

Luke 16:19-31

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[0:00] Y'all go ahead and grab your Bibles and turn to Luke chapter 16. We're going to be looking at what is commonly referred to as the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

So as TJ mentioned last week, we are currently on week two of a very short series on parables while the professionals are away. And I can tell you in full assurance that I am actually not a professional.

And I know that because I realized I don't have one Charles Spurgeon quote in this sermon. So please don't hold that against me. So last week, TJ, he spoke on the parable of the talents, did a great job.

And as Gary mentioned also this morning during the Lord's Supper service. And so this week we will be looking at the parable of the rich man and Lazarus again, Luke 16, 19 through 31.

Before we get in to the text, I do want to take just a few minutes to speak about what parables are. And at their heart, parables are short stories that are meant to convey truth about the kingdom of heaven.

[1:09] In the parables that Jesus tells, he would often use very familiar items, right? He would use very familiar situations to the people who are listening to him. He's trying to relate to them in a way that they can understand and make sense.

And the parables at their heart are comparison stories. You can know this very easily just by thinking about a couple of them. The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field. Or the kingdom of heaven is like a net, right? So you have that simile there, right? A comparison using like or as. So parables are at their core comparison stories.

Other parables are not as outright in their comparison. For instance, you have the parable of the sower and the seed, right? You have the sower and the seed and the different types of soil. And they're all meant to represent something different. So Jesus is comparing a very familiar situation to his hearers to explain and expound upon truths about the kingdom of heaven.

[2:06] And his parables often had a twist as well. And just a little spoiler alert. In our parable today, there will be a twist. So, but his stories often had twists.

There was something that the hearer was not expecting to hear. There was something that they were not expecting to come up against. Just another easy example is think about the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, right?

You have a Pharisee and you have a tax collector and they're both praying up at the temple. But Jesus says only one of those went home justified that day. And it wasn't the one you would think. It wasn't the dirty, nasty tax collector.

Or it wasn't the Pharisee. Sorry, excuse me. It was the tax collector, right? The guy that was on the lowest rung in society. He was the one that Jesus said went home justified because of his heart, right?

There was that twist that people weren't expecting. And he would have messages like that. And his hearers, there were times where they didn't like that. They didn't like that.

[3:06] Oftentimes, he was telling his stories in the presence of the Pharisees. And we'll see that again today. His main target audience in the parable today are the Pharisees. And these parables, as he's telling them, they can be difficult to understand, right?

That was true for the people who heard them for the first time, just like it's true for us today. And so the disciples, they asked Jesus in Matthew 13, 10. They said, why do you speak to them in parables? And Jesus replied to them in verse 11.

He said, to you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. But to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given. And he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables. Because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And he continues on in verse 16. He says, but blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous people long to see what you see, and did not see it.

[4:09] And to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. In short, these parables that Jesus tells, they show the spiritual blindness of the people who are listening to them.

It's only through the grace of God and the working of the Spirit in our lives that we have the capacity to understand Jesus' teachings here. So, if we do not have that Spirit at work inside of us, then we also will be blind to that truth, as are the Pharisees in these instances.

Another aspect of parables that make them so effective is that we as humans, we are generally drawn to stories. Think about how successful movies and books are. We are innately drawn to a good story.

And so, even Jesus' parables, for people who don't claim to follow Christ, they've worked their way into their common vernacular. You have the lost, the prodigal son. You have the good Samaritan. Everyone knows who the good Samaritan is. Everyone knows or has some concept of the prodigal son. Even people who don't claim Christ, right? So, Jesus' stories are memorable. They've lasted for thousands of years.

[5:14] And if you're like me, then you had probably a parent or a grandparent or somebody older than you, right? You get home. You got in trouble. Mom or dad, in my case, dad, would sit me down, you know, in the backyard.

I had a white, I was a baseball guy, so we had baseballs everywhere. I had a white bucket with a lid on it. And my dad would pull up that bucket. He'd say, all right, son, sit down. Great. Here we go. Right? My dad's about to launch into some long story I've probably heard a million times, you know. And he's going to teach me a lesson on that story. And you know what? He did. I can still remember him. Right?

I can remember my mom sitting down at the kitchen table telling me, you know, I better be thankful I wasn't in Catholic school getting my hands wrapped by the nuns. You know? I remember these things. I remember these things.

I had coaches. I played ball. So I had coaches that would tell all these stories from things and things that they have learned to help make me more successful as a player or as a coach. And so on a much grander and obviously much more important scale.

[6:13] Jesus is attempting to accomplish the same purpose with these parables. He is using a relatable story to teach the hearer a deeper truth about the kingdom of God.

And so with all of that said, let's get into the text. Luke 16, starting in verse 19 down to verse 31. There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus covered with sores who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table.

Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.

And in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out, Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue.

[7:17] For I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things and Lazarus in like manner bad things. But now he is comforted here and you are in anguish.

And besides all this, between us and you, a great chasm has been fixed in order that those who would pass from here to here to you may not be able and none may cross from there to us. And he said, Then I beg you, Father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them lest they also come into this place of torment.

But Abraham said, They have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them. And he said, No, Father Abraham. But if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.

He said to him, If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. Now let's pray. God, thank you for your word.

[8:18] Thank you for the gift of it. That you saw fit to write down these things for your glory and for our benefit. And God, as we seek to open it and learn more about you today, I pray that you would open our eyes, that we wouldn't be spiritually blind to this parable.

But that through the spirit working in us, that we can see what you have for us today. Amen. So in this story, we have mainly two contrasting characters, right?

We have the rich man over here and Lazarus on the other side. And Jesus says that this rich man is so wealthy that he wears the most expensive clothes that you can wear, right?

Linen. I mean, still, linen is incredibly expensive. It's this great cotton. They dyed it purple, which at the time was this incredibly expensive way of coloring clothes.

It was the most expensive color that you can have. There's even some connotation in this that the linen is actually referring to as undergarments. So it's like, I mean, down to this guy's core, like he's Gucci, you know, like it's it's as good as it gets.

[9:24] So not only is he wearing these expensive clothes every single day, not just occasionally, not just big, you know, big events, but every day. But he's also feasting sumptuously every day.

Right. So, like, I think about, you know, big family gatherings like Thanksgiving. You come out and you have, you know, the turkey and all the trimmings. Right. And it's just as a kid, you know, I walk in, my eyes get really big. Well, that's what this guy's eating.

He's eating that every single day. He's feasting sumptuously every day. And so this lavish lifestyle, he is flaunting his wealth. Right. This isn't somebody who's trying to hide the fact that he has money.

He wants everyone to know that he has a lot of money. So that's on one side. On the other side, we have we have Lazarus. And now there is no evidence in this passage to suggest that this is the Lazarus that Jesus raised from the dead.

And to be honest, it's likely it's not. But Lazarus in this story, he's incredibly poor. And not only was he poor, but he was also covered in sores. He had a terrible skin disease. And he also had some sort of infirmity or disability because it says he was laid at the gate, which connotes that he couldn't get there himself.

[10:27] All right. So he was poor. He was covered in sores. He was laid at this gate that the rich man had, which is also another measure of the wealth of the rich man. Right. He had a gate.

Right. And it wasn't even just a gate. It was like the gate of a walled compound. So this guy, I mean, he really had he really had something. And so Lazarus, he's laid there and he's laid there in hopes for charity.

Right. At that time, people who could not, people in his situation would often be laid in places in hopes for charity. And so having him laid at the gate of this rich man made sense for the time. You know, hopefully the rich man, he sees him. He feels something inside. He shows some sort of hospitality, some sort of philanthropy, brings him in, takes care of him. And all that kind of stuff. All right.

So but he's hungry. And Jesus said that he could actually be filled by the scraps that fall off of this guy's table. Right. So just like the trash, the garbage that's left over, the stuff that they would have fed to the dogs.

[11:26] Right. That Jesus is saying that that would have been enough to feed this guy. And so not only that, but there's also dogs that are coming and they're licking his sores.

Right. And so as I was studying for this, I heard some there are some people who would think that the dogs are licking his sores out of the sense of comfort. Right. You know, like we have two dogs in my house.

They look nonstop. They won't quit. And so if you have any kind of, as we would say, boo boo, if Titus has a boo boo or Nora has a boo boo, the dog wants to lick it. Right. So this measure of comfort.

So it could have been that or it could have been that they were just hungry and Lazarus looked like a meal. Right. So dogs at that time, they weren't household pets like they were scavengers. They were not they were not well liked.

But either way, whether it was, you know, a dog giving kisses or Lazarus was going to be food, it's pretty gross. They were licking his sores. So that's where we're at. So we have the rich man up here on this end of the spectrum and Lazarus on the complete opposite end of the spectrum.

[12:29] And so Jesus, he continues the story from there by telling us that the poor man died and was carried up to Abraham's side, which is to be understood as heaven. And then likewise, the rich man also died, but he was found to be in Hades in a place of torment.

And then just one other thing to note about that. When Lazarus dies, it doesn't even mention a burial. Right. There is no mention of a burial. He wasn't important in that society at that time.

But the rich man, he has a burial. Right. It says he died and was buried. He was somebody. He was important. Right. Just furthering that the contrast between the two.

So they both die. And Lazarus, he's carried up to Abraham's side. And then the rich man is found to be in Hades in torment.

And in his torment and anguish in the flame, he looks up and he sees Lazarus. And he calls out to Abraham to have Lazarus come down and dip his finger in some water and put it on his tongue to cool it because he is in such anguish.

[13:30] But then Abraham hits him with a truth bomb and it would have hit like a ton of bricks. He says, child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things and Lazarus and like manner bad things.

But now he is comforted here and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you, a great chasm has been fixed in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able and none may cross from there to us.

So Abraham's telling this rich guy, he said, man, in life, you had it good. You were the top dog.

Right. You were wearing Gucci and Prada every day. Right. You were eating these Thanksgiving feasts every single day. You had a gate, man.

Like you had it good in life. And Lazarus, he didn't have anything. Right. He had nothing. He was late at your gate hungry and you walked by him daily and didn't take care of his needs.

Right. He was just hoping from scraps for the dog food off of your table. He was diseased, had this awful skin disease and was fighting off dogs from licking him constantly. He said, not only that, but there's this massive divide here.

[14:34] We can't come to you and you can't come to us. I'm sorry, buddy. There's nothing I can do here. So the rich man, he hears that and he realizes, man, this fate is eternal. So then he thinks in response to Abraham.

Abraham, well, if it's too late for me, if I'm stuck here, then can you send Lazarus to my family? I got five brothers. They're in my father's house. I don't want them to end up in this torment like I am.

I'm suffering. This is terrible. So Abraham, but he responds. He says, they have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them. The rich man, he hears this and thinks, no, I mean, Abraham, you don't understand.

Right. You don't understand. And he's begging at this point. He says, no, father Abraham. But if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent. And you think Abraham, he's not, he's not changing his mind.

He says, Abraham says, if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone would rise from the dead. He doubles down. So in our time this morning, I want to talk about three things, mainly three things.

[15:45] Thing number one is this idea of a great reversal. Thing number two will be God's just judgment. And then thing number three will be the

sufficiency of scripture. And then we'll, we'll shoot for some application.

So when I say the great reversal, what do I mean? So Al Mohler, when he's describing this idea, he says that what passes for power and dignity and success in one life may lead to a very different result in the life to come.

And scripture is full of examples like this, right? Look at Peter. He was a fisherman. He wasn't a learned biblical scholar, right? Look at Rahab in the Old Testament. She was a prostitute. She was on the lowest rungs of society at that time. And Ruth, same, right? She was a widowed Moabite in a foreign country gleaning grain in somebody's field, right?

Even Paul, Paul describes himself as not even being a good speaker. So when we see these people, they weren't kings or royalties or anything like that. What made them exceptional is their faith, right?

[16:51] And in Hebrews chapter 11, there's an entire chapter devoted to just common people who are exceptional because of their faith. They're justified by their faith. And so their world then that they lived in, even our world now, for most of these people, we wouldn't deem them to be successful, you know, by any measure of what we deem to be success.

But I will tell you that what goes for success is being told, well done, my good and faithful servant, right? What goes for success is running our race to completion.

That is what success is. The world, it'll tell you that success is buying a nice big new lifted truck or buying a big house, being the boss, having a bunch of followers on Twitter or Facebook friends. That's what the world will tell you success is. But that's not what scripture tells us success is. Jesus says in Matthew 5 in the Sermon on the Mount, he says, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Now, these teachings are very different than what people tell us bring success today, right?

[17:56] We're trained almost to be prideful, right? We're told to look out for number one. We're told to look out for ourselves. Sorry, I keep tapping that. We're told to look out for ourselves because no one else is going to look out for us.

We're told that we're to chase personal happiness and satisfaction at all costs, no matter what it does to other people, right? We're told to seek power, to climb that social ladder, to reject the authority that's over us, right?

And so the rich man in this story, he apparently chased many of these same things that we're told to pursue today, right? We can see it. He lived this opulent, lavish lifestyle daily, right?

So is there inherently wrong with having money or possessions? No, there's nothing wrong. There's a lot of examples in Scripture of people who had means that, you know, loved the Lord and pursued him, right?

Job, right? Job was very wealthy and, you know, pursued the Lord and was faithful, right? And it's just like being poor. It doesn't inherently mean that we have a love for Christ or that we don't love material possessions.

[19:01] In our flesh, we're just as capable of being prideful about our poverty as we are of our wealth, right? So whether the point is, though, is whether we have much or whether we have little, we are called to be stewards of the gifts that God has entrusted us with, right?

If we back up one parable in Luke, it's the parable of the unjust steward. In Luke 16, 9, Jesus says, And so the point that Jesus is making here is that we should be using these material possessions that God has entrusted us with to further the kingdom of God.

But you see, the issue happens or the problem happens that when we take those material blessings that God has given us and we use them to bless our own little kingdoms, to further our own little kingdoms, not to be used for the purposes of the kingdom of God.

And that's what this rich guy, that's what he's clearly guilty of, right? He wastes all these vast material blessings that God has given him on these ridiculous clothes and these ridiculous feasts.

All the while, he has a guy dying at his front door, right? He wastes it. There is no evidence that the rich man attempts to meet Lazarus' needs or provide him any relief.

[20:24] And so the writer of Hebrews, he tells us, Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware. Right? The rich guy, he doesn't care. He doesn't do that.

He's worried about him, number one. Right? He's at the top of the social ladder and living in his walled compound with his gate. Right? He's happy to be there. But Lazarus, he is as far removed from that as you can get.

Right? So one thing I thought was cool that I didn't realize in researching this parable is that in this parable, Lazarus is the only character in all of Jesus' parables that he actually names. Right? It's cool. So Lazarus, his name actually means God has helped. Right? So if you're hearing this, you know, in first century, if you're hearing Jesus tell this parable for the first time, and he's saying like, oh, Lazarus.

Okay. Oh, God has helped. How has God helped this guy? Right? I don't see how God's helped this guy. If anything, God helped the rich guy. He's rich. Right? Lazarus, God has helped.

[21:23] I mean, he's incredibly poor. He's diseased. He's getting licked by dogs, laying at a gate. If anything, he's been cursed by God. Right? That's how the Pharisees would have seen that.

That was very common at that time. They would have seen the rich man as being blessed and Lazarus as being cursed. But this is where we have the great reversal. Right? So that's when death comes.

We see how things change. And as I mentioned before, Jesus' parables, they had this element of shock value. Right? Now for us, we lose some of that shock value.

Just frankly. Right? We've heard these stories time and time again. And so it's difficult for us to put ourselves back in the place of the person who would have heard it originally. Right?

To see these characters as those first century Jews would have, as the Pharisees would have. Right? Like I said, the Pharisees would have been hearing Jesus describe this rich guy. In their mind, they would have been thinking, man, that guy's blessed.

[22:19] Like, God really, that guy's blessed. He's made it. God's got him. And they would have been hearing Lazarus being described. And they said, nah, he's cursed. Yeah. God's cursed him. I don't even want to help him.

Right? Because I would be maybe potentially messing up God's plan for Lazarus. Right? He's cursed. So imagine those Pharisees when they hear Jesus say that the poor guy who's diseased, like he's the one who's carried up by the angels to the place of Abraham's side.

Right? And so that isn't even just like being carried up to heaven. That's a place of honor. Right? So it's the picture of being at a great banquet and Lazarus is being given a place of honor by the father of the faith.

Right? By Abraham. Like one of the patriarchs. So not only would they have been surprised to hear that little twist, but then they would have been even more surprised as well to hear that when the rich man died, that he went to hell.

Right? They kind of doubled down on that shock. But that's the great reversal. So because the fact of the matter is, is the things of this world and the success or the status of this world, they're not, they don't directly translate to the kingdom of heaven.

[23:31] Right? They don't. We have measuring sticks for success here of what we deem to be successful, but that's not the same for God. Right? Look at 1 Corinthians 1, 25 through 31.

Paul says, That's it.

That's our hope. This life is a vapor. It's a mist. It's here today, gone tomorrow. Vanity of vanities, says the preacher. Right? Do not store up for yourself treasures here on earth where moths and rust destroy, but store up your treasure in heaven.

So thing number two. God's just judgment. God's just judgment. So in this text, Jesus makes it very clear that heaven and hell are real places.

Right? We can't avoid it. Jesus talks more about hell than anyone else. He talks about hell more than he talks about heaven. And when it comes to eternity, Jesus only lays out two possible

destinations. Right?

[25:28] He lays out heaven and he lays out hell. No limbo. No purgatory. Just heaven and hell. He doesn't extensively describe in this section of the text heaven and hell, but he does give us some light into both.

You see, we can see Lazarus at Abraham's side being comforted while the rich man is in anguish and flame. You see, heaven is a place where there's no more sin, no more sorrow, no more pain, no more death.

We will live eternally in God's presence and be comforted. There will be joy. There will be peace. And then hell is the exact opposite. There's no goodness in hell. There's no presence of God.

There's no joy, no peace, no comfort. There's no eternal suffering and anguish. Right? In the parable of talents that TJ read last week, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But we live in a culture today that tries to clean up hell. Right? They either try to clean it up or just do away with it because it's uncomfortable. It's not culturally appropriate to tell someone that they're not good enough and that there's consequences to their actions.

[26:35] Right? I don't like being told that there's consequences to my actions. So people would just rather avoid the topic. And bring it up. But Jesus brings it up multiple times.

He says in Matthew 13, 49 and 50. So it will be at the end of the age, the angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

So our Lord and Savior himself says that hell will be full of tears, pain, and turmoil. And the truth of the matter is, is that no matter what we want to believe, God's just judgment, just judgment is coming.

And those who do not find themselves in Christ will be banished to hell for all eternity. You see, we are all sinners and have all fallen short of the glory of God. And because of our sin, we are separated from God.

God is holy. Right? God is holy. And he is just. And because of that, he can have nothing to do with sin. And he can't take any part in it. Psalm 89, 14 says, Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.

[27:39] Steadfast love and faithfulness go before you. Because of God's just nature and because of his holiness, he has to punish sin. Right? And we have to remember that God is just at all times.

People try to confuse it and say that God is love. And so, therefore, how could a good God punish sin? They just don't understand the character and nature of God. Right? God in his justice, he must punish sin.

And we have this tendency to forget it. But to be honest, I don't think that we would really want him to not punish sin. Right? We desire justice.

We look. Turn on the news. Turn on the news. Pull up your phone. Get on social media. Look and see all the injustice around us. Right? You see that. And inside of you, your heart, something screams out for justice.

Where is justice? Right? Think about as we go about our days and people, these perceived slights. Right? These injustices that we feel that have been done against us.

[28:36] In our heart, we cry out for justice. Right? Praise God, there will be justice one day. It's been promised. We know it's coming. In that final judgment, God will render justice.

Right? All the atrocities, all the atrocities that we see when we're saying, where is justice here?

Those people, they will have to atone from their sin.

And they'll have to give an account for their sin. Excuse me. And I would be much more terrified of facing God than I would be of facing me. All sin will have to be accounted for.

The punishment for that sin is death and eternal separation from God to experience his wrath forever. And then once that judgment's been made, there's no going back. There's no going back.

It's eternal. As Abraham said in the passage, And besides all this, between us and you, a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.

[29:37] So once God has handed down his judgment, that's it. We're either redeemed or we're condemned. There is no swapping back and forth. But God, God has extended his grace to all people.

Right? He even extended his grace to the rich man in this passage. His common grace. Wayne Grudem, he defines common grace as the grace of God by which he gives people innumerable blessings that are not a part of salvation.

It's by grace alone that we can take every breath that we take. That we wake up in the morning. It is the grace of God. It's grace that God didn't immediately judge the world when Adam and Eve brought sin into the world in the garden.

God's grace. The rich man, all his material blessings, God's common grace. Right? God gifted them and gifted all of us, you know, those things.

But that grace doesn't lead to salvation. There's a difference between common grace and saving grace. You see, saving grace is the grace of God that brings people to salvation.

[30:39] It's that grace that brought Lazarus up to Abraham's side. Right? And none of us deserve this grace. We don't deserve it whatsoever. But praise God, there's grace to be had.

Right? Ephesians 2, 4-8. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of your own doing. It is the gift of God. So even though we are sinners, God in his love and grace has redeemed believers through the atoning work of Christ on the cross.

God poured out his wrath on Christ so that we can be declared justified in his sight. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we are our salvation.

[31:44] Right? And this grace, this grace is costly. It costs something. It costs God his son. Right? I love the cost of discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

And so, and I'm also thankful that those Wimpy's are here so I can quote Dietrich Bonhoeffer while they're here. Except for Germany. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance.

Baptism without church discipline. Communion without confession. Absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship. Grace without the cross. Grace without Jesus Christ.

Living and incarnate. Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field. For the sake of it a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy, which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble. It is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.

[32:45] Right? This grace costs something, and it should invoke a response from us. Right? Not a cheap version of grace where there's no actual power to it. Right? But the grace of God, this saving grace, there's power to it.

There's power to it. And that's, it's that grace, not common grace, which brought Lazarus to Abraham's side. On the other side of saving grace, we can see that the rich man, he earned his faith.

And even while he's in hell, he's still prideful and arrogant. Right? So, like, hell doesn't bring about, like, repentance. You know? Like, and we can see that in a couple, in a couple ways.

So, as we said, you know, at the beginning, he looks up to heaven and he sees Lazarus and recognizes Lazarus. Right? That's the guy who was laying at my gate. Right? He says, hey, Abraham. He doesn't even talk to Lazarus. Lazarus is still beneath him.

Even though Lazarus is in heaven and he's in hell, Lazarus in his mind is still beneath him. He says, Abraham, can you send him down here to me? I'm a little hot. Like, I got some anguish here. Can you get him to dip his finger in some water and put it on my tongue?

[33:48] Right? Even still, he's prideful. He's asking Abraham to send Lazarus to serve him. Right? And then later, he tries to correct Abraham's theology. No, no, no, Abraham.

No. No. If someone comes from the dead, right, then they'll repent. Right? How prideful is that? How prideful is that? So, yeah. Yeah. So, we can see the rich man earned his faith.

He rejected the saving grace of God. Right? And so, from there, after we see Abraham's response, we have our last little twist. Sorry. We'll speed this up a little bit.

Point number three. Thing number three. The sufficiency of scripture. Right? So, up to this, if you're just casually reading it, you would see a parable of two guys that are different. Right? You would see one guy who lived opulently.

Another guy poor. And you can see that God punishes sin. Right? We could see that there's consequences to that sin. And that is important. That is incredibly important. Right? But Jesus hits it with another little twist right there at the end.

[34:50] In verse 31. He said to them, but if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. And so, while Jesus is telling this parable, he knows what's coming up next.

Right? He knows he's going to the cross. He knows he's going to die for our sin. He knows he's going to rise again from the dead. And he knows that he's going to do all of those things and people are still going to reject him.

Right? He knows that him rising from the dead isn't going to be enough. Isn't going to be enough to convince everyone. Right? People that that's not going to do it.

Right? We have everything we need in God's word for salvation and a call to repentance. According to Wayne Grudem, the sufficiency of scripture means that scripture contained all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history.

And that it now contains all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting in him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly. Right? And so everything in this book that we're holding right now, we have everything we need to recognize our sin, to see our need for a savior, to know who that savior is.

[36:01] Right? To repent of our sin and then know how to follow him. Everything we have is in this book because at its core unbelief is a heart condition. Right? So the rich man, he's thinking that if his brothers, if they see some miraculous sign, then they're going to repent.

But Jesus knows that's not it. Right? It's their hearts. It's their hearts. And they have everything that they need in God's word. They have the evidence in here to repent and believe.

Right? And we have access to this, to God's word, at unprecedented levels of human history. Okay? There's no excuse for us to not use it.

So that's not to say that there aren't other resources that we shouldn't use. I know I used resources when I was looking at this, but the Bible is ultimate. The other resources, the podcast, the books, all that stuff, they don't have the same authority as God's word.

And the people that are writing these books and doing these podcasts, they would probably tell you the same thing. Right? Read the Bible. Read the Bible. Scripture is perfect.

[37:06] It's infallible. Right? No book or what other people had to say. So I know for myself, especially early in my walk, I was quick to lean on what other people had to say. And there's nothing wrong with that. Right?

There's nothing wrong with that. But don't go to them at the expense of the Bible. Right? This is what we need. This is sufficient. Right? So we should be wary of people who try to use other things to interpret Scripture.

Right? Like the Book of Mormon. Right? Right? Reading the Book of Mormon to be able to interpret the Bible. We should be wary of stuff like that. Right? Scripture is sufficient. Deuteronomy 4.2.

You should not add to the word I command you nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God I command you. Right? So we are not to add to Scripture.

We're not to take from Scripture.

And for the sake of time, I'm going to cut to the next. Right? So basically, the Pharisees, this is something that Jesus called the Pharisees on.

[38:03] Right? Look at Mark chapter 7. Like Jesus calls them out on it very clearly. It's a great example. The Pharisees are saying, hey, why do your disciples not wash their hands?

It's the tradition of the elders. And Jesus is like, you guys are a bunch of hypocrites. Right? You're more worried about the traditions of men than following the commands of God. Right? Obey the word. Don't add to it.

Don't take away from it. So application. Application. So what can we learn from this parable? What can we take away? Number one, we must be in the word.

All right? A lot of times there's a direct correlation between how we are doing spiritually with our time in the word, our time in prayer. Right? Right? Fundamentally, as believers, we should be interested in the things of God, which should then lead us to want to learn more about God, which we can do by reading God's word.

Right? We call it our relationship with God. Right? It's not just our knowledge about God. But when we talk to fellow believers and say, hey, how's your relationship with the Lord? How's your walk with the Lord? Right?

[39:06] This idea of intimacy with God. We don't read the Bible for like a textbook. Right? I'm not, it's not my math book, you know, which I never read anyways.

But we don't, we don't read the Bible to learn theology for theology's sake. Right? We read the Bible to learn more about who God is, to draw us into a deeper, more intimate and more full relationship with him.

Right? So read the word. It's living and active. It's sharper than any two-edged sword. Right? Piercing to the division of the soul and of spirit and of joints and of marrow. It discerns the heart, the thoughts and the intentions of the heart.

Right? Reading God's word changes our hearts. Right? Reading God's word changes our hearts. It's not enough to just have intellectual knowledge of him. The demons have intellectual knowledge of him. But there's no salvation in that.

Right? It's about the relationship. And scripture is sufficient for that. And then number two, we should be eagerly waiting for Christ's return. Final judgment is coming.

[40:09] And we'll have to give an account. And God will execute his justice. So in light of this, we should be waiting for Christ's return. It should spur us on to walk in holiness.

We should be excited to see. Right? It should encourage us to share the gospel with others. Hey, judgment is coming. Repent and believe. Right? That should spur us on for evangelism.

Right? As Christians, that's how God's coming judgment should encourage us. And if you're not in the Lord, well, then your encouragement should be to repent and believe.

Judgment's coming. Right? Jesus is the only way. He's our only hope in life and death. As we sang earlier, Jordan, Jesus paid it all. Right? All to him I owe. Right?

Jesus paid it all. And praise God for it. Right? So reading the rich man Lazarus, what should it spur us on to? It should spur us on to read our Bibles because God's word is sufficient.

[41:04] It should spur us on to eagerly await Christ's coming and to lead holy lives. Sharing the gospel with others. Forgiving others. Right? Because God's final judgment is coming.

Right? Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.