

Series: The Gospel of Luke

Sermon: A Shocking Reveal

**Passage: Luke 16:19-31 (ESV)**

Illustration:

Need: Jesus teaches on the inadequacy of religious self-righteousness and the reality of life after death.

### **I. Two Contrasting Characters (16:19-21)**

- #1 - an unnamed man of seemingly unlimited wealth and resources.
- #2 - a destitute, broken and outcast man named Lazarus ("God Helps"), NOT Mary & Martha's brother.
- This story has both the elements of a parable as well as an account of actual events.
- The Pharisees would have seen the riches as evidence of God's blessing on the righteous and the broken poverty as evidence of God's displeasure and judgment on sin.

### **II. Two Very Different Destinations (16:22-23)**

- #1 - Abraham's Side (bosom) = temporary location for the righteous dead awaiting vindication.
- Jesus defined Abraham's side (Paradise **Luke 23:43**) as a place of comfort, blessing, and rest.
- #2 - Hades/Hell = temporary location for the unrighteous/wicked dead awaiting judgment.
- Jesus defined Hades or Hell in terms of "torment, separation, anguish, and fire."
- Both men died. Lazarus was taken to Abraham's side but the rich man awoke in Hades.
- The Pharisees would have expected the men to arrive at opposite destinations.

### **III. Two Impossible Requests (16:24-30)**

- In Hell, the rich man was able to communicate with Abraham but not necessarily anyone else.
- He requested Lazarus to provide him a small relief which he was unwilling to do for Lazarus before.
- Abraham denied this request because of the great gulf between them.
- The rich man also requested that Lazarus return from the dead to warn his five brothers of his error.
- This request was also denied because it was not possible and would be ineffective.

### **IV. One Sobering Warning (16:31)**

- A humble, repentant response to the word of God is the only way to the righteousness that God provides.
- The Pharisees had traded God's word for their own traditions which is why they did not recognize or accept Jesus as Messiah.

### **V. Principles to take away:**

1. Earthly riches/security do not prove God's blessing and one's righteous standing with God.
2. An unrighteous heart is proven by one's lack of compassion for the needs of others.
3. The way of religious self-righteousness will result in eternal anguish.
4. True righteousness begins with repentance and faith in Jesus Messiah, embracing Him & His mission.
5. Followers of Jesus not only represent Him with the gospel message but also in our compassionate response to the needs of others.
6. Hell is a real place of anguish and torment and the destination of those who ignore God's clear word.
7. Heaven is also a real place but requires a righteousness from God that comes only through faith in Jesus.
8. The word of God is all one has or needs to understand and receive God's righteousness through Jesus.
9. To ignore the word of God is to ignore the God of the word and face His judgment.