has sometimes been felt as a difficulty that the one is not said to have done anything

bad, nor the other to have been devout or good; and **some hasty readers have thought that Jesus was here teaching the communistic doctrine that wealth is sin, and that poverty is virtue. No such crude trash came from His lips.** But **He does teach that heartless wallowing in luxury, with naked, starving beggars at the gate, is sin which brings bitter retribution. The fact that the rich man does nothing is His condemnation.** **He was not damned because he had a purple robe and fine linen undergarments, nor because he had lived in abundance, and every meal had been a festival, but because, while so living, he utterly ignored Lazarus, and used his wealth only for his own gratification.** Nothing more needs to be said about his character; the facts sufficiently show it.

Still less needs to be said about that of **Lazarus. In this part of the narrative he comes into view simply as the means of bringing out the rich man's heartlessness and self-indulgence.** For the purposes of the narrative his disposition was immaterial; **for it is not our duty to help only deserving or good people.** Manhood and misery are enough to establish the right to sympathy and succour. There may be a hint of **character in the name 'Lazarus,' which probably means 'God is help.'** **Since this is the only name in the parables, it is natural to give it significance, and it most likely suggests that the beggar clung to God as his stay.** It may glance, too, at the riddle of life, which often seems to mock trust by continued trouble. **Little outward sign had Lazarus of divine help, yet he did not cast away his confidence.** No doubt, he sometimes got some crumbs from Dives' table, but not from Dives. That the dogs licked his sores does not seem meant as either alleviation or aggravation, but simply as vividly describing his passive helplessness and utterly neglected condition. Neither he nor any one drove them off.

But **the main point about him is that he was at Dives' gate, and therefore thrust before Dives' notice, and that he got no help. The rich man was not bound to go and hunt for poor people, but here was one pushed under his nose,** as it were. Translate that into general expressions, and it means that we all have opportunities of beneficence laid in our paths, and that our guilt is heavy if we neglect these. 'The poor ye have always with you.' **The guilt of selfish use of worldly possessions is equally great whatever is the amount of possessions. Doing nothing when Lazarus lies at our gate is doing great wickedness. These truths have a sharp edge for us as well as for the 'Pharisees who were covetous'; and they are woefully forgotten by professing Christians.**

II. In the second part of the narrative, our Lord follows the two, who had been so near each other and yet so separated, into the land beyond the grave.

It is to be especially noticed that, in doing so, He adopts the familiar Rabbinical teaching as to Hades. He does not thereby stamp these conceptions of the state of the dead with His assent; for **the purpose of the narrative is not to reveal the secrets of that land, but to impress the truth of retribution for the sin in question.** It would not be to a group of Pharisaic listeners that He would have unveiled that world.

He takes their own notions of it-angel bearers, Abraham's bosom, the two divisions in

Hades, the separation, and yet communication, between them. These are Rabbis' fancies, not Christ's revelations. **The truths which He wished to force home lie in the highly imaginative conversation between the rich man and Abraham, which also has its likeness in many a Rabbinical legend.**

The difference between the ends of the two men has been often noticed, and lessons, perhaps not altogether warranted, drawn from it. But **it seems right to suppose that the omission of any notice of the beggar's burial is meant to bring out that the neglect and pitilessness, which had let him die, left his corpse unburied. Perhaps the dogs that had licked his sores tore his flesh. A fine sight that would be from the rich man's door!** The latter had to die too, for all his purple, and to be swathed in less gorgeous robes. His funeral is mentioned, not only because pomp and ostentation went as far as they could with him, but to suggest that he had to leave them all behind. 'His glory shall not descend after him.'

The terrible picture of the rich man's torments solemnly warns us of the necessary end of a selfish life such as his. The soul that lives to itself does not find satisfaction even here; but, when all externals are left behind, it cannot but be in torture. That is not drapery.

Character makes destiny, and to live to self is death.

Observe, too, that the relative positions of Dives and Lazarus are reversed—the beggar being now the possessor of abundance and delights, while the rich man is the sufferer and the needy.

Further note that the latter now desires to have from the former the very help which in life he had not given him, and that the retribution for refusing succour here is its denial hereafter. There had been no sharing of 'good things' in the past life, but the rich man had asserted his exclusive rights to them. They had been 'thy good things' in a very sinful sense, and Lazarus had been left to carry his evil things alone. There shall be no communication of good now. Earth was the place for mutual help and impartation. That world affords no scope for it; for there **men reap what they have sown, and each character has to bear its own burden.**

Finally, the ineffaceableness of distinctions of character, and therefore of destiny, is set forth by the solemn image of the great gulf which cannot be crossed. It is indeed to be remembered that our Lord is speaking of 'the intermediate state,' before resurrection and final judgment, and that, as already remarked, the intention of the narrative is not to reveal the mysteries of the final state. But still **the impression left by the whole is that life here determines life hereafter, and that character, once set and hardened here, cannot be cast into the melting-pot and remoulded there.**

III. The last part of the narrative teaches that the fatal sin of heartless selfishness is

inexcusable.

The rich man's thought for his brethren was quite as much an excuse for himself. He thought that, if he had only known, things would have been different. **He shifts blame from himself on to the insufficiency of the warnings given him.** And the two answers put into Abraham's mouth teach the sufficiency of 'Moses and the prophets,' little as these say about the future, and **the impossibility of compelling men to listen to a divine message to which they do not wish to listen.**

The fault lies, not in the deficiency of the warnings, but in the aversion of the will.

No matter whether it is Moses or a spirit from Hades who speaks,

if men do not wish to hear, they will not hear.

They will not be persuaded—for persuasion has as much, or more, to do with the heart and inclination than with the head.

We have as much witness from heaven as we need.

The worst man knows more of duty than the best man does. **Dives is in torments because he lived for self; and he lived for self, not because he did not know that it was wrong, but because he did not choose to do what he knew to be right.**

Barnes' Notes

Luke 16:19

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

There was a certain rich man - Many have supposed that our Lord here refers to a "real history," and gives an account of some man who had lived in this manner; but of this there is no evidence. **The probability is that this narrative is to be considered as a parable, referring not to any particular case which "had" actually happened, but teaching that such cases "might" happen.**

The "design" of the narrative is to be collected from the previous conversation.

He had taught the danger of the love of money [Luke 16:1-2](#); the deceitful and treacherous nature of riches [Luke 16:9-11](#); that what was in high esteem on earth was hateful to God [Luke 16:15](#); that people who did not use their property aright could not be received into heaven [Luke 16:11-12](#); that they ought to listen to Moses and the prophets [Luke 16:16-17](#); and that it was the duty of people to show kindness to the poor.

The design of the parable was to impress all these truths more vividly on the mind, and to show the Pharisees that, with all their boasted righteousness and their external correctness of character, they might be lost.

Accordingly he speaks of no great fault in the rich man - no external, degrading vice - no open breach of the law; and leaves us to infer that the "mere possession of wealth" may be dangerous to the soul, and that a man surrounded with every temporal blessing may perish forever.

It is remarkable that he gave no "name" to this rich man, though the poor man is mentioned by name.

If this was a parable, it shows us how unwilling he was to fix suspicion on anyone. If it was not a parable, it shows also that he would not drag out wicked people before the public, but would conceal as much as possible all that had any connection with them. The "good" he would speak well of by name; the evil he would not "injure" by exposing them to public view.

Clothed in purple - A purple robe or garment. This color was expensive as well as splendid, and was chiefly worn by princes, nobles, and those who were very wealthy. Compare [Matthew 27:28](#). See the notes at [Isaiah 1:18](#).

Fine linen - This linen was chiefly produced of the flax that grew on the banks of the Nile, in Egypt, [Proverbs 7:16](#); [Ezekiel 27:7](#). It was especially soft and white, and was, therefore, much sought as an article of luxury, and was so expensive that it could be worn only by princes, by priests, or by those who were very rich, [Genesis 41:42](#); [1 Chronicles 15:27](#); [Exodus 28:5](#).

Fared sumptuously - Feasted or lived in a splendid manner.

Every day - Not merely occasionally, but constantly. This was a mark of great wealth, and, in the view of the world, evidence of great happiness. It is worthy of remark that Jesus did not charge on him any crime. He did not say that he had acquired this property by dishonesty, or even that he was unkind or uncharitable; but simply that he "was a rich man," and that his riches did not secure him from death and perdition.

[Luke 16:20](#)

And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,
Beggar - Poor man. The original word does not mean "beggar," but simply that he was "poor." It should have been so translated to keep up the contrast with the "rich man."

Named Lazarus - The word Lazarus is Hebrew, and means a man destitute of help, a needy, poor man. It is a name given, therefore, to denote his needy condition.

Laid at his gate - At the door of the rich man, in order that he might obtain aid.

Full of sores - Covered with ulcers; afflicted not only with poverty, but with loathsome and offensive ulcers, such as often are the accompaniments of poverty and want.

These circumstances are designed to show how different was his condition from that of the rich man.

"He" was clothed in purple;
the poor man was covered with sores;

"he" fared sumptuously;
the poor man was dependent even for the
crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.

The dogs came - Such was his miserable condition that even the dogs, as if moved by pity, came and licked his sores in kindness to him. These circumstances of his misery are very touching, and his condition, contrasted with that of the rich man, is very striking. It is not affirmed that the rich man was unkind to him, or drove him away, or refused to aid him (**Sin of OMISSION vs. Sin of COMMISSION** - JDP).

The narrative is designed simply to show that the possession of wealth, and all the blessings of this life, could not exempt from death and misery, and that the lowest condition among mortals may be connected with life and happiness beyond the grave. There was no provision made for the helpless poor in those days, and consequently they were often laid at the gates of the rich, and in places of public resort, for charity. See [Acts 3:2](#). The gospel has been the means of all the public charity now made for the needy, as it has of providing hospitals for those who are sick and afflicted. No pagan nation ever had a hospital or an almshouse for the needy, the aged, the blind, the insane. Many heathen nations, as the Hindoos and the Sandwich Islanders, destroyed their aged people; and "all" left their poor to the miseries of public begging, and their sick to the care of their friends or to private charity.

[Luke 16:21](#)

And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

[Luke 16:22](#)

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

Was carried by the angels - The Jews held the opinion that the spirits of the righteous were conveyed by angels to heaven at their death. Our Saviour speaks in accordance with this opinion; and as he expressly affirms the fact, it seems as proper that it should be taken literally, as when it is said the rich man died and was buried. **Angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation [Hebrews 1:14](#), and there is no more improbability in the supposition that they attend departing spirits to heaven, than that they attend them while on earth.**

Abraham's bosom - This is a phrase taken from the practice of reclining at meals, where the head of one lay on the bosom of another, and the phrase, therefore, denotes intimacy and friendship. See the notes at [Matthew 23:6](#). Also [John 13:23](#); [John 21:20](#).

The Jews had no doubt that Abraham was in paradise. To say that Lazarus was in his bosom was, therefore, the same as to say that he was admitted to heaven and made happy there. The Jews, moreover, boasted very much of being the friends of Abraham and of being his descendants, [Matthew 3:9](#). To be his friend was, in their view, the highest honor and happiness. Our Saviour, therefore, showed them that this poor and afflicted man might be raised to the highest happiness, while the rich, who prided themselves on their being descended from Abraham, might be cast away and lost forever.

Was buried - This is not said of the poor man. Burial was thought to be an honor, and funerals were, as they are now, often expensive, splendid, and ostentatious. This is said of the rich man to show that he had "every" earthly honor, and all that the world calls happy and desirable.

[Luke 16:23](#)

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

In hell - The word here translated hell ("Hades") means literally a dark, obscure place; the place where departed spirits go, but especially the place where "wicked" spirits go. See the [Job 10:21-22](#) notes; [Isaiah 14:9](#) note. **The following circumstances are related of it in this parable:**

- 1. It is "far off" from the abodes of the righteous. Lazarus was seen "afar off."**
- 2. It is a place of torment.**
- 3. There is a great gulf fixed between that and heaven, [Luke 16:26](#).**
- 4. The suffering is great. It is represented by "torment" in a flame, [Luke 16:24](#).**
- 5. There will be no escape from it, [Luke 16:26](#).**

The word "hell" here means, therefore, that dark, obscure, and miserable place, far from heaven, where the wicked shall be punished forever.

He lifted up his eyes - A phrase in common use among the Hebrews, meaning "he looked," [Genesis 13:10](#); [Genesis 18:2](#); [Genesis 31:10](#); [Deuteronomy 8:3](#); [Luke 6:20](#).

Being in torment - **The word "torment" means "pain, anguish" Matthew 4:24; particularly the pain inflicted by the ancients in order to induce people to make confession of their crimes. These "torments" or tortures were the keenest that they could inflict, such as the rack, or scourging, or burning; and the use of the word here denotes that the sufferings of the wicked can be represented only by the extremest forms of human suffering.**

And seeth Abraham ... - This was an aggravation of his misery. One of the first things that occurred in hell was to look up, and see the poor man that lay at his gate completely happy. What a contrast! Just now he was rolling in wealth, and the poor man was at his gate. He had no expectation of these sufferings: now they have come upon him, and Lazarus is happy and forever fixed in the paradise of God. It is more, perhaps, than we are authorized to infer, that the wicked will "see" those who are in paradise. That they will "know" that they are there is certain; but we are not to suppose that they will be so near together as to be seen, or as to make conversation possible. **These circumstances mean that there will be "a separation," and that the wicked in hell will be conscious** that the righteous, though on earth they were poor or despised, will be in heaven. **Heaven and hell will be far from each other, and it will be no small part of the misery of the one that it is far and forever removed from the other.**

[Luke 16:24](#)

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.

Father Abraham - The Jews considered it a signal honor that Abraham was their "father" - that is, that they were "descendants" from him. Though this man was now in misery, yet he seems not to have abandoned the idea of his relation to the father of the faithful. The Jews supposed that departed spirits might know and converse with each other. See Lightfoot on this place. **Our Saviour speaks in conformity with that prevailing opinion; and as it was not easy to convey ideas about the spiritual world without some such representation, he, therefore, speaks in the language which was usual in his time. We are not, however, to suppose that this was "literally" true, but only that it was designed to represent more clearly the sufferings of the rich man in hell.**

Have mercy on me - Pity me. The rich man is not represented as calling on "God." The mercy of God will be at an end when the soul is lost. Nor did he "ask" to be released from that place. Lost spirits "know" that their sufferings will have no end, and that it would be in vain to ask to escape the place of torment. Nor does he ask to be admitted where Lazarus was. He had no "desire" to be in a holy place, and he well knew that there was no restoration to those who once sink down to hell.

Send Lazarus - This shows how low he was reduced, and how the circumstances of people change when they die. Just before, Lazarus was laid at his gate full of sores; now he is happy in heaven. Just before, he had nothing to give, and the rich man could expect to derive no benefit from him; now he asks, as the highest favor, that he might come and render him relief. Soon **the poorest man on earth, if he is a friend of God, will have mercies which the rich, if unprepared to die, can never obtain.** The rich will no longer despise such people; they would "then" be glad of their friendship, and would beg for the slightest favor at their hands.

Dip the tip ... - This was a small favor to ask, and it shows the greatness of his distress when so small a thing would be considered a great relief.

Cool my tongue - The effect of great "heat" on the body is to produce almost insupportable thirst. Those who travel in burning deserts thus suffer inexpressibly when they are deprived of water. So "pain" of any kind produces thirst, and particularly if connected with fever. The sufferings of the rich man are, therefore, represented as producing burning "thirst," so much that even a drop of water would be refreshing to his tongue. We can scarce form an idea of more distress and misery than where this is continued from one day to another without relief. We are not to suppose that he had been guilty of any particular wickedness with his "tongue" as the cause of this. It is simply an idea to represent the natural effect of great suffering, and especially suffering in the midst of great heat.

I am tormented - I am in anguish - in insupportable distress.

In this flame - The lost are often represented as suffering "in flames," because "fire" is an image of the severest pain that we know. It is not certain, however, that the wicked will be doomed to suffer in "material" fire. See the notes at [Mark 9:44](#).

[Luke 16:25](#)

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Son - This is a representation designed to correspond with the word "father." He was a descendant of Abraham a Jew - and Abraham is represented as calling this thing to his

remembrance. It would not lessen his sorrows to remember that he was a "son" of Abraham, and that he ought to have lived worthy of that relation to him.

Remember - This is a cutting word in this place. One of the chief torments of hell will be the "remembrance" of what was enjoyed and of what was done in this world. Nor will it be any mitigation of the suffering to spend an "eternity" where there will be nothing else to do, day or night, but to "remember" what "was" done, and what "might have been," if the life had been right.

Thy good things - That is, property, splendor, honor.

Evil things - Poverty, contempt, and disease.

But now ... - How changed the scene! How different the condition!

And how much "better" was the portion of Lazarus, after all, than that of the rich man! It is probable that Lazarus had the most "real" happiness in the land of the living, for riches without the love of God can never confer happiness like the favor of God, even in poverty.

But **the comforts of the rich man are now gone forever, and the joys of Lazarus have just commenced.** "One" is to be comforted, and "the other" to be tormented, to all eternity.

How much better, therefore, is poverty, with the friendship of God, than riches, with all that the world can bestow! And how foolish to seek our chief pleasures only in this life!

[Luke 16:26](#)

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 thence.
A great gulf –

The word translated "gulf" means chasm, or the broad, yawning space between two elevated objects.

In this place it means that there is no way of passing from one to the other.

Fixed - Strengthened - made firm or immovable. It is so established that it will never be movable or passable. **It will forever divide heaven and hell.**

Which would pass - We are not to press this passage literally, as if those who are in heaven would "desire" to go and visit the wicked in the world of woe. The simple meaning of the statement is, that there can be no communication between the one and the other - there can be no passing from one to the other. It is impossible to conceive that the righteous would desire to leave their abodes in glory to go and dwell in the world of woe; nor can we suppose that they would wish to go for any reason unless it were possible to furnish relief. That will be out of the question. Not even a drop of water will be furnished as a relief to the sufferer.

Neither can they pass to us ... - There can be no doubt that the wicked will desire to pass the gulf that divides them from heaven. They would be glad to be in a state of happiness; but all such wishes will be vain. How, in the face of the solemn statement of the Saviour here, can people believe that there will be a "restoration" of all the wicked to heaven? He solemnly assures us that there can be no passage from that world of woe to the abodes of the blessed; yet, in the face of this, many Universalists hold that hell will yet be vacated of its guilty millions, and that all its miserable inhabitants will be received to heaven! Who shall conduct them across this gulf, when Jesus Christ says it cannot be passed? Who shall build a bridge over that yawning chasm which he says is "fixed?" No: if there is anything certain from the Scripture, it is that they who enter hell return no more; they who sink there sink forever.

Luke 16:27

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: Five brethren - The number "five" is mentioned merely to preserve the appearance of verisimilitude in the story. It is not to be spiritualized, nor are we to suppose that it has any hidden or inscrutable meaning.

May testify unto them - May bear "witness" to them, or may inform them of what is my situation, and the dreadful consequences of the life that I have led. It is remarkable that he did not ask to go himself. He knew that he could not be released, even for so short a time. His condition was fixed. Yet he had no wish that his friends should suffer, and he supposed that if one went from the dead they would hear him.

Luke 16:28

For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Luke 16:29

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. They have Moses - The writings of Moses. The first five books of the Bible.

The prophets - The remainder of the Old Testament. What the prophets had written.

Hear them - Hear them speak in the Scriptures. Read them, or hear them read in the synagogues, and attend to what they have delivered.

Luke 16:30

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.
Nay - No. They will not hear Moses and the prophets. They have heard them so long in vain, that there is no prospect now that they will attend to the message; but if one should go to them directly from the eternal world they would hear him. The novelty of the message would attract their attention, and they would listen to what he would say.

Luke 16:31

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Be persuaded - Be convinced of the truth; of the danger and folly of their way; of the certainty of their suffering hereafter, and be induced to turn from sin to holiness, and from Satan unto God.

From this impressive and instructive parable we may learn:

1. That the souls of people do not die with their bodies.
2. That the soul is "conscious" after death; that it does not "sleep," as some have supposed, until the morning of the resurrection.
3. That the righteous are taken to a place of happiness immediately at death, and the wicked consigned at once to misery.
4. That wealth does not secure from death.

"How vain are riches to secure

Their haughty owners from the grave!"

The rich, the beautiful, the happy, as well as the poor, go down to the grave. All their pomp and apparel, all their honors, their palaces, and their gold cannot save them. Death can as easily find his way into the splendid mansions of the rich as into the cottages of the poor; and the rich shall turn to the same corruption, and soon, like the poor, be undistinguished from common dust and be unknown.

5. We should not envy the condition of the rich.

"On slippery rocks I see them stand,

And fiery billows roll below.

"Now let them boast how tall they rise,
I'll never envy them again;
There they may stand with haughty eyes,
Till they plunge deep in endless pain.
"Their fancied joys how fast they flee!
Like dreams, as fleeting and as vain;
Their songs of softest harmony.
Are but a prelude to their pain."

6. We should strive for a better inheritance than can be possessed in this life.

"Now I esteem their mirth and wine.
Too dear to purchase with my blood:
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine -
My life, my portion, and my God."

7. The sufferings of the wicked in hell will be indescribably great. Think what is represented by "torment;" by burning flame; by insupportable thirst; by that state where a single "drop" of water would afford relief. Remember that "all this" is but a representation of the pains of the damned, and that this will have no intermission day or night, but will continue from year to year, and age to age, without any end, and you have a faint view of the sufferings of those who are in hell.

8. There is a place of sufferings beyond the grave a hell. If there is not, then this parable has no meaning. It is impossible to make "anything" of it unless it be designed to teach that.

9. There will never be any escape from those gloomy regions. There is a gulf fixed - "fixed," not movable. Nor can any of the damned beat a pathway across this gulf to the world of holiness.

10. We see the amazing folly of those who suppose there may be an "end" to the sufferings of the wicked, and who, on that supposition, seem willing to go down to hell to suffer a long time, rather than go at once to heaven. If man were to suffer but a thousand years, or even "one" year, why should he be so foolish as to choose that suffering rather than go at once to heaven, and be happy at once when he dies?

11. God gives us sufficient warning to prepare for death. He has sent his Word, his servants, his Son; he warns us by his Spirit and his providence; by the entreaties of our friends and by the death of sinners; he offers us heaven, and he threatens hell. If all this will not move sinners, what would do it? There is nothing that would.

12. God will give us nothing farther to warn us. No dead man will come to life to tell us of what he has seen. If he did we would not believe him. Religion appeals to man not by ghosts and frightful apparitions. It appeals to their reason, their conscience, their hopes, their fears. It sets life and death soberly before people, and if they "will not" choose the former, they must die. If you will not hear the Son of God and the warnings of the Scriptures, there is nothing which you will or can hear. You will never be persuaded, and will never escape the place of torment.

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

16:19-31 Here the spiritual things are represented, in a description of the different state of good and bad, in this world and in the other. We are not told that the rich man got his estate by fraud, or oppression; but Christ shows, that a man may have a great deal of the wealth, pomp, and pleasure of this world, yet perish for ever under God's wrath and curse. **The sin of this rich man was his providing for himself only.** Here is a godly man, and one that will hereafter be happy for ever, in the depth of adversity and distress. **It is often the lot of some of the dearest of God's saints and servants to be greatly afflicted in this world.** We are not told that the rich man did him any harm, but we do not find that he had any care for him. Here is the different condition of this godly poor man, and this wicked rich man, at and after death. The rich man in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment.

It is not probable that there are discourses between glorified saints and damned sinners, but this dialogue shows the hopeless misery and fruitless desires, to which condemned spirits are brought. There is a day coming, when those who now hate and despise the people of God, would gladly receive kindness from them.

But **the damned in hell shall not have the least abatement of their torment.** Sinners are now called upon to remember; but they do not, they will not, they find ways to avoid it.

As wicked people have good things only in this life, and at death are for ever separated from all good, so godly people have evil things only in this life, and at death they are for ever put from them.

In this world, blessed be God, there is no gulf between a state of nature and grace, we may pass from sin to God; but if we die in our sins, there is no coming out.

The rich man had five brethren, and would have them stopped in their sinful course; their coming to that place of torment, would make his misery the worse, who had helped to show them the way thither. How many would now desire to recall or to undo what they have written or done! Those who would make the rich man's praying to Abraham justify praying to saints departed, go far to seek for proofs, when the mistake of a damned sinner is all they can find for an example. And surely there is no encouragement to follow the example, when all his prayers were made in vain.

A messenger from the dead could say no more than what is said in the Scriptures. The same strength of corruption that breaks through the convictions of the written word, would triumph over a witness from the dead.

Let us seek to the law and to the testimony, Isa 8:19,20, for that is the sure word of prophecy, upon which we may rest, **2 Peter 1:19:**

And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,

Circumstances in every age show that no terrors, or arguments, can give true repentance without the special grace of God renewing the sinner's heart.

Expositor's Greek Testament

[Luke 16:19-31](#). *Parable of the rich man and Lazarus*. This story is hardly a parable in the sense of illustrating by an incident from natural life a truth in the spiritual sphere. Both story and moral belong to the same sphere. What is the moral? If Jesus spoke, or the evangelist reported, this story as the complement of the parable of the unfaithful steward, then for Speaker or reporter the moral is: see what comes of neglecting to make friends of the poor by a beneficent use of wealth. **Looking to the end of this second "parable," Luke 16:31, and connecting that with Luke 16:17, we get as the lesson: the law and the prophets a sufficient guide to a godly life.** Taking the first part of the story as the main thing ([Luke 16:19-26](#)), and connecting it with the reflection in [Luke 16:15](#) about that which is lofty among men, the resulting aim will be to exemplify by an impressive imaginary example the reversal of positions in this and the next world: the happy here the damned there, and *vice versâ*. In that case the parable simply pictorially sets forth the *fact* of reversal, not its ground. If with some (Weizsäcker, Holtzmann, Feine, J. Weiss) we cut the story into two, an original part spoken by Jesus and an addition by a later hand, it will have two morals, the one just indicated, and another connecting eternal perdition with the neglect of the law and prophets by a worldly unbelieving Judaism, and eternal salvation with the pious observance of the law by the poor members of the Jewish-Christian Church. On this view *vide* J. Weiss in Meyer.

MISC.

- Short term spend vs long term investing
- Reflection precedes celebration
- "What do you want?" - Jesus
- **All we need is what we ALL need - "truth in love."** - JDP

- This life is a split second, pregame warm up act... for the “eternal game” - a never-ending, VERY interactive (for better or worse), reality.
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17

*** Think about the divides that we’ve crossed... city, culture, country, continents... outer space... BUT...

*** **There is ONE uncrossable chasm...**

Context:

- Jesus is Creator Christ
 - > Genesis 1:1
 - > John 1:1ff (summary)
- Gospels are His “truth in love”
 - > Define “gospel” on 2 levels
 - ~ General “good news”
 - ~ God’s gracious “Good News”
 - > Message & methods of Christ...
 - > Preaching, power, principles, & parables...

> m M m

Noteworthy:

1. A Great Chasm
2. Clouds Without Water
3. The Simple Truth
4. Surrender To Victory
5. No Salvation Without Surrender

Great CONTEXT

- God's Word
 - > Luke
 - > Luke 16
 - > Parable
- God's Will
 - > 5 Great C's
 - > Hear, Heed, Herald
- God's Ways
 - > Truth in love
 - > Go
 - > D3

> Acts 1:8...

I. Great CONTRAST

- Lost vs Found
- Self vs Savior
- Heaven vs Hell
- Apathy vs Sympathy
- Consumption vs Compassion
- Greed & Gluttony vs Grace & Godly
- Sumptuously vs Scarcely
- Royal-threads vs Tattered-rags
- Purple vs Putrid
- Healthy vs Hurting
- Builder vs Beggar
- Comfortable vs Crumbling
- Standing vs Laying
- Feasting vs Fasting
- Daily Abundance vs Deadly Agony
- Chefs vs Crumbs
- Envy vs Empty
- Independence vs Dependence
- Buried vs Carried (symbolic)
- Tormented vs Treasured
- Looking up vs Looking down (S)
- Far off vs By his side
-

19 "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

II. Great COMFORT (now or later)

24 And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.

III. Great CHASM

26 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 be able, and none may cross from there to us.'

IV. Great CONSEQUENCES

27 And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house- 28 for I have five brothers-so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'

V. Great Clarity

- Start with Gen. 1:1 & John 1:1
- Next... Genesis 3 & John 3
- Then... 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- And... Ephesians 2:1-10
- Finally... 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

29 But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'

Great CONFUSION

30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 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.'" Luke 16:19-31

Great CHRIST (closing)

*** See in the parable's closing crescendo:

- God's Word, will, & ways!
- Romans 10:8-17!!!
- Great C's!!!
- Unbelief is NEVER satisfied! - JDP
- See again: m M m (need miracle)
- Notice... ***** Many who argue and reject truth in love here... even when it's shared from heaven, will continue to do so in hell. - JDP (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4 & 1 Cor. 2:14)

Text:

1. Let me give you a great tip on a guaranteed investment!
2. The Reality of Eternity
3. What Do You Want
4. The Eternal Fork In The Road
5. Listen UP... Or Die-Down
6. The dogs came because the people didn't!
7. It's Almost Too Late
8. Unbelief Is NEVER Satisfied

9. But Wait... There's More

> John 3... 3,16,36

> m M m

*** Praise God for the pig pen!

Key Thoughts & Observations:

A. Life & death are both temporary & eternal

B. Death is everyone's doorway into
their eternity. - JDP

C. Death's door has only 2 destinations

D. "A great chasm has been fixed"

E. Heaven & hell are the 2-sides of the eternity-coin...

F. God is real and Creator of all reality

G. God has really spoken & clarified...

H. The human problem is more heart than hearing. - JDP

I. "carried by the angels..."

J. "in Hades, being in torment" (do
word study)

K. "have mercy on me & send Laz..."

L. "for I am in anguish in this flame..."

M. "he is comforted here and you are
in anguish"

N. "between you and us..." (chasm)

O. "no one may pass/cross"

P. "Then I beg you..."

Q. "warn them, lest they come into this
place of torment"

R. Jesus gives us divine insight into what happens after we
die... and He says the bottom line comes down, not to more

persuasive evidence, but miraculous, faithful obedience.
(See m M m)

S. Death is indifferent to demographics - JDP

T. Per God's grace & Gospel, the
angels were Laz's pallbearers

U. This passage annihilates annihilationism! - JDP

V. See Revelation 14:9-11 for the presence of God in His
wrath and judgment amongst those in hell

W. Rich man calls to father Abraham which shows head
knowledge and moral respect... but no transformation. (QT.
"There will be many theologians in hell." - John MacArthur)...
See Head, Heart, Hands collective necessity.

X. Note lack of rich man's repentance & his self-focus in this
passage...

Y. Worldly sorrow vs Christlike sorrow? See Scripture's
contrast of worldly vs. godly sorrow per Paul & David in
Ps.51. QT: "If you want a Savior from hell BUT not a Savior
FROM our sin(s), we will have a savior from neither!" - Justin
Peters

Z. No second chances... man dies once and faces judgment...
no such thing as purgatory!

A1. Romans 10:9-17 = application of Luke 16:24-31!!! (cf. 2
Timothy 3:16-17 to affirm this point).

B1. How much money did he leave behind??? (A question in
the text AND amongst some here today...) The answer in
both cases is the same... ALL of it!

C1. "What people value highly is detestable in God's sight."
Luke ?:?

D1. Luke 9ff = travel narrative (Jesus on His way to the
cross)

E1. This passage/parable is in the context of 3 that address money...

F1. Christian grieving is often deepened because of the eternal and torturous grieving that we know the lost souls are now forever embroiled in. - JDP

G1. When you carry your cross to gate of eternity, God will exchange it for a crown as you come into Heaven. - JDP

H1. Connect other KEY PASSAGES:

- The rich young ruler
- MONEY IS NOT THE PROBLEM!
- The LOVE of money is the sin and problem...
- FYI... a love for the byproduct of money is the same thing! - JDP
- It's easier for a camel to get thru the eye of a needle, than a rich man to get into Heaven...
- Acts 5: manipulative giving...
- Judas looked good, trusted treasurer - responsible for all the \$
- Demas got caught up with the wants & worries of this world...
- See 7 churches of Rev. 2-3
- Birds have nests and foxes have holes...
- WHAT DO YOU WANT?
- Today is the day... repent/believe
- Titus 1:5; 2:1; 2:15
- John 3:3; 3:16; 3:36

I1. Eternally speaking... you can have EVERYTHING and NOTHING at the same time... Conversely, when it comes to this world and this lifetime... you can have what appears to

be NOTHING... while having EVERYTHING... of true & lasting value!

- Its the difference between spending in the short term or investing for the long...
- What do you REALLY have?
- What do you REALLY want?

*** The 12 Signatures of Surrender: ***

- Grace
- Truth
- Love
- Worship
- Faith
- Obedience
- Peace
- Joy
- Fruitful
- Missional
- Discipleship
- Witness

Dustin Bengel:

We're all susceptible to deception. Our only defense: 1. Live in the Bible. 2. Pursue sound doctrine. 3. Test all things with Scripture. 4. Exercise biblical discernment. 5. Don't jump to conclusions. 6. Seek wise, godly counsel. 7. Pray without ceasing.

Walk thru The FUNDAMENTALS... especially the Facts, Fight, Faith, Family, & Forever

*** The American dream is a spiritual nightmare. - JDP

***** One man's short term hopes & dreams are another man's scraps & crumbs... Yet, (don't miss this...) the second man's humble blessings, in and thru all of ETERNITY, can and WILL become the first man's haunting nightmares. - JDP *****

Always chasing & faking...

Last will be first & first will be last...

Exalted humbled, humbled exalted