

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17 & Luke 16:19-31
Singing: 391:1-4 – 40:5-6 – 135:1-5 – 65:1-4 – 31:4, 6, 7

Intro: *If only one would rise from the dead ... I would believe (Luke 16:29)*

Five Questions in Jesus' Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

I. Is your wealth corrupting you? (19-21)

- A. The Bible does not condemn material possessions
1. Increase of possessions thru honest trade/work is God's promise (Prov 10:4; 12:24)
 2. Yet each increase also increases the temptation in riches (1 Tim. 6:9)
- B. Failing to use our riches to enrich the poor is *criminal* (James 5:1-6)
1. Wickedness is also to *neglect the poor* (Job 24:7-10; Is. 58:5-12)
 2. Godliness is also to *serve the needy* (Job 29:12-17)

II. Are you defining blessedness as Jesus defines it? (vs. 20-22)

- A. The rich man defined his blessedness wrong
1. He was mastered by the material and ignored the spiritual
- B. By outward standards Lazarus was to be pitied
1. His circumstances contrasted with his name
 2. His death brought him security and comfort of heaven (vs. 22)
- C. Challenge: *How would you finish, "I will be blessed when ...?"*

III Are you ready to die and meet your Maker?

- A. Death comes to all and every kind of people (Ps. 49)
- B. Death is not the "end but merely the beginning" of heaven or hell (vs. 22)
- C. Are u ready to meet your Maker *now?* (Eccl. 12:1; Ps. 2:11-12)

IV. Do you actually believe in hell?

A. Clearly, rich man did not quite believe it (vs. 28)

1. Hell is *the total separation from God sealed forever* (vs. 26) and a place of torment (vs. 23-24)

2. In hell, one word will never cease to embitter: *Remember* (vs. 25)

3. Hell does not bring an ounce of *repentance*

a. his apparent concern for his brothers is not compassion (vs. 28)

b. his implied argument is a smoke-screen excuse (vs. 30)

B. Take a deep and close look at this rich man's spiritual portrait: *is he you?*

V. Are you a spiritual beggar like Lazarus?

A. Lazarus remained a beggar, yet he was brought to heaven!

1. This does not teach that *the (economic) poor* are heaven-bound

2. This illustrates the life of grace: *we become and remain beggars*

B. Are we such *spiritual beggars* like Lazarus was a beggar?

1. Lazarus felt his sores, needs and rags

2. Lazarus felt his helplessness and hopelessness in his condition

3. Lazarus daily laid at the 'rich man's door'

C. God declares: *The LORD takes pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in His mercy*

1. What is to fear Him?

2. What is it to hope in His mercy?

3. What does it mean that the LORD takes pleasure in such?

Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Phil. 1:6