

Luke

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- [0 : 00] The Gospel according to Luke, chapter 16, the 29th, and the two following verses.
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- Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.
- Lord, this portion of God's Word we had for our reading this morning.
- And this latter part has remained upon our spirit all day. It is a part of God's Word, which is sadly neglected.
- [1 : 31] It's glossed over by so many, because there is a solemn truth in it. And men do not wish for truth.
- Men prefer darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. It's very solemn when we come to consider this rich man, who had everything that it was possible to have in this life, and yet was destitute of the grace of God.
- How the Lord had prospered him, in some way or other, we know not. But he knew not what mercy was, and he had no time or consideration whatever for Lazarus, the beggar.
- And yet, that beggar, although in such an awful condition, although covered in sores, and how the dogs of the rich man came and licked his sores, how that rich man would never stoop to touch him, let alone help him.
- Yet, the angels of God came and carried him to Abraham's bosom. When we come to consider the greatness of God, and the way in which he chooses beggars for eternal life, what would we rather be?
- [3 : 22] Rich in this world's goods, or beggars at the throne of grace. It's a great mercy to be a beggar. Begging for mercy.
- Begging for a crumb here, and a crumb there, so long as it's real. And I feel more than ever, that as our end approaches, the necessity of being right at last.
- Now I compare this rich man, although the, this is not a parable, and we want to be very careful when we come to God's word, there are those parables, and there are those things which actually took place.
- And here you see, the Lord is speaking with regard to this, he said, there was a certain rich man. This actually happened. And this is actually happening every day.
- All the while this world endures, this is happening every day. But, how solemn to have a professional religion, which is so full that we need nothing.
- [4 : 43] To have everything. And then to frown upon those who are begging. And how these, and if we follow these gospels through, we shall find, there's a lot we can learn by reading the whole chapter, and you'll see a simile.
- He speaks, first of all, of this certain rich man, which had a steward. And then he goes on to speak with regard to the way in which the steward acted, and how the men of this present world act with more wisdom than even the people of God.

how the people of God so often they look at those in a profession of religion, and how they seem to be so full of the goodness of the Lord, how they're able to rest upon the promises of God, how they're able to do this, and how they're able to do that.

But the child of God all he can do is to keep pleading, hoping that something will fall from the rich man's table.

What a mercy it is that the Lord never permits us to have anything from that rich man's table. How happy perhaps we would be if we could be like some of those believers who rest upon their own merits, who rest upon what they've done, that which they procured, they rest upon it, and they're happy in it, and they have no thought with regard to eternity, they're so safe in their own minds, and never are they concerned with regard to the reality and the enduring reality of the riches which they possess.

[6 : 54] How often we hear of rich men being suddenly deprived of all their riches? Quite unexpectedly. And others who perhaps have riches, their health has been affected and they've been unable to enjoy those things which they make so much of.

but oh to be one who knows something of the true Spirit of God within their own heart.

You know there's nothing that we could desire more upon the face of this earth than to be right at last. Whatever we may be called to pass through in this life, to have this knowledge that when this life comes to an end, as indeed it will, probably quite suddenly and very quickly, that there is that eternity waiting for us.

For now you see where that rich man would not take Lazarus or touch him because of his sores which typifies the sins and the plague within which showed itself outwardly yet the angels of the Lord, they came and they took his soul unspotted, unspotted and placed it in the bosom of Abraham.

Abraham was one who was looked to in the Old Testament as a great patriarch of old and one whom the promises of God hinged upon.

[8 : 44] But how you see this man, this rich man, they both died and they both went to separate places.

As there was a separation on earth, so there was a separation in eternity. If you are truly taught by the Holy Spirit, there will be a separation within your spirit with the Pharisee.

You won't bear to walk with the religious world. It doesn't matter who you are or what you profess, there will be a separation. I would rather walk with the ungodly, and I know what I'm talking about, than to mix with the Pharisees of religion.

At least you don't get blasphemies so much from the world as you do from the Pharisees. It's a solemn thing when we realise how one can go to such lengths to be dressed according to the fashion of the religion and then to be lost at last.

And there was this Pharisee and how he was clothed in purple and fine linen, fierce subsistly every day. There wasn't a day that he had something around.

[10 : 15] You know the type. Always able to bless the Lord for this, always able to bless the Lord for the other. Every day they have something to praise the Lord for.

But if I know anything of it, the child of God goes months on end before he's able to praise the Lord. He might have to plead and plead for a thankful heart.

But do you know what it is to really thank the Lord, to really praise the Lord, when the Lord has given you a few crumbs? Well, they both died.

When it came to pass, the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom. What an awful thing to awake in hell.

[11 : 23] You see, it's final. Absolutely final to awake in hell. No way of redemption.

No way of reprieve. And therefore eternity. Never again to fear sumptuously, never again to dress in purple, and to plead, as it were, for just a sip of water.

And how he needed that water upon his tongue. That tongue which doubtless had cursed the poor beggar.

That tongue which had blasphemously praised the God that it knew not. that tongue now needed a sip of cold water.

All that tongue when we come to consider of the rich man. That boastful tongue. That boastful tongue as it spoke of relying upon the promises of how it looked upon the Lord as being so wonderful and how the pride of the heart shows itself in the Pharisee.

[12 : 49] But how the poor beggar, look how he appeared, rags and sores. Oh, how true the scripture is with regard to this.

He was a mass of putrefying sores, wasn't he? poor old Job. He knew something of this pathway. He knew what it was to be rich in this world's goods and stripped of them.

And I know this, that if the Lord deals with your soul, this world's goods will mean nothing to you compared to eternity. Eternity, tremendous sound.

To guilty souls, a dreadful wound. But oh, if Christ and heaven be mine, how sweet the accent, how divine. Now it would appear that he was able to see the pleasure that this poor beggar was now enjoying.

We know not, and it's not right to speculate on God's word, but it would seem apparent that to add to his torment in hell, that he could see the pleasures that that poor beggar was enjoying.

[14 : 15] How all his sores had now gone, how that body of sin and death had now completely disappeared, and how his spotless soul was gathered with the church triumphant, and how he doubtless realised, as he was informed by Abraham, there was a great gulf fixed, that he could never, never attain the pleasures that that dear man Lazarus was then enjoying.

Solemn, isn't it? But it's true, and does it cause us an examination of our own hearts? we know not why the Lord has led us to this portion, or even allowed us to feel a little liberty in speaking from it.

But it is God's word, and it's a word which, as far as I can remember, I've only ever spoken once from before. And yet, it's a word surely that should be proclaimed upon the housetops as a warning to dead sinners, those who were twice dead, dead in a form of religion, and dead in sins and trespasses.

Now you see how he speaks, for I have five brethren, and how he sought, you see, that even for his brethren, he knew his own condition now was beyond recovery.

but he said, remember thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things and likewise let us evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented.

[16 : 08] Beside this, between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed, and that gulf we feel here below. you can't feel a union to a fallacy if you're taught by grace, if you know anything of the experience of the love of God within your soul, you can't mix with them.

It's that great gulf that is mixed. Now you see, the world link, many a time, I've been able to speak to the world link.

It may be like water upon a duck's back, but where the Lord has enabled me, on those few occasions and opened a door for me to speak, I've spoken.

That might be their greater condemnation, we know not. But to try and speak to a Pharisee, where do you get? When he's so imbibed in his own religion, so taken up with his own good deeds, his works, his righteousness, and everything else that goes with it.

But now you see, he's beginning to think, and he thinks of his brethren, he says, then I pray thee, he couldn't pray to God, I pray thee, the Father, that thou would send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

[17 : 47] Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. What does this mean? Well it means this, we have the scriptures, we have Moses, we have the law, how many are there today that know the law work?

How many are there today that really know Moses, the giver of the law? Thou shalt not. The rich man didn't.

He didn't know anything about Moses. He never knew what it was to be condemned under the law. He never knew what it was to be a sinner in the sight of God.

Never knew what it was to have broken the law of God. But there it was, he was in hell now, and yet during his lifetime there was the law, there was Moses, and he wouldn't listen.

He wouldn't listen to God's word. He wouldn't listen with regard to the law of God. And it's a terrible thing when men and women listen to the law of Moses, we'll hear it, and we'll not take heed, and we'll not listen to it.

[19 : 04] But when the Holy Spirit works, what a difference it makes. You see, the Pharisees religion is all love, and all based upon what they've done and what they're doing.

And they like others to see it too, don't they? But how you see the law, it cuts a man down, it's a schoolmaster. And if you and I know anything of the law, it's like a schoolmaster, it teaches us, and it will bring us to Christ.

It will teach us what we are, it will show us what we are, and we shall know that Moses and that law we could never, never keep.

The law was broken, as those tables of stone were broken. Abraham reminded him of this. Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.

You and I have Moses and the prophets. there were the prophets. How in the scriptures, in the Old Testament, you see the Jews, they had the Old Testament, they had the law, and they had the prophets, and how they were looking, and they couldn't look into the prophets, they couldn't believe those things which were prophesied.

[20 : 33] And you know the Pharisees, they can't believe they're sinners. they can't believe that they're in need of salvation. They can't believe that there is a God.

They can't believe that there's a day of judgment. They can't believe they've got to stand before a just and a holy God. Do you? You see, you have a profession of religion, and that profession is either living or it's dead.

It's one or the other. And it's a solemn thing to have any profession, whatever, unless it's real. And to hear the gospel, week after week, to be warned, but how solemn, how little warning there is in the day in which we live.

And if ever there was a day in which a warning, or the trumpet should sound, a warning with regard to the things which will shortly come upon this earth, the prophets have foretold them, it is in the day in which we live.

Now you see, they have Moses. Now Moses then represented the law, and the prophets, they prophesied not only the coming of the Lord Jesus, but they also prophesied what it would be to be destitute of the faith and the knowledge of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

[22 : 09] But you see, their minds were so warped. They were so taken up with earthly things, they were expecting an earthly king. Like so many today.

They get so much joy, don't they, so much pleasure out of their religion. salvation. And they expect the crown of glory at the end of it. Now you see, there was the prophets.

And how the prophets, they prophesied the Messiah. Messiah. If you take Isaiah for instance, and how he testifies of the Lamb of God, and how he speaks that when they see him, they shall not desire, they see no beauty in him, but they shall desire him.

Their eyes are blinded. Have you ever seen any beauty in the gospel? There is a beauty in it. There is something ever so blessed in the gospel, in the prophets, the prophecy.

That which is to come. You see, that is what the prophets were proclaiming. Moses was speaking with regard to the law, and that which had already taken place. Thou shalt, and thou shalt, and thou shalt not.

[23 : 30] And that was the law. But the law was broken. Now the prophets were proclaiming the blessed gospel, and those things which were to take place in the future, for the coming Messiah.

And then, how Isaiah speaks, as he was led, just as it had already taken place, he was led as a lamb to the slaughter.

And yet, he opened not his mouth. How it was absolutely fulfilled in every detail, the prophecy of the coming, the suffering, the work of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus. How, you see, he was testified. Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

And there he was. And if we trace out the history of the Lord Jesus upon earth, we see everything there. But, how we see it, with the eye of faith, in our own experience.

[24 : 55] Unto us, a child is born. Not a great king, not a great warrior to fight our battles, with a great army.

Not a great captain, as it were. Seen by the natural eye. No, you see, the things of the spirit are spirit. The things of the flesh are flesh.

Now Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them. Have you heard Moses? Have you heard the prophets?

Do you believe in the coming judgment of God? Do you believe that you have an eternal soul?

Do you believe that the time will come when you'll have to stand before a just and holy God, and to give an account of the deeds done in your body? Whatever must that rich man have felt like, as he awoke in hell, and with all his money, with all his wealth, whatever he had, whatever he possessed, he was eternally lost.

[26 : 12] Now those who have been awakened out of the sleep of nature, this is what they dread more than anything, to be lost at last.

And he said, Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. You see, what he wanted, how he wanted Lazarus to go, how he wanted one to go from the dead, to testify to his brethren, of those terrible things and the torments that he was suffering.

You know, God is merciful. He's merciful to the greatest sinner. He's merciful to the damned, as they live upon this earth.

Because they do not see, and they will not see, the torment which is awaiting them, until they arrive there. And there's a God of mercy in that.

I know it's a terrible thought, but it's perfectly true. The mercy of God is shown to the damned, as they live upon this earth, in keeping from their eyes that which awaits them.

[27 : 45] But, to go further. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

One has gone unto them from the dead. And do they repent? Now you see things are different to what they once were.

Now we have the New Testament. Now we have the proof that one has gone to them. He came upon this earth, he walked upon this earth.

And now, he rose from the dead. Or how, you see, the gospel is tied up in these verses in such a way, by the prophecy.

You've got the law, you've got the prophets, the prophecy, those things which proclaim the future, both for sinner and for saint, and also the good news of salvation.

[28 : 58] One risen from the dead. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Now this is the crux of it all. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, have you heard Moses?

Have you heard the prophets? If not, you cannot be persuaded. There's not a truer portion, although the whole of God's word is true.

we wouldn't put a shadow of doubt upon it. But this last verse in this chapter is most solemn when we come to consider.

If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. Until the arrow of conviction enters the heart of a sinner, he has no knowledge, no thought, would he gone to eternity.

[30 : 07] He rests upon this world. He's satisfied in taking his fill of the riches of this world. It's a solemn thing, isn't it?

But, when the arrow of conviction enters that sinner's heart, and here we want to be very, very clear, the arrow of conviction, there are those arrows which go very deep.

There are other arrows which do not penetrate to the same depth, but it must be an arrow of conviction. A heaven sent arrow, one which goes into the heart of the sinner.

Now we read also in the gospel of a rich man. A young, rich man. Very similar to the one that we've read and speaking of this evening.

And he'd heard something with regard to eternal life. And he comes to the Lord Jesus. Could one become closer to this than the living God?

[31 : 25] He comes actually to the Lord Jesus. And he says, what must I do to be saved? Now it shows how close we can come to the real thing, doesn't it?

And then to be lost at last. He had everything that he could possess. What must I do to be saved? And the Lord Jesus spoke with regard to the law of Moses.

Oh, he was proud. He said, I've kept all these from my youth home. He said, right now go and sell all that thou has. And give to the poor. What's your religion worth?

Is it worth that? Now you see the young man, he was sad. He couldn't do it. He couldn't do it. What's the hymn writer?

It says, Jesus my all. Not Jesus my part. Jesus my all to heaven is gone. He whom I fix my hopes upon.

[32 : 29] The law and the prophets. And thus you see the Lord Jesus prophesied to that rich young man. But it was beyond his capability. He couldn't let go of the things of time.

Now he said, if they hear not Moses and the prophets. If you can't believe rightly that you're a sinner. If you can't believe rightly that hell will be your portion.

If the Lord doesn't appear for you. He and he alone, he must come from the dead. Now, I like this. It's a wonderful, a blessed expression.

When we come to consider it. I say it's a wonderful, it's a blessed expression. One coming from the dead. Here's a poor sinner. And I know what I'm speaking about here.

Here's a poor sinner under the law. He's heard the law. He believes the law. He knows the law. And he's a condemned sinner under the law. Because he's a guilty sinner.

[33 : 39] He believes the prophets. He believes that his soul will be lost. He believes in the eternal bliss of the saved.

He believes in the eternal damnation of the wicked. And he feels to be one of them. And he is almost in the same state as this rich man in hell, feelingly.

And then one rises from the dead. Something which has never happened, never expected. A living Christ appears.

One who says, take that sinner. Place upon my person all the punishment due to him.

And I will take the burden. I will take the punishment that was due to that sinner. And he will live eternally with me, without spot and without wrinkle.

[34 : 47] It's a wonderful feeling. I believe, I'm certain. It is the most wonderful condition that a child of God can be in whilst upon this earth, apart from perhaps his last moments, when he sees that one coming from the dead.

A risen Christ. Now you see, the Lord Jesus is the one.

And when one sees him, having seen the law of the prophets, being condemned under the law, and then to see him, the Lord Jesus.

You know, it's sweet, isn't it? Lovely to see the Lord Jesus, to know him. There's something real. You see, all the pleasures of a false religion, where does it get you?

Nowhere. It may fill you with pride. It may cover up your sin and choke your tears, perhaps.

[35 : 53] it may calm your conscience, but it won't go any farther than that. But how sweet the name of Jesus else.

In a believer's ear. Now see the difference between these two. There's this poor wretch. wretch. Oh yes he is, a poor wretch in hell. One who was so full of self, so full of everything. And here he is now stripped of everything in hell.

A poor wretch. And there he is today. And there he will be eternally. The other poor wretch, who had known nothing of the life that the rich man had had.

And yet now he's faring sumptuously. He's clothed, not in purple. He's arrayed in white clothes. He's been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

[37 : 01] He's now with Abraham and all the glorified saints in glory and blessing and praising this God of risen Christ.

Of risen Christ. Now you see, man today, imagine not what we see.

You can point out to the ungodly the various miracles that take place upon the face of the earth. Miracles take place today as they've always taken place.

We've only got a look in the spring. We see the miracle of life after the winter. We see the seeds fermenting. We see the corn.

We see the fruits of the earth springing forth. If that's not a miracle, what is? We see others who perhaps have been laid aside with terrible sickness, suddenly cured for no reason whatever.

[38 : 05] Others who may have been blinded, their sight is restored just as it was when the Lord Jesus was upon earth. Miracles take place today. And there are those.

We know that none have actually ever died apart from those whom the Lord raised, who have risen from the dead. But here we have the blessed Saviour. neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

And he did rise from the dead. And you cannot persuade them. All the preaching in the world will never persuade them until that arrow, the conviction, enters the soul.

How solemn it is. And yet, how wonderful to know anything by experience of the love of God. Well might Agar speak how Agar, he says, two things am I required of thee.

Deny me not then before I die. Remove far from me vanity and lies. Vanity and lies is a parasitical religion. Deny me then not before I die.

[39 : 29] Remove far from me vanity and lie. Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say who is the Lord, or lest I be poor and still, and take the name of my God in vain.

for what a solemn thing it is to be destitute of the things of God. Or may the Lord so bring it home to us more and more, so that whilst still in the land of the living, before we enter that place of torment, that we may be given that grace of God and the love of God which passeth all understanding, that great gulf, so great that the mercy of God, and we often talk of the greatness of the mercy of God, don't we?

But you see, this man was beyond the mercy of God how he had to call upon Abraham, and how Abraham told him and reminded him of what his life had been, also of the life of the poor beggar, and also reminded him that his place was an eternal destiny, that great gulf which is fixed.

Do you believe in it? As the Lord brought these things home to you solemnly, who I believe, I've known something of it. I trust there are some here who've known something of it by experience.

If not, may we have been able to beg this very night for the mercy of God, to prevent us from entering that place of torment, that place where there is no deliverance, that place where there can be no mercy, that place where there's not a sip of water, to ease that tongue which has spoken and taken upon it the name of God.

[41 : 54] And how far then can we go with the truth? What do we know of this one that has risen from the dead? God's love for you to be saved? If you and I are saved, I'm sure of this, our voice will ring eternity with praises unto this one that rose from the dead.

Sinners like you and I, wretches like you and I, are brought safely home from all their sin, from all their corruption, from all their sores, and their soul is safely gathered home.

And that body of sin and death which has caused them so much concern, falls to dust, and they leave it forever, to be forever with the Lord.

Abraham saith unto him, and they had Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. We must leave it. May the Lord have his blessing.

[43 : 16] Amen. One two three three four three