

Summary

This sermon examines the parable of the rich man and Lazarus from Luke 16:19-31, focusing on how worldly blessings can blind us to spiritual realities. Pastor Chris contrasts Lazarus, a poor beggar full of sores who trusted in God despite his suffering, with the rich man who lived in luxury but ignored eternity. After death, their situations reversed - Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom while the rich man found himself in torment in hell. The rich man's wealth, comfort, and status had blinded him to his spiritual need and the suffering of others around him.

The message warns against being "blinded by blessings" - allowing good things like success, comfort, busyness, pride, or even religious routine to distract us from our relationship with God and concern for eternity. Pastor Chris emphasizes that hell is real and conscious, where the rich man could see, feel, speak, and remember. He concludes with an urgent call for salvation, reminding listeners that Jesus rose from the dead to provide the way to heaven, and no one needs to go to hell if they accept Christ as their Savior.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today grateful for Your Word and the truths You want to reveal to us. As we gather together to discuss this message, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to what You want us to learn. Help us to be honest with ourselves and with each other about the areas where we might be blinded by our blessings. Give us wisdom to see clearly, compassion for those who don't know You, and courage to live differently because of what we discover today. Holy Spirit, guide our conversation and help us to encourage one another in our faith journey. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one simple pleasure or comfort in your daily routine that you would really miss if you had to give it up for a week?

Key Verses

1. Luke 16:19-31
2. Luke 16:25
3. Luke 16:31

Questions

1. What are some ways that our blessings and comforts today might blind us to spiritual realities, just like the rich man in the parable?
2. How can we maintain a heart of compassion for those in need when we're living comfortably ourselves?

3. Pastor Chris mentioned that Lazarus means 'God is my help.' How do you see God as your help during difficult times versus comfortable times?
4. What does it mean to be a 'funnel' rather than a 'barrel' with our blessings? How can we practically apply this in our lives?
5. The rich man could remember everything in hell. How should this reality affect the way we share the gospel with others?
6. What are some modern-day distractions (busyness, success, entertainment, etc.) that might keep us from focusing on eternity?
7. How can we develop the same kind of faith that Lazarus had - trusting God even when circumstances look hopeless?
8. Pastor Chris said some hearts are so hardened that even a resurrection won't change them. What keeps people from believing despite clear evidence of God's power?

Life Application

This week, identify one blessing in your life that might be blinding you to spiritual needs around you. Choose one specific way to 'funnel' that blessing to help someone else - whether through time, resources, or simply showing genuine concern. Also, have an honest conversation with someone about their relationship with Jesus, remembering that we all have friends or family members who need to hear the gospel.

Key Takeaways

1. Worldly blessings can blind us to spiritual realities and eternal concerns if we're not careful
2. God calls us to be 'funnels' not 'barrels' - sharing our blessings rather than hoarding them
3. Hell is a real, conscious place of torment where people retain their memory and awareness
4. Even resurrection power doesn't convince hardened hearts - we must respond to God's Word now
5. True blessing comes from knowing Jesus as Savior, not from worldly comfort or success

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for this time together and for the sobering truths we've discussed today. Help us not to be blinded by the good things You've given us, but to use them for Your glory and the benefit of others. Give us hearts that break for those who don't know You, and give us courage to share the gospel with urgency and love. Protect us from the distractions that would pull us away from what matters most - our relationship with You and the eternal destiny of those around us. Help us to live each day with eternity in mind, knowing that You are coming again. We commit to being faithful stewards of all You've entrusted to us. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.

