

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon May 24, 2020

Luke 16: 19-31 – “The Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man – Part 2”

14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. 15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. 16 The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. 17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail. 18 Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery." 19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 Then 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.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' 27 Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' 29 Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

I. Introduction

- a. Calvin "...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 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."¹
 - i. Outside of Christ, this rich man remained unable to love others, unable to care for them and be inwardly motivated to help them. As we gaze upon his life and its outcome, do our souls ache and long to remain close to Christ, to avoid this outcome, this tragic trajectory? Do we long for those like him to be awakened their tragic trajectory?
- b. Today's Sermon: The Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man – Part 2
 - i. Their situations compared in this life v19-21 – last week

¹ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 184). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

- ii. Their situations compared in the afterlife v22,23 – today
 - iii. The Rich Man’s Pleading with Abraham from hell v24-31 – future
 - iv. Questions to know, love and obey Christ our Lord
- II. Lazarus and the Rich Man compared in this life v19-21
 - a. The self-focus and lack of compassion of the rich man are shockingly obvious to us as we hear Jesus tell this story, but the rich man himself didn’t see his own trajectory. Do we see our own trajectory accurately? Do we allow the wealth of others to blind us to the potential emptiness of their souls, the tragic trajectory of their lives?
 - b. The quiet suffering of Lazarus (covered with sores, unable to walk, alone, ignored, starving, licked by dogs) draws out our compassion, yet Lazarus was on his way to bliss. Do we rightly assess life according to what is valuable to God?
- III. Their situations compared in the afterlife v22,23
 - a. 22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
 - b. Lazarus at Abraham’s bosom v22
 - i. “So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom.”
 - ii. “The beggar” – As the world saw Lazarus.
 - iii. “The beggar died” – no mention of his burial. As if no one noticed that Lazarus was gone.
 - 1. Henry “Nothing is said of the interment of the poor man. They dug a hole any where, and tumbled his body in, without any solemnity; he was *buried with the burial of an ass*: nay, it is well if they that let the dogs lick his sores did not let them gnaw his bones.”²
 - 2. Yet, his grave-bed brought him into full and final relief and joy.
 - a. Henry “The beggar *died first*. God often takes godly people out of the world, when he leaves the wicked to flourish still. It was an advantage to the beggar that such a speedy end was put to his miseries; and, since he could find no other shelter or resting-place, he was *hid in the grave*, where the *weary are at rest*.”³
 - b. What is your attitude toward your approaching death?
 - iv. “was carried by the angels” – God noticed. The angels noticed. Once carried by those who would drop him on the ground outside the gates of the stingy rich man, now Lazarus is carried by God’s angels through the gates of heaven, inside God’s eternal generosity.

² Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1884). Peabody: Hendrickson.

³ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1884). Peabody: Hendrickson.

1. Henry “They are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, not only while they live, but when they die, and have a charge concerning them, to *bear them up in their hands*, not only in their journeys to and fro on earth, but in their great journey to their long home in heaven, to be both their guide and their guard through regions unknown and unsafe. The soul of man, if not chained to this earth and clogged by it as unsanctified souls are, has in itself an elastic virtue, by which it *springs upward* as soon as it gets clear of the body; but Christ will not trust those that are his to that, and therefore will send special messengers to fetch them to himself. One angel one would think sufficient, but here are more, as many were sent for Elijah. ... Saints ascend in the virtue of Christ’s ascension; but this convoy of angels is added for state and decorum. Saints shall be brought home, not only safely, but honourably. What were the bearers at the rich man’s funeral, though, probably, those of the first rank, compared with Lazarus’s bearers? The angels were not shy of touching him, for his sores were on his *body*, not on his *soul*; *that* was presented to God *without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing*.”⁴
- v. “to Abraham’s bosom” – Once only touched by licking dogs, now embraced in safety and affection.
 1. Bock “Abraham’s bosom was a place of blessing and represents the patriarch’s reception of the faithful into heaven. ...It may also be a more graphic way to speak of someone’s “being gathered to the fathers” (Gen. 15:15; 47:30; Deut. 31:16; Judg. 2:10; 1 Kings 1:21) Lazarus goes from being a lonely sufferer at the rich man’s gate to an accepted, blessed saint at the side of Judaism’s patriarch. ... Lazarus is at Abraham’s side in intimate fellowship.”⁵
 2. In addition, the reference to relational joy with Abraham would be an especially pointed rebuke to the Pharisees listening to this parable. They clung to their lineage connection to Father Abraham, yet they had no real closeness or affection for their ancestors in the faith, no real desire to honor them.
 - a. In what ways are we like these Pharisees, relying upon lineage instead of faith? How do we refuse to honor those in the faith who have gone before us?
- c. The rich man tormented in Hades v23
 - i. “The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”

⁴ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1884). Peabody: Hendrickson.

⁵ Bock, D. L. (1996). [*Luke: 9:51–24:53*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1368). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

- ii. Also = we all have the same destination in this life under the sun. We will all be placed in the dirt.
 - 1. Henry “Death is the common lot of rich and poor, godly and ungodly; there they meet together. One dieth *in his full strength*, and another in *the bitterness of his soul*; but they shall *lie down alike in the dust*, Job 21:26. Death favours not either the rich man for his riches or the poor man for his poverty. Saints die, that they may bring their sorrows to an end, and may enter upon their joys. Sinners die, that they may go to give up their account. It concerns both rich and poor to prepare for death, for it waits for them both. ...—*Death blends the sceptre with the spade*...With equal pace, impartial fate, Knocks at the palace, as the cottage gate.”⁶
 - 2. This text calls us to consider our coming death. In your mind this morning, be thinking, “What awaits me when I die? Where goes my soul once parted from this flesh?”
- iii. Was buried = people buried this man. His death was noticed. His life was remembered. He had a funeral and a eulogy, and his earthly friends and family publicly mourned him. Did any of them understand the torment the rich man was experiencing as they gathered at his funeral?
 - 1. Henry “But the rich man had a pompous funeral, lay in state, had a train of mourners to attend him to his grave, and a stately monument set up over it; probably he had a funeral oration in praise of him, and his generous way of living, and the good table he kept, which those would commend that had been feasted at it.”⁷
- iv. “Being in torment in Hades”
 - 1. Torment =
 - a. a touchstone, which is a black stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal
 - b. the rack or instrument of torture by which one is forced to divulge the truth
 - c. torture, torment, acute pains
 - i. of the pains of a disease
 - ii. of those in hell after death
 - 2. Can there be a greater contrast in the life of one person? In one instant, the rich man goes from comfort to torment. The shock!
 - 3. Hades

⁶ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1884). Peabody: Hendrickson.

⁷ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1884). Peabody: Hendrickson.

- a. Bock “The rich man is in torment in Hades, the place in the OT (ליאֵשׁ, *šē-ōl*, Sheol) and in Judaism where the dead were gathered (Ps. 16:10; 86:13). The righteous ...and unrighteous (Ps. Sol. 14:6, 9–10; 15:10) both reside there, though they are separated from one other...”⁸
 - v. He lifted up his eyes and saw two things afar off
 - 1. Abraham – The one in whom he said he trusted. But, turns out, the rich man was no friend of Abraham during earthly life, and this reality is now on full display.
 - 2. Lazarus in Abraham’s embrace – The loss of relationship with God is also a loss of relationship with all those good saints who’ve gone before us.
 - 3. Heightening and intensifying his torment
 - a. Suddenly, in a single moment, the rich man understands himself accurately. He is an enemy of God, of the saints and is thus a stranger, forever alone and rejected.
 - 4. Bock “Death permanently changes everything. A reversal occurs as the rich man looks up and sees Lazarus at Abraham’s side, a situation vividly displayed with the present tense”⁹
 - a. This rich man’s eternally unchanging state.
 - 5. Henry “He now began to consider what was become of Lazarus. He does not find him where he himself is, nay, he plainly sees him, and with as much assurance as if he had seen him with his bodily eyes, afar off in the bosom of Abraham. This same aggravation of the miseries of the damned we had before (*ch. 13:28*): *Ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.* [1.] He saw *Abraham afar off*. To see Abraham we should think a pleasing sight; but to see him afar off was a tormenting sight. Near himself he saw devils and damned companions, frightful sights, and painful ones; afar off he saw Abraham. Note, Every sight in hell is aggravating. [2.] He saw *Lazarus in him bosom*. That same Lazarus whom he had looked upon with so much scorn and contempt, as not worthy his notice, he now sees preferred, and to be envied. The sight of him brought to his mind his own cruel and barbarous conduct towards him; and the sight of him in that happiness made his own misery the more grievous.”¹⁰

IV. The rich man’s pleading with Abraham from hell v24-31

- a. There is no hope once in hell, so listen now to the Word of God.

⁸ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1369). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁹ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1369). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

¹⁰ Henry, M. (1994). [Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume](#) (p. 1884). Peabody: Hendrickson.

V. Questions to know, love and obey Christ our Lord