

BIBLE STORY: THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

Luke 16:(14-15) 19-31

Central Thoughts

- To trust in one's works or money for salvation is an abomination to the Lord because it rejects Christ who died upon the cross for our salvation.
- The rich man made a god out of his own works and accomplishments.
- The beggar Lazarus trusted in Jesus, the Seed of Abraham for his salvation.
- God's Word is the only thing that can bring about the miracle of repentance and faith in Christ.
- Abraham's bosom is a picture of the comfort, peace, and joy of heaven for all who trust in Christ.

Discussion Questions

According to verses 14 and 15, to whom was Jesus especially directing this parable?

The Pharisees, who were lovers of money and who justified themselves before men. Their money, works, and accomplishments were their idols.

What does God think of the things we trust and value more than Him?

They are an abomination (foul and dirty) in His sight because they mark a rejection of the Lord.

What were the Rich Man's purple, fine linen, and sumptuous fare a sign of?

He was a man of great wealth. Purple and fine linen meant that he had a position of high standing in the community and he ate and drank in abundance of the very best food and drink.

How is the beggar Lazarus described?

He is sick, full of sores, and laid at the rich man's gate desiring nothing more than to eat the crumbs that fell from his table. Dogs licked his sores.

What is a beggar?

Someone who has nothing and is totally dependent upon another

What is Abraham's bosom a symbol of?

The comfort and peace of heaven where we are forever with the Lord

What is father Abraham noted for in the Old Testament (see Genesis 15:6)?

Abraham believed in the Lord and his faith in the Lord was accounted to him as righteousness.

Who are the ones who join father Abraham in heaven?

Those who trust in the Seed of Abraham, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for salvation

What is Hades?

The place of the dead who do not worship Christ, hell

Why did Lazarus go to heaven?

He trusted in the Lord Jesus alone for salvation.

Why did the Rich Man go to hell?

He trusted in His money, works, position, and accomplishments rather than Christ. These things became his gods.

What had the Rich Man's idolatrous faith turned him into?

He died a very selfish and arrogant man. Even from the grave he tries to exalt himself over Lazarus.

Why is hell a place of torment and pain?

Those in hell are without Christ, who is the only source of peace and comfort

What does father Abraham say to the rich man that showed he worshiped his money and works?

"In your lifetime you received your good thing." The rich man trusted in these things more than anything else. They became his god, but they could not save him.

What promise does the believer in Christ have, even if they suffer greatly in this life?

They will be comforted in heaven where they will be with Christ their Savior forever

Can people pass from heaven to hell or from hell to heaven once they die?

No, there is a great gulf or chasm fixed between the two

What final thing did the rich man want Lazarus to do?

Warn his five brothers, who also trusted in their works, so that they would not come the place of torment.

What is father Abraham talking about when he identifies Moses and the prophets as the only ones who can bring these brothers to repentance and faith in Christ?

God's Word, the Old Testament Scriptures written by Moses and the prophets, is the only thing that can bring about the miracle of repentance and faith in Christ for salvation from sin.

What does the rich man insist will bring about their conversion?

If one rises from the dead and visits them

How does father Abraham answer the rich man?

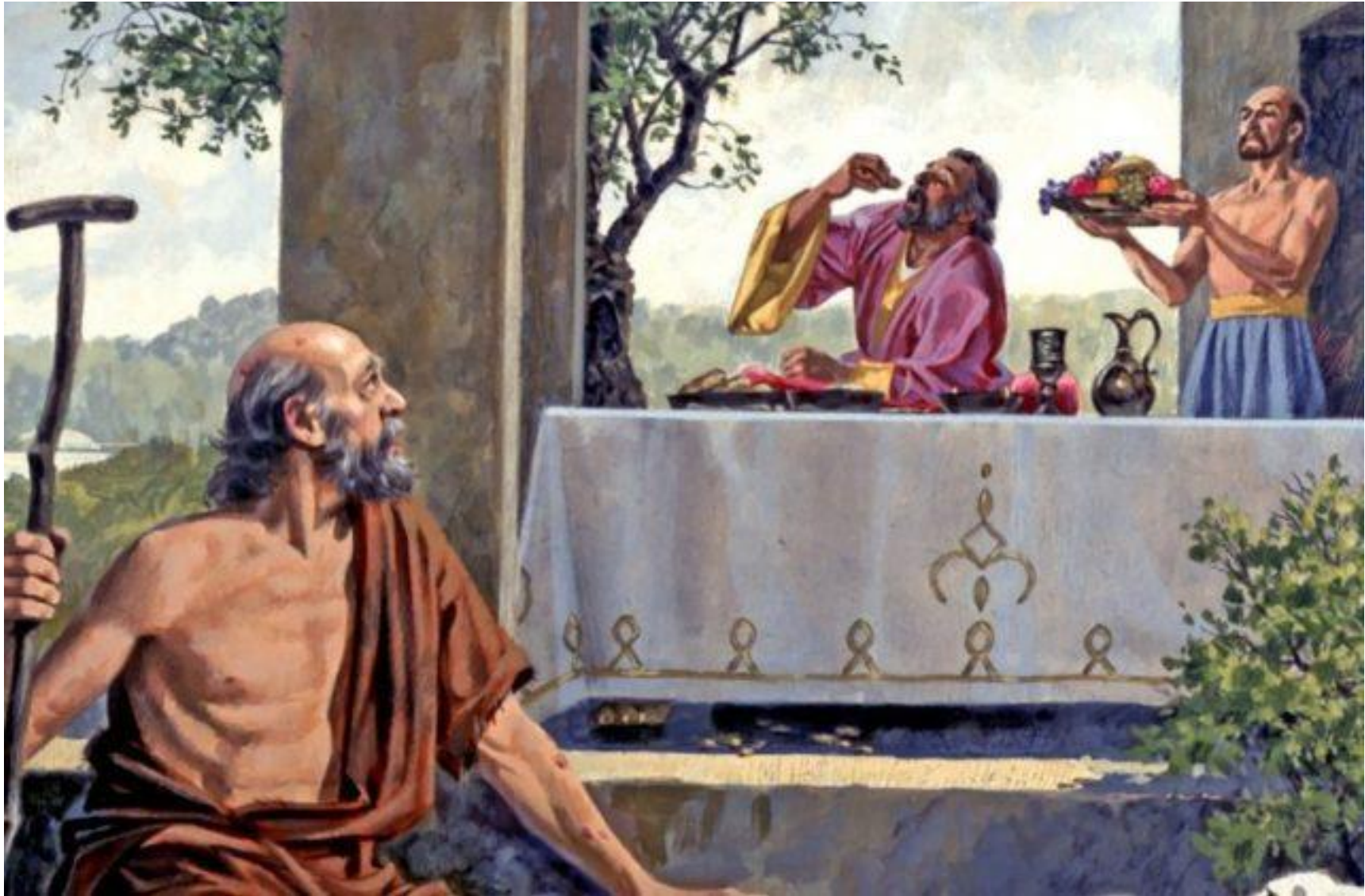
Not even the resurrection of Christ will bring about the repentance and faith of an unbeliever apart from the testimony of God's Word. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing (believing) by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17).

Meditation on the Bible Story

To be a beggar, one who is totally dependent upon another, is a great description of what it is to be a Christian. The Christian is totally dependent upon Christ, who died for our sins and who gives us the gift of eternal life and salvation. He is the promised Seed of Abraham, and through faith in Him we are declared righteous—justified and forgiven. Our own works, accomplishments, money, education, and position in life cannot save us. Only Christ can save because only He died upon the cross in payment for our sins. Both men were sinners. Neither one of them could have saved themselves. The difference between the two was the faith of the heart. The rich man trusted in his riches. The beggar Lazarus trusted in the Lord. We need God's Word. Only the testimony of the Scriptures from Moses and the prophets can bring about the miracle of repentance and faith in Christ. God's Word exposes our sins of idolatry and calls us to repentance. But where the Holy Spirit works faith, there is the promise of forgiveness and salvation with the Lord forever. We look forward to the day when we die and the angels carry our souls to heaven, Abraham's bosom, where we will forever be with the Lord and where He will wipe away all tears from our eyes.

Prayer on the Bible Story

Heavenly Father, by Your Word bring us to repentance for all the ways in which we trust in ourselves, our works, our money, or any of the pleasures of life. Give us firm faith in Jesus Christ our Savior, so that trusting in Him like the beggar Lazarus, we might have the gift and promise of everlasting life with You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



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