

“The End Time Dimension Of The Parables”

Lesson #4 - The Rich Man and Lazarus, Part 3

Focus: “The Bible is the fully inspired Word of God. It is the infallible revelation of His will. It is the authoritative revealer of doctrine, and it is the trustworthy record of God’s acts in history. Prayerfully and humbly read and study the Bible more. For in it we will find hope for every crisis. But more importantly, we will find our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who died to redeem us from our sins.” ref. Ps. 119:142; Isa. 8:20; 41:21-29; Matt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4; 24:25-27, 32, 44-49; Jn. 3:16-17; 5:39; 8:58; 17:17; 1 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 1; 2 Pet. 1:16-21

READ: Luke 16:19-31; John 8:37-39; John 11:45-53; John 12:9-10,19; Matthew 15:21-28; *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 260-271, *Ellen G. White*

Review: How can we lay up treasures beside the throne of God? “Far better might he lay up his money beside the throne of God, by using it to do good. Death cannot make any man poor who thus devotes himself to seeking eternal riches. But the man who hoards his treasure for self can not take any of it to heaven.” (COL, p. 266.1) ref. Luke 12:13-40. See the Biblical background to this idea in Matt 6:19-34, Matt. 7:1-29; Matt. 8:1-34; Matt. 9:1-38; Matt. 10:1-42; Matt. 11:1-30; Matt. 12:1-50; Matt. 13:1-58; Matt. 14:1-36; Matt. 15:1-39; Matt. 16:1-28; Matt. 17:1-27; Matt. 18:1-35; 19:1-30; Matt. 20:1-34; 21:1-9. What shall we be able to carry to the heavenly courts? “Money cannot be carried into the next life; it is not needed there; but the good deeds done in winning souls to Christ are carried to the heavenly courts.” (COL, p. 266.2) see Rev. 22:12

The Second Application of the Parable

1. Whom does the rich man represent? “The rich man was favored with every temporal and spiritual blessing, but he refused to cooperate with God in the use of these blessings. Thus it was with the Jewish nation.”¹ (COL, 267.3) Ex. 19:1-8; Deut. 7:6-9; Isa. 5:1-7; Rom. 3:1-2

Note 1: In the strictest sense of the word, the rich man represents the Pharisees. This is true for at least five reasons: 1) The rich man addressed Abraham as father, and Abraham addresses the rich man as son. (Luke 16:24-25; Luke 16:27; Luke 16:30). The Jews in general, but the Pharisees in particular claimed Abraham as their father (see, John

¹ The End Time Dimension of the Parables, #4, p. 31, by Pastor Stephen Bohr, SecretsUnsealed.org

8:37-44); **Matthew 3:9**). 2) The Pharisees claimed to have a special closeness to Abraham. **Jesus** would never have described the Gentiles as being in the “bosom of Abraham”. 3) The rich man had five brothers. These could very well represent other Jewish denominations of **Christ’s** day: The Sadducees, the Herodians, the Scribes, the Zealots, and the Essenes. 4) It is clear that the rich man believed in the immortality of the soul because he asked Abraham to send someone to his brother from among the dead (**verse 30**). This is precisely what the Pharisees believed! 5) The brothers of the rich man “had Moses and the Prophets” (**verse 31**). It was the Jews who had Moses and the Prophets (**John 5:39-46**).

2. What did **Jesus** teach regarding natural genetic lineage? “**Christ** recognized no virtue in lineage. **He** taught that spiritual connection supersedes all natural connection.” (COL, p. 268.2) **ref. Jn. 6:22-71**
3. What did **Jesus** say to a gentile woman who begged **Jesus** to heal her daughter, and what did the woman say in return? “*It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to the dogs. . . . Truth, Lord: Yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the masters’ table.*” **Matthew 15:26-27; see Mark 7:27-28**

Note 2: There are several parallel words in this passage to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus: Crumbs, dogs, table, children. This would indicate that Lazarus represents the Gentiles. The Jews referred to the Gentiles as “stones” (**Matthew 3:9-10**), “dogs” (**Matthew 15:26**) and “swine” (**Matthew 7:6**). **see John 4:9; Acts 10:25-28**

4. **Thought Question:** Sometimes it is important not only to read what a passage says, but also what it does not say. Does this passage use any of the following words (in bold type)?

“Immediately after he died,” (**Luke 16:22**) “His body was buried,” (**Luke 16:22**) “his soul was in everlasting torments,” (**Luke 16:23**) “send the soul of Lazarus,” (**Luke 16:24**) “being in the everlasting torments of hades,” (**Luke 16:23**) “in this eternal flame,” (**Luke 16:24**) “his soul is comforted.” (**Luke 16:25**). The sobering fact is that the words “soul” and “everlasting” are missing!²

5. What indication do we have in the parable that the rich man believed in the immortality of the soul? “*Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.*” (**Luke 16:30**)

² *ibid.*, p. 31-32

6. Did **Jesus** believe a dead person could impart a message to the rich man's five brothers? *"And he [Abraham] said unto him [the rich man], If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."* (**Luke 16:31**)

Note 3: It is clear that **Jesus believed in the resurrection of the dead**, not the immortality of the soul. The word "rise" in this text is used repeatedly by **Luke** to describe the **resurrection** (see, **Luke 18:33; Luke 24:7; Luke 24:46; Acts 26:23**). It is also used by **Jesus** in **John 11:24-25** to describe **His own resurrection**.

7. **Though Question:** Why did **Jesus** employ the proper name "Lazarus" in this one parable? Hint: The answer to the question is found in **John 12:9-11**; and supported in the book "*Christ's Object Lessons*": "**Christ's last and crowning miracle was the raising of Lazarus of Bethany**, after he had been **dead four days**. The Jews were given this **wonderful evidence of the Saviour's divinity**, but they rejected it. **Lazarus rose from the dead and bore his testimony** before them, but **they hardened their hearts against all evidence**, and even sought to take his life." (COL, 265.1) **see 1 Samuel 6:6**
8. What did the Jews attempt to do to **Jesus** after he resurrected Lazarus? *"Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death."* (**John 11:53**) **see Matt.14:5; Mk. 14:1, 55; Lk. 18:33**
9. What did the Jews attempt to do to Lazarus after his resurrection? *"But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death."* (**John 12:10**) **see Matthew 23:37**

Note 4: The **words of Jesus** in the **parable of the rich man and Lazarus** were proved literally **true**. **Lazarus went to the Jews after rising from the dead and yet they did not believe in Jesus**. This is what **Jesus** meant when He said: *"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."* (**Luke 16:31**)

10. Was the Jewish nation "consumed" for their rejection of the **Messiah**? *"The King. . . . sent forth His armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city."*³ (**Matthew 22:7**) **Luke 21:20-24**

Note 5: The **city of Jerusalem was burned up by the Romans** (in 70 A.D.) [**God's instruments**] and the **Jews have been suffering fiery trials**

³ *ibid.*, p. 32-33

ever since (see, Luke 19:41-44) The kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles (see Acts 13:46-47). Deut. 28:47-68; Micah 3:12

The Final Application of the Parable

1. To whom does the parable apply in the end-time? “Today, there is a class in our world who are self-righteous. They are not gluttons, they are not drunkards, they are not infidels; but they desire to live for themselves, not for God. He is not in their thoughts; therefore they are classed with unbelievers.” (COL, p. 270.2) **ref. Rev. 3:14-22**
2. What is it that fits us to dwell with Christ in heaven? “To learn of Christ means to receive His grace, which is His character. But those who do not appreciate and utilize the precious opportunities and sacred influences granted them on earth, are not fitted to take part in the pure devotion of heaven. Their characters are not molded according to the divine similitude. By their own neglect they have formed a chasm which nothing can bridge. Between them and the righteous there is a great gulf fixed.”⁴ (COL, p. 271.1) **Matt.25:31-46**
3. **Thought Question:** Do you suppose that this parable could have something to do with the **message of Jesus** to the Laodicean church? What relationship do you see? Do you think the Laodicean Church could repeat this story? **ref. Revelation 3:14-22; Col. 4:1-16**

Closing: “The condition of many of those who claim to be the **children of God** is exactly represented by the message to the Laodicean church. There is opened before those who serve **God**, **truths of inestimable value**, which, brought into the practical life, show the difference between those **who serve God** and those who serve **Him** not. The earth itself is not more richly interlaced with views of golden ore than is the **field of revelation with veins of precious truth.** The **Bible is the storehouse of the unsearchable riches of God.** But those who have a knowledge of the **truth** do not understand it as fully as they might. They do not bring the **love of Christ** into the heart and life. The **student of the Word** finds himself bending over a **fountain of living water.** The church needs to **drink deeply of the spirituality of the Word.** Their **service to God** needs to be very **different** from the tame, lifeless, emotionless religious experience that makes many believers but little different from those who believe not, very similar in spirit to the unconverted.” **EGW , Manuscript 117, 1902**

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 33

Lesson #4- The Rich Man and Lazarus, Part 3

Words: Matthew 6:19 - Tune: I Sing The Mighty Power of God⁵

Why are you struggling day by day,
Does peace and joy abide?
Is your heart right, your treasure safe,
Within the coffers of God?
Lay not up treasure on the earth
Where moth and rust corrupt;
Where thieves break through and steal your all:
Revealing your hearts not right with God.

You say, I am rich and don't have needs
But, you are wretched,
Pitiful, poor, blind and naked,
Devoid of My blessings.
I counsel you to buy from Me
Gold refined in the fire;
Then you'll be rich,
Your shame covered,
Your eyes will clearly see.

What have you done for Me today
To help some soul to win?
You could not pay the price Christ paid
To ransom you from sin.
O may you live in harmony
With My saving word,
And use your means to glorify,
Rather leaving it to burn.

⁵ Words modified by Barbara J. Hales 5/20/2022.