

09 June 24 Sermon Luke 16.19-31

Introduction

- "What are some things your family never talked about around the dinner table?" Sex, money, politics...
- Today we are going to dare to talk about money
- **QUESTION:** What are some things you know the Bible says about money and possessions?

Context and background

- Luke - theme of God's compassion for the marginalised and needy
- Lost and saved - Luke 15
- **Luke 16.10-13**
“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own? No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”
- **Luke 16.14-15**
“The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God’s sight.”
- **Luke 16.19-31**
- All about what we love most, and especially the tug in our hearts between God and material well-being.
- The Pharisees' love of money led them to love a religion that allowed materialism rather than God himself.
- Tough stuff! This is what preaching is for - the heart. The mind more in the Watford Word articles.
- Only parable to travel into the next world.
 - Important not to press the detail of the parable to much as description of afterlife.

Rich Man

- What do we know about the rich man?
- Assumed to be blessed
- He and his brothers knew

Leviticus 19.18

“You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”

- Lazarus visible to rich man regularly. That’s his sin. Knew law - heard regularly in synagogue that no one of Israel should be neglected.
- Sees Lazarus as his servant even in the afterlife
- The warning that is useless to the rich man is useful to us.

Lazarus

- What do we know about Lazarus?
- Assumed to be cursed
- 'laid' - 'ballo' - thrown
- Only character in all parables to have a name - “God helps”.
- • The rich man is nameless (v.20), whereas the poor man has a name. This is a major reversal of what is normal (poor people are nameless nobodies, while rich people have made a name for themselves), and will indicate the even greater reversal to come (post mortem) -- see v.25; also 6:20-21,24-25.
- Gate: large; portico; like a city or palace. Think entrance to Disneyland.
- Dogs not positive image - unclean.
- Rich man buried - no mention of burial for Lazarus - another indignity.
- In life dogs were his friends - in death it is angels.

Abraham

- What is the significance of Abraham in this story?
- “According to Jewish legends, Abraham will sit at the entrance to hell to make sure that no circumcised Israelite is cast in.” Evans, NABC page 251.
- Note: he does not argue that this is what he deserves
- Rich - this is not a spiritual impediment, if.....
- **Zacchaeus** - “Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.” (Luke 19:9 NIV11)
 - The right way for the wealthy to respond to the call to follow Jesus
 - He did not stop being wealthy, but his wealth stopped being his identity. he was now a disciple.

Useful Points for us

1. Responsibility and compassion
2. Temporal vs. eternal values
3. The Consequences of Ignoring Scripture
4. Repentance and Opportunity
5. Judgment and Mercy
6. Role of Wealth
 - Importantly, the parable illustrates that wealth itself is not condemned but the attitude towards it and how it is used matter greatly.
 - Abraham, who was also wealthy, is depicted positively, which suggests that wealth can be a tool for good if used righteously.

Follow-up questions:

- What do the different destinations of Lazarus and the rich man tell you about their spiritual state while on earth?
- Why do you think Lazarus is with Abraham specifically?
- What is the message of that connection? In what way should “Moses and the Prophets” be enough for the rich man?
- What does this tell you about the sufficiency and power of God’s Word?

Personal questions:

- There are many possible lessons from this parable including having compassion on the needy and the potential dangers of wealth.
 - But what do you take from it for yourself?
- The whole chapter has been about money, loyalty to one master and humility towards God’s Word.
 - What does it look like in your own life to be humble to the Bible?