

The Gospel of Luke

Three Requests from Hell (II)

Luke 16:19-31

1. **Two Antithetical Lives** (vs.19-21)

The rich man was very wealthy lived opulently, regularly clothed in the finest garments and feasting every day. Lazarus' destitution was so severe that he was clothed in sores and longed to eat the rich man's discarded scraps of food.

2. **One Complete Reversal** (vs.23-26)

Following their deaths (v.22), both men found their new condition to be the exponential inverse of the other's former life. The rich man's comfort in life was nothing compared to Lazarus' everlasting rest (Matt. 22:2; Luke 23:43), and Lazarus' living despair was nothing in comparison to the rich man's eternal torment (Matt. 13:42; 1 Thess. 1:9).

3. **Three Bold Requests** (vs.24-31)

A. **A Meager Relief** (vs.24-26)

The rich man shows no repentance and requests no forgiveness for his just punishment. Abraham refuses his request for a momentary abating of his consuming torment, and declares the eternal impossibility for the agony of his torment to be assuaged in any way (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 14:10-11).

B. **A Merciful Warning** (vs.27-29)

What the rich man had known and rejected in life is now of no benefit though he is convinced of it in death (Heb. 9:27). Abraham refuses to send a special messenger to his brothers, but rather urges that they listen to the Scriptures. The clarification and fulfillment of the gospel message is in Jesus, but the Old Testament laid all of the necessary groundwork so that men could believe in God and be saved.

I. There is Only One True God (Deut. 4:35; 6:4; Ex. 20:2-3)

II. The Holiness of God (Ex. 20:18-21; Num 20:11-13; Isa 6:1-5)

III. Man's Fundamental Duty Before God (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Mic. 6:8; cf. Mark 12:28ff)

IV. The Sinfulness of Man (Gen. 6:5, 8:21; Jer. 17:9-10)

V. The Wages of Sin is Death (Gen. 2:16-17; Ezek. 18:4)

VI. The Accountability of the Individual (Lev. 1:2, et al; Ezek. 18:20)

VII. God is Forgiving (Ex. 34:6-7; Mic. 7:18-19)

VIII. The Need for a Redeemer (Gen 3:15; 12:3; Job 19:25)

IX. God is the Redeemer (Ex. 6:6-7; Ps. 78:35; Isa. 43:14; 44:21-22)

X. The Need to Repent of Sin (Lev. 5:5ff; Ezek. 18:30-32; Jon. 3:4-10)

XI. The Need for a Substitute (Gen. 22:6-13; Lev. 16:7-10, 20-22; Isa. 53:4-5)

XII. The Need for an Alien Righteousness (Gen. 15:6; Isa. 53:11)

XIII. Justification by Faith not Works (Gen. 15:6; Hab. 2:4)

XIV. The Reliance Upon God's Grace (Ex. 33:19; 34:6-7; Ps. 51:1ff)

C. **A Miraculous Sign** (vs.30-31)

The Pharisees regularly explained away Jesus' miracles in order to deny His authority to instruct them (Matt. 9:34) while at the same time requesting for signs in order that they might believe (Luke 11:29). They would even reject the undeniable miracle of resurrection (John 11:43-44; 12:9-10), twice (Matt. 28:11-15). No miracle will result in the faith of someone who refuses to believe God's Word.

I. The Scriptures Are Powerful to Judge the Heart (Heb. 4:12)

II. The Scriptures Are Sufficient to Reveal Salvation (2 Tim 3:15-17)

III. The Scriptures Are God's Means for Salvation (Ja. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:18)