

## Parables of Luke, Lesson 2, January 14, 2020

**Lk. 16:19-31** another chapter that is unique to Luke.

Many ways we could title this: Reluctant witness from Hell; The great reversal; How to think you're going to heaven and end up in hell; etc.

A very important parable because most people in western culture or who have been exposed to Christianity think they are going to heaven.

90% of Americans believe in God; they mostly all think they are going to heaven.

Hell will be populated mostly by people who are shocked to find themselves there.

The world is dominated by religious people; therefore, hell will be dominated by religious people.

Remember last week, the mindless got in, the stupid got in, the heinous and rebellious got in, the least likely who was closest to the father, but not close enough never repented.

Hell is going to be populated by religious people: **Mt. 7:21-23; Jn. 8:21-24**

This is the story of a religiously approved man who is shocked to find himself in hell.

Hell is the place of the most profound suffering, compounded infinitely by the fact that it lasts forever; it will never ever change.

This is a story of a man who went to that place: **Luke 16:19-21**

### **1. The rich man is a blessed and godly man in the eyes of that culture.**

The Pharisees along with the friends of Job were the first promoters of a prosperity gospel: "If you're walking with the Lord, you will be rich, healthy, and have everything you want."

It is a hellish doctrine and those who promote it and subscribe to it, are in danger of Hell itself.

What happens to you in this life may have no relationship to how you are living or what God thinks of you.

### **Lk. 16:14-15**

**Lk. 18:25-26** – They had no concept that the rich weren't going to heaven.

The Pharisees and those who followed their doctrine were this rich man.

### **2. This is a story of extreme contrasts.**

A poor man becomes rich forever and a rich man becomes poor forever.

A poor man who suffers in this life and is blessed in the next and a rich man who has bountiful blessings, but suffers in the next life.

Starts with the poor man on the outside and rich man on the inside and ends the opposite way.

### **3. The story breaks into three parts: Life, Death, Life after Death.**

#### **John 12:37- "people believe miracles and not the Word of God"**

1. Life – V.19 – This is extreme wealth; he was always decked out in the most expensive clothing.

The culture would label him blessed by God and certain to go to heaven. Heaven had marked him as its own, in their minds.

V. 20 – This is the other extreme; the word for poor in the Greek here means to have literally nothing to your name.

## Parables of Luke, Lesson 2, January 14, 2020, Continued

Extreme poverty and extreme illness; "laid at the gate" literally means to be dumped there. It implies he had no way to get himself there or away from there; he's disabled in some way.

Extreme hunger – V.21 – These weren't crumbs but chunks of molded bread; in a wealthy home they would keep the old bread to wipe their hands on.

2. Death – V. 22 – If Jesus paused here, the Pharisees and the average person who was listening would have thought, "of course, now he goes to hell to continue his torment", but that's not what happens!

3. Life after Death -- Where Jesus says he goes is the last thing they would have thought would happen!

Abraham's bosom refers to the place he's seated at the feast of God; remember, your rank was determined by how close you sat to the guest of honor.

The rich man – V. 23 – "In Hades"

The same torment awaits those who die outside of Christ, who reject faith in God.

"**lifted up his eyes**" is a statement of self-realization; it's like he's finally awake for the first time! This is not what he thought would happen, not what he was told would happen.

The saved are immediately in conscious bliss and fellowship; the unsaved are immediately in conscious torment.

V. 24 – "Father"? He's a Jew, aren't all Jews saved? So he thought.

"have mercy on me" – amazing, the merciless one now wants mercy!

VV. 25-26 – No mention of rescue or repentance of any kind here; no word of how wrong he was or how sorry. Hell is not remedial; it doesn't fix anyone; it crystalizes who you were in this life.

A place where one suffers so profoundly that the tiniest drop of water would mean everything to you.

"A great gulf" – Both situations are permanent ones; those in Hell never go to heaven and vice versa. It's fixed, no second chances, no relief, no hope.

**VV. 27-28** – He's concerned about his brothers, since there is no going to hell to rescue, maybe there is a way back to earth to warn them.

**VV. 29-31** - Don't you agree? Isn't there something in you that says "if God would just do some big miracles, everybody would get saved." "If God would heal my loved one, I would get saved." "If God would change my circumstances, I would get saved."

The greatest evidence of the reality of God is His Word.

Some may be tempted to think that God is cruel by not pulling out all the stops and working some kind of global miracle so people will get saved. He's not doing it because He knows it won't work. **I**

**Cor. 10:1-5; Jn. 12:37-38**

**Rom. 1:18-21; 28; 32** – It's not that they don't know; it's not that the most powerful communication of God isn't in place either. **Heb. 4:12**

Abraham is right! The sword that divides the saved and the lost is people's response to God's written Word!

The word of God is sufficient; Abraham says it, Jesus says it, the testimony of history says it. **Heb. 4:1-3** (they had seen all the miracles, but refused to trust God)