

THE RICH FOOL: UNANSWERED PRAYERS FROM HELL  
JESUS SERIES  
DR. ROGER BARRIER  
Luke 16:19-31  
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People have differing ideas about what happens when we die. All of these confusing opinions must seem rather strange to Jesus. He does not speculate. He knows. In Luke 16 He pulls back the curtain on eternity in the story of two men—one rich, the other poor; one in Heaven and the other in Hell.

LUKE 16:19-21

Which person (Dives or Lazarus) is more like you? You are probably stumped.

We are conditioned always to look up the ladder of wealth. We seldom look back down the ladder at all the people below us.

The evidence of our inner spiritual life is demonstrated by how we share our possessions with the poor and needy around us (1 John 3:17; James 1:27; 2:15-17).

LUKE 16:22

Jesus certainly believed in Hell. "Gehenna" was the fire-burning-garbage-dump word He utilized most often for Hell. He used it a recorded twelve times to describe Hell's horrors.

The Bible clarifies exactly what happens to us at death. Look at the CHART on the back of this insert.

Avoid the second death at all costs (Revelation 20:10-14).

LUKE 16:23-24

How could God stand by as people suffer in the most horrendous torment ever described? The answer lies in our failure to understand just how much God is mortified and offended by our sin. Our sin sent Jesus Christ to the cross. Fortunately anyone can avoid Hell—by grace.

Hell is a place of burning fire (Mark 9:43); intense thirst (Luke 16: 24-25); darkness, depression, isolation, weeping and utter anguish (Matthew 25:30); a place of torment (Luke 16:23-24) and a place of sorrow and remorse (Luke 16:25, 27-28).

While Hell has multiple levels, the ground at the foot of the cross in Heaven is perfectly level.

God never intended for anyone to go to Hell (Matthew 25:41). In fact, the Bible teaches that Hell was enlarged to make room for all the humans who were choosing to go there.

As horrible and tragic as Hell is, so Heaven is mercy, forgiveness, comfort and love (Revelation 21:1-5).

LUKE 16:25-26

By the way, this passage provides multiple insights into what life after death is like. Clearly and unmistakably, we are still alive; conscious of being ourselves; remember our former experiences and are not all going to have the same destiny in the unseen world.

Almighty God in His grace gave this rich man every opportunity to be saved. God spoke to him through material blessings, through Lazarus and through a man's death...and he wouldn't listen.

LUKE 16:27-31

The rich man prayed from Hell three non-answerable prayers:

1. The rich man prayed for mercy;
2. The rich man prayed for water;
3. The rich man prayed for a special resurrection testimony to his brothers.

The sad thing is that even today the rich man is still thirsty ... and he will always thirst.

THE APPLICATION

1. Share Christ with others. Our chance to share the gospel is over when we die.
2. Today is the day to decide for Christ. Our Heaven or Hell destiny is set in concrete the day we die.