

Our Mission:

To share Christ with the world
and grow disciples for Jesus



Loving God and Loving Neighbor as Ourselves

Background:

We must remember that in Jesus's day wealth and poverty were recognized as signs of God's blessing or lack thereof. Yet, there was an obligation of those who had been blessed to 'tithe' toward the assistance of those without means. We might remember the covenant God made with Abraham, blessed in order to be a blessing toward the nations (people). The rich man in this story is unable to see Lazarus beyond the full platter on his own table, and for that reason there is an accounting..

Theology Connection:

In this parable, it is interesting that the one who society would not name is given one, and the one who would be well-known is nameless. The wealthy man even in his torment continues to imagine that he gets to call the shots, ordering Lazarus to serve him by either quenching his desires or warning his siblings of their impending doom. Of course, Father Abraham's words are chilling, as he warns that not even the rising of someone dead can convince us to give up a self-absorbed lifestyle.

Application:

We are warned throughout scriptures that the love of money is destructive. When we put a price tag on everything including relationships, we begin to see our soul atrophy. In Denmark, they make 'happiness' the goal rather than financial success. They have discovered that financial well-being can contribute to happiness but is not the ultimate source of such. Are we happy? Are we content or do we find ourselves constantly striving for what we do not have? Does our desire for 'success' blind us to the values of the Kingdom?

The Text: Luke 16: 19-31

¹⁹"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day.

²⁰At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²"The time came when the beggar died, and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.

²³In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

²⁵"But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'²⁷"He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

²⁹"Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'³⁰"No, Father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

³¹"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

ADULT

Jesus tells stories with the hope that we will find ourselves within the narrative. Where do you find yourself in this narrative? Does it cause you to rethink how you have chosen to live life? Or perhaps, we really don't feel we have had a choice, that we cannot swim against the tide. The Christian lifestyle has always been at odds with the ways of the world. What might that mean for us this season of Lent?

YOUTH

Please read Luke 16:19-31

Sometimes there are reasons why we do things in a certain order. Like we don't put our shoes on before our socks. This story is a great example of why we should put God first in our hearts. Sometimes we can get confused and rearrange the order of importance. Have you ever put money first? Have you ever thought you could buy your way to heaven?

For example, if I donate more to the church can I buy my way to heaven? The man in this Gospel seemed to think so. It's easy to get distracted and forget to put God as our number one focus. Have you ever put yourself ahead of God?

The bible reminds us that it isn't about our things we own but the love in our hearts and putting God first and living in his example.

Let us pray,

Dear God Thank you for your examples we read over and over in the bible of your unwavering and unconditional love. Please help us keep you as our focus. In Jesus name we pray: Amen.

CHILDREN'S

Read and Summarize:

This story that Jesus told was about a rich man, and a poor man whose name was Lazarus. Jesus said that the rich man lived a wonderful, easy life on this earth. He wore clothes that were purple and made of fine linen. This man ate what he wanted and lived in a fine house and had a wonderful life.

There was also a beggar named Lazarus. Lazarus had an extremely hard life, he had big sores all over his body and could not help himself. He relied on kind people to lay him by the gate where rich people would see him and perhaps give him something. He wanted to eat what fell from the rich man's table, but his desire was ignored. Dogs would even come and lick his sores! One day the beggar died, and an angel carried him to a place of comfort. The rich man also died and was buried, he saw that Lazarus was with Abraham. The rich man cried out to Abraham, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip his finger in water that he may cool my tongue, for I am tormented by this flame." But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime, you received many good things and Lazarus received bad things. Now, Lazarus is comforted, and you are tormented."

1. What did you learn from this story?

Remember:

We need to read God's Word and learn how to live and behave, so that we may one day live in the place of comfort.

To do:

Come up with your very own prayer of thanks!