

"THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS"**Introduction**

1. A very memorable Parable of Christ
2. It is a window on life after death
3. We all need to pay careful attention

1. WE SEE THAT GOD MAY GIVE WEALTH TO THE WORLDLY

- 1) We must not measure "blessing" wrongly:
 - (i) NOT necessarily: health, wealth, comfort
 - (ii) ONLY where God makes these of spiritual value
- 2) Here is a man with no thought of God, yet:
 - (i) lives like a king – details
 - (ii) his godlessness shown by his selfishness
- 3) Never think that blessing = pleasure:
 - (i) this is the worldly man's mistake
 - (ii) nothing like Christ's words: "Lay not up..."
OBSERVE: Is this not still true: sportsmen / film-stars / TV personalities...
APPLICATION: Never equate blessing with wealth

2. GOD, INDEED, MAY GIVE HARDSHIP TO HIS OWN

- 1) It is clear from the sequel Lazarus was good:
 - (i) after death, to glory
 - (ii) with saints
- 2) Yet, in this life he had much pain:
 - (i) extreme poverty
 - (ii) ill health
 - (iii) cruel neglect
 - (iv) the company of dogs!

- 3) Why does God sometimes do this?
 - (i) to teach us to pray: Ex. Manasseh...
 - (ii) to teach us to seek our happiness only in God Himself
 - (iii) that we might value heaven above earth
- 4) Often people turn to God only when they come to an end of themselves:
 - (i) Look at the Prodigal Son
 - (ii) The woman with the issue
 - (iii) "I had been undone if I had not been undone". This is so true.
APPLICATION: Earthly troubles are often blessings in disguise.

3. WHAT MATTERS IS WHERE WE SPEND ETERNITY

- 1) What a difference here! v.22-23
APPLICATION: This is what happens at death
- 2) Be clear: Lazarus not saved by poverty – he had the love of God in his soul. Proof.
- 3) The rich man had no faith or love – as his life-style showed.
APPLICATION: Do you think to help the poor?
- 4) In hell the state is fearful:
 - (i) look how they are punished
 - (ii) see how they envy the believer
 - (iii) see how they fear the worst
 - (iv) notice: how precious the Bible is!
- 5) Be clear: this is how people are in the world beyond death: two places:
OBSERVE: This is not Purgatory but Hell
APPLICATION: Christ tells us this so that we may all cry to God for mercy.

CONCLUSION

1. Do you believe this?
2. Ought you not to believe?
3. "How shall we escape...?"

PSALMS**5: 1 – 8****7: 10 -15****18: 16 - 20**