

DEAD MEN

TALKING

LUKE 16:19-31

- **This lesson from Jesus has always been one of the more sobering lessons that I've ever encountered**
- **Through the inspired writers, we are revealed information about the afterlife, that we could have never known (some Biblical stories are audaciously real)**
- **The Bible asserts for instance, that when we all die we will go to "Hades"- a Greek word meaning "unseen" The Hebrew word for Hades is "Sheol,"- which means simply, "beyond."**
- **Therefore, a good phrase for us to remember when speaking of Hades is "the waiting room" of departed souls where we wait until the second coming of Christ**
- **The Pandemic has sent many to the waiting room**

- The rich man and Lazarus departed this life and went to two separate places in the unseen world
- Neither place could be entered from the other. The rich man asked for relief from Lazarus, just like Lazarus had asked for relief from the rich man while on earth (longing for just the crumbs please)
- There was a chasm (fixed gulf), that had been put into place that was uncrossable, verse 26
- The chasm then symbolizes the “reality of the finality of life!” THERE IS NO COMING BACK TO CHANGE OUR MINDS! (no re-do’s, excuses, no change in venue in spite of obvious sorrow)
- The discussion that these dead men had gives us some insight into our expectations of the afterlife

THE RICH MAN SPEAKS FIRST

- He first calls for “Father Abraham” to help him by sending Lazarus to his aid in his tormented state
- Many Jews related to their “blood lineage of Abraham religiously,” but didn’t live faithfully to God as did Abraham (will our plea to avoid torment be based on our parents’ relationship with God rather than ours?)
- Many today call themselves Christians, but are not interested in living like Christ (they may cry for “the family pack” like the rich man in the afterlife)
- If the Second Coming is not in this text (judgment day, Jesus and His angels), what is his “tormenting flame?”

ABRAHAM SPEAKS NEXT

LUKE 16:25

“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.’”

- I suggest to you that his torment was having to live in “the waiting room,” with his MEMORY of the foolishness of living a selfish life without compassion
- When we stand before God, we like the rich man, will be able to REMEMBER our past sins that condemn us
- Having our Memory is consistent with believing in the justice of Hell. We can’t conceive of a just God allowing men to suffer without knowing why (that’s one reason to reject reincarnation) That’s why we will be able to **REMEMBER!**
- However, Christians who have asked for and received God’s grace of forgiveness for their trespasses will inherit eternal life, Galatians 3:29, *“if ye be Christ’s.....”*

THE TORMENT OF A GOOD MEMORY!

- Imagine the pain of knowing of the dozens of opportunities you had to accept Christ through Repentance and Baptism, but you didn't
- Imagine the torment of knowing that you refused to say I'm sorry for years for "picking and choosing" when to be a Christian and when to live selfishly (like a light switch turns on and off, or "*I'll turn around at 50*")
- Imagine the torment of knowing that for years, you allowed public opinion to dictate how committed a Christian servant you would be
- No one will be condemned without knowing the charges **IN THEM!** (That would be in your memory)
- Therefore, the essence of the Rich Man's Misery was his **Memory!**

WHY WAS THE RICH MAN HERE?

- Money is not Jesus' problem with him. We have never read that Jesus suggested that poverty is closer to religion and wealth is closer to wickedness
- Money itself is “amoral.” It's like a knife, it can be used to slice a ham to eat or assault someone!

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.” Luke 16:10 NIV

“The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus (rolled their eyes, dismissing Him as hopelessly out of touch)” Luke 16:14 The MSG.

OBSERVATIONS

- Lazarus in this story represents an *opportunity* to serve **God**
- The rich man represents the neglect of that opportunity (in plain sight every day at his gate)
- All Lazarus desired were the food crumbs that were left from the rich man's meals (leftovers), but the rich man was so self centered that he did not care
- Beware when sinful habits and selfish ways become a way of life for you (that's just the way you roll)
- Even the dogs had more compassion, by licking the open sores of Lazarus, thereby bringing him comfort

When an animal's instincts override human apathy, beware

When your dog treats your spouse better..... beware

IS THE BIBLE SUFFICIENT ENOUGH FOR MAN TO ESCAPE THE RICH MAN'S DESTINY?

- The rich man suggests finally, that the problem with men is that they don't have adequate revelation
- After experiencing the agony of separation from God, the rich man seems repentant and wants Abraham to send Lazarus back to warn his family of their future
- He suggests that men would not be so selfish with their lives, if only someone could come back from the dead and tell them of their fate; verse 30
- I suggest to you, that this is a subtle way of blaming God for man's sinful dysfunction (*"if only God would give man more evidence, man would believe; but since a man does not have sufficient evidence, he remains in unbelief"*)

OBSERVATIONS

- Jesus, on the other hand says, if you seek you will find (Matthew 7:7), but the skeptic says, “ *I’m going to wait until I’m am bombarded with so many facts, and miracles, and wonders before I believe.*”
- God has already done that, and it got Jesus killed! Acts 2:22-26, “*Ye men of Israel hear these words....*”
- This is another position of raw selfishness and self indulgence on man’s part; Matthew 16:24-25
- Men don’t want to take any chances on giving up their sins until they are sure that there is a pay-off, but man doesn’t want the pay-off of sin, Romans 6:23
“And this is the condemnation (grounds for the sentence; AMP), that light is come into the world, and men LOVED darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

John 3:19

IS THE RICH MAN RIGHT?

- If Lazarus returned to the rich man's five brothers, they possibly could assume he was an impostor and try to kill him, for telling them their brother was in hell
- How could Lazarus prove that he was from the land of the dead? They would find all kinds of reasons to reject him, just as they did Christ
- Abraham seems harsh but makes it clear: if they will not hear Moses and the prophets, they will not listen to one from the dead; Luke 16:31
- If the Old Testament was sufficient (and Abraham says it is already), how much more is the New Testament sufficient to escape hell and gain heaven?

JOHN 5:39

“You study the scriptures diligently, because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very scriptures that testify about me, yet you REFUSE to come to me to have life.”

Coming to Christ is a matter of “Changing Wills”

Your Will For God’s Will!

Have These Dead Men Affected You Today?

What about the 500,000 COVID DEATHS?

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38