

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS" | LUKE 16: 14-31 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

"Kick the bucket" is one unique phrase to say death. What is the weirdest way people mention death?

"The Danger of Self-Justification" (Luke 16: 14-18)

Jesus challenged the Pharisees since they appeared to be strict about some of the law but then didn't care as much about laws for divorce and money. **What causes people to compromise on moral laws?**

"The Rich Man and Lazarus: Two Men" (Luke 16: 19-22)

Jesus tells a parable about a rich man who lived in luxury and ignored the poor and eventually dies. **How should the fact that all people die affect how people use money?**

"The Rich Man and Lazarus: Two Destinies" (Luke 16: 23-26)

The poor man Lazarus is welcomed into comfort in heaven while the rich man is in torment in hell. **What does this image of the after-life show about God?**

"The Rich Man and Lazarus: Two Requests" (Luke 16: 27-31)

The rich man in torment asks for relief and asks for his brothers to be warned about hell, yet he is denied both requests, showing there's no second chances after people die. **How should this view of the afterlife affect how Christ-followers live?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

These passages show that God's word is important and more than enough to lead people to Jesus. **How important has God's word been in your life lately? Has your life been marked by trusting and obeying Jesus lately? Pray and ask God to show you how to live in obedience to Him.**

The Rich Man and Lazarus

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide2-7 Lar: CK xmas spec. Wrapping. Winter Camps. Xmas Services. Mens Breakfast. JM12.
- B. Slide8 Urim.
- C. Prayer:

II. Slide9 **Intro:** *The Rich Man and Lazarus*

- A. A **man** awoke after an **operation** and found *the curtains in his hospital room drawn*. “Why are the curtains closed?” he asked the nurse. “Is it night time already?” - “No,” the nurse replied, “But there’s **a fire** across the street, and we didn’t want you to wake and think *the operation was unsuccessful*.”
 - 1. This morning God gives us a glimpse *beyond the veil of death*.
- B. **Recap:** Jesus was speaking to his disciples (1) on the topic of money (use of), now he pivots to talk to the Pharisees about their greed (abuse of) (14).
 - 1. **Note** the **vital connection** between vs.13 & 14.

III. Slide10 **THE DANGER OF SELF JUSTIFICATION (14-18) READ**

- A. (15) This verse becomes **the key** to the rest, **as** he contrasts their **motives** in doing things in the sight of **man** **or** for **God**. [in **life**, you will constantly keep **God** in view **or not**]
- B. (16a) **The law/the prophets** (OT) were *until John* (Bap) who was a *transitional figure*.
- C. (16b) **Forces his way into it?** Do everything you can to get to Jesus. *Like the guy lowered through the roof. Or the woman fighting through the crowd to get to Jesus*.
 - 1. **Jesus creates a holy crisis**. Don’t let anything keep you out of *the kingdom*.
- D. (17) **The good news/gospel** doesn’t cancel the OT, **but fulfills** it.
 - 1. **Regarding** The OT, some of it is *continuity and some discontinuity*.
 - 2. **Discontinuity:** No longer **food laws**. No longer **circumcision** is needed.

a) We must read now the OT in light of the NT.

E. (18) So Jesus simply gives an *illustration* of OT law to support vs.17.

1. Slide11 3 parts of the OT Law: The Moral Law (10 Com), The Ceremonial Law (the types/symbols found in *sacrificial system*). The Civil Law (meaning the everyday laws that governed the lives of the ancient people of Israel).

a) The best *definition* of the Law I heard was, *It's an invitation to trust God's wisdom.* (think of 10 comm)

2. This was about the purpose & durability of Scripture.

a) He's saying, the moral law continues to be binding. God continues to care about holiness, *that divorce is still divorce.* Jesus chooses one that the Pharisees were specifically breaking. [*God hates divorce*, of course, we all do!]

3. Ps: It would take a whole service to cover all divorce & remarriage vss. (i.e.) The exception clause (desertion/abandonment & sexual immorality)

4. The Pharisees who took a loose view of money also took a loose/liberal view of divorce (eg. Rabbi Hillel, divorce for anything).

IV. Slide12 THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS (19-31) READ

A. This section isn't necessarily to teach about the future life, but instead primarily to drive home the awful danger of making *wrong use of this life*, thus leading to **eternal misery**.¹ Griffith Thomas

B. Slide13a TWO MEN (19-21)

C. With only your *earthly eyes*, which of the 2 would you say was *favored* by God?

D. The Rich Man (19)

E. 1st, the issue wasn't that he was a rich man, but *how he was a rich man*.

He was self-centered, never helping the poor. The issue wasn't with his bank account, but with his *heart account*.

F. We don't even know *the rich man's* name, we know *Lazarus*, but not the rich man's.

¹ Griffith Thomas, pg.259.

G. **Slide13b** **Clothed in purple & fine linen** - purple/opulence (extremely expensive dye from a sea snail of the genus, *murex*). [Murex was used by *Aristotle* in reference to these kinds of snails, thus making it one of the oldest classical seashell names still in use by the scientific community] (15's more expensive than gold. 120 lbs snails = 1 gram dye)

H. **Clothed in ... fine linen** - a very costly, delicate, soft linen (undergarments).

I. **Who feasted sumptuously every day** - opulence, luxury.

1. You could sum up his life in 3 statements:

a) **He wore expensive underwear. He had lots of fun. He was buried.** [his riches couldn't bribe the grim reaper]

J. Even **his gate** was awesome - Literally an *impressive* gate. **A gate of beauty.**

K. **Lazarus** (20,21)

L. The only character named in Jesus' parables. Maybe because of what his name means, *When God Helps*.

1. **But think about this: Lazarus is unclean, penniless, he's covered with sores, he desired what fell from the rich man's table, and even the dogs licked his sores.** Yet his name means, *When God Helps*. **Does He?**

a) I wonder how many people *mocked him* because of his name. *Doesn't look like you're getting helped by God!* **But** this is not the end of the story for Lazarus.

b) In the end it shows **God really was his Help.** His suffering came to an end, **and then the Great Reversal.**

M. **Licked by dogs** - **not** like your pampered pet that comes up and greets you with a kiss and a lick. **No** we're talking *diseased* stray dogs.

N. The rich man saw him every day **and** ignored him every day.

1. He forgot who he should invite to his daily parties ... Lk.14:13,14

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

2. **And also** we note, *the dog outside* the gate, showed more compassion than *the man inside!*

O. **These guys cannot be more different.** One rich, one poor. One feasted, one starved. One covered in purple, one covered in sores. One with enough money to meet his needs and throw parties, the other man with **a name**, unlike the other guy.

P. **Now, what did they have in common?** They both had a date with death. **Death is the great equalizer.** (death comes to all *but* doesn't end all).

1. **Games People Play** (Joe South) 1968.

a) *Oh, the games people play now. Every night and every day now.
Never meaning what they say now. Never saying what they mean.
While they wile away the hours. In their ivory towers.
'Til they're covered up with flowers ... In the back of a black limousine.*

(1) **A sober conclusion to life.**

2. That's why Solomon said in Eccl.7:2a *It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for this is the end of all mankind, and the living will lay it* (take it) *to heart.* (it's better to think on death) **because** that's where we are all going! **So** we can **live wisely** in light of it.

Q. **Slide14 TWO DESTINIES** (22,23)

R. **The poor man died, and was carried by the Angels to Abraham side** (where idea comes from)

1. **Here is the Great Reversal.** Before he had to be *carried to the rich man's gate*, **now** Angels carry him to Abraham's side. (a picture of fellowship, a picture of welcome, picture of comfort).

2. Where the story of **the rich man** is **Warning** to us, the story of **Lazarus** is a **comfort** to us.

S. **The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment -**

1. Today, anyone who dies we hear them say, *She's up there watching over me* or *He's up there playing golf.* This text puts a **sharp point** on this issue

2. What you do with Jesus Christ **now** determines your eternal destiny. **And** there's no 2nd chance as this shows.

T. **Slide15a TWO REQUESTS** (24-31) *have mercy on me and warn my brothers.*

U. **1st Request:** *Have Mercy on me*

V. The point he makes about hell is, it's about **anguish** (2 x's: 24, 25).

1. It's explained by **it's hot** (*cool my tongue*), there's **a flame**. Other places talks about **darkness**. **It's awful, it's to be avoided**. (physical fire? I know it's a reality. **eg.** Dengue Fever: *achy bones, full rash, mental*)

W. **Slide15b** (25) Here Abraham explains **the Great Reversal** (re-read).

X. (26) Here it shows there is no 2nd chance, *no purgatory*. **A reminder that what you do here, matters there**. **Now** is the time to decide what you want to do for eternity.

1. The time to ask for mercy is not after you die but right now. And the good news of the gospel is now is the time for mercy/grace.

2. **Slide15c He wills that none should perish but all should come to repentance**. 2 Pet.3:9

Y. **2nd Request** - *Warn my brothers*

Z. (31) Your brothers have everything they need, *they have Moses and the prophets, the OT scriptures*.

1. They don't need to see the dramatic display of someone rising from the dead, **because they already have what they need in the Scriptures**.

2. It doesn't answer all of our questions on every topic, **but** it does answer the main question.

3. **The Scriptures points us to Jesus**. The Bible is a book about **salvation**.

a) **We run into this all the time**. **If only** God would write something for me in the sky **then** I'd believe. **If only** I saw a miracle **I** would believe. **If only** my alphabet soup would spell out **J-E-S-U-S** **then** I would believe. **Slide15d**

(1) Jesus says, no you wouldn't **believe!** **This is a powerful text on the sufficiency of scripture**.

4. If a person **did** rise from the dead what would they say to you? If they really did rise from the dead, they would quote scriptures.

- a) That's what Jesus did when he rose from the dead, He gave a Bible study & told them. *O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* Lk. 24:25-27
- b) Jesus rose from the dead and said, *you guys should've read your Bible.*

AA. **CM** Keep **trusting** the Scriptures, keep **reading** the Scriptures, keep **believing** the Scriptures. Keep **embracing** the **Hero** of scriptures, **Jesus Christ!**

1. **Slide16 J.C.Ryle** - 1st Anglican bishop of Liverpool (book: *Holiness*).
*I charge everyone to ask himself frequently what **the Bible** is to him. Is it a Bible in which you have found nothing more than good moral precepts and sound advice? Or is it a Bible in which you found Christ? Is it a Bible in which Christ is all? If not I tell you plainly you have until now used your Bible with very little purpose. You are like a man who studies the solar system and leaves out the studies of **the sun**, which is the center of all. It is no wonder why you find your Bible to be a dull book.*
2. Again, he thought *if only my brothers would get a little glimpse of the dramatic, but saving faith often **doesn't look dramatic**. It looks like hearing the gospel, believing it, and being changed by it! [Heaven & hell are a reality]*
 - a) Like the old hymn says, *Whatever my lot (even the lot of **Lazarus' life**), Thou hast taught me to say, *It is well, It is well with my soul.**

BB. **Don't wait** to ask for **mercy** after you've died. It's too late. **Ask for it now!**

1. **Your choice:** carried by angels **or** awakening in anguish.

CC. Keywords: angels, law, heaven, mercy.