

¹⁹ “There was a rich man who would dress in purple and fine linen, feasting lavishly every day. ²⁰ But a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, was lying at his gate. ²¹ He longed to be filled with what fell from the rich man’s table, but instead the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²² One day the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ And being in torment in Hades, he looked up and saw Abraham a long way off, with Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ ‘Father Abraham!’ he called out, ‘Have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this flame!’

²⁵ “‘Son,’ Abraham said, ‘remember that during your life you received your good things, just as Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here, while you are in agony. ²⁶ Besides all this, a great chasm has been fixed between us and you, so that those who want to pass over from here to you cannot; neither can those from there cross over to us.’

²⁷ “‘Father,’ he said, ‘then I beg you to send him to my father’s house— ²⁸ because I have five brothers—to warn them, so that they won’t also come to this place of torment.’

²⁹ “But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’

³⁰ “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said. ‘But if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

³¹ “But he told him, ‘If they don’t listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.’”

— *Luke 16:19-31*

Discussion/Journal Questions

What are you thinking or feeling as we come off our Head, Heart, Hands series on the work of MoHI and the Christian response to extreme poverty? What lingering questions do you have?

Have two or three people read Luke 16:19-31 out loud slowly. After some time of reflection, ask each other what words, phrases, or ideas stand out to everyone. What questions come to mind as you meditate on this scripture?

Our passage from Luke is a parable Jesus told when confronting Pharisees who were “lovers of money” (Luke 16:14). How does Jesus use this parable to subvert expectations about who is favored/blessed by God?

How did the rich man treat Lazarus in life? How did he continue to treat Lazarus in death?

How might Jesus reword this parable for Americans in 2025?

What would Jesus have us do in response to this parable?