

CTW: Isaiah 56:1-8

Reading: Luke 16:19-31

AGD: One of the most painful things I hear people talk about is when they are hurting and other people dismiss or deride them for their pain. Paul Harvey said the people like to hear about misfortunes that befall others because it makes them happy it didn't happen to them.

Job 12:5 says it this way, "Those who are ease hold calamity in contempt as if it is reserved for those whose feet slip." The rich man in this parable must have felt that way.

1. Rich in every way
  - a. Clothed in purple and had linen underwear
  - b. Feasted sumptuously
  - c. The poor man was laid outside the gate, covered with sores and hungry
  - d. Insult to injury the dogs licked his sores!
2. Polar opposite lives and opposite fates
  - a. Jesus likes to contrast the things of this world with the world to come
  - b. He likes to remind us that the way God sees things is very different than how we see them
  - c. The first shall be last and the last shall be first
3. The did have one thing in common their fate was final and reversible
  - a. In this life things can turn around but wherever you are when you pass from the world is fixed
  - b. "Between us and you a great chasm has been fixed"
  - c.
4. The rich man never noticed Lazarus
  - a. It was only in torment—under the judgement of God—that he noticed
  - b. Even then he wants Abraham to do his bidding and have Lazarus function as his servant
    - i. To bring a drop of water
    - ii. To warn his brothers
    - iii. Some commentators believe that Jesus was saying the rich man was the nation of Israel that failed to reach out to those beyond the gate
5. The Pharisees are the focus of this teaching for they were confident in their riches
  - a. Jesus said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a person who has everything to be saved—because wealth gives us security and we don't realize we our need before God
  - b. But it fits us too because we are confident in a lot of things that look secure here
    - i. "not that bad"
    - ii. "others are worse"
    - iii. Outward compliance with Religion
    - iv. The thing God wants to see is a changed heart—one that is broken in repentance and given to Him

6. The rich man is unidentified but the poor man is named
  - a. Lazarus—"God is my help"
    - i. How many of you know that everything changes when God becomes your help?
  - b. Died and was carried by angels to Abrahams side (paradise)
  - c. He wasn't saved because he was poor. The rich man was not lost because he was rich. The saved are simply the ones who find their help in the Lord and the lost are only the ones who refuse the gift of grace
  - d. Prosperity in this life can hid the truth from us
    - i. We are so accustomed to our will, our thoughts, our beliefs, our opinions
    - ii. But God doesn't have an opinion—God holds the truth—and Jesus is giving us a peek here into the afterlife
    - iii. As my friend Will Wells said the other day, "It's like Jesus is pulling back the curtain for a moment and saying, "Here take a look!"

## CLOSE

- Have you ever noticed the poor outside your gate?
- Have you ever taken a peek at what lies for you on the other side of your death?
- Have you ever heard the Scripture speaking to you?
  
- Have you ever noticed the Christ who rose from the dead?
  - Jesus died in your place and accepted upon Himself the penalty of your sin—death and separation from God.
  - While we were still sinners Christ died for us
  - See whether you realize it or not God has noticed you.
    - He noticed you outside the gate and Christ went outside the gate to give His life for you
    - You are ever noticed

Such is the depth of His love. Such is the length to which God has gone to reach both the poor without hope and the rich who have need of nothing. God doesn't want you to end up on the other side of the chasm. He loves you and wants you to spend eternity with Him.

Ever noticed?