

THE RICH FOOL
JESUS SERIES
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S-1740

•SLIDE #1: [background slide] I want to begin my sermon with a short video.
Explain video.

VIDEO: Post Mortem (3:16): Sermonspice.com, search heaven, page 8
Show video of people's opinions of what happens when we die.

•SLIDE #2: People have all sorts of opinions about what happens when we die.

•SLIDE #3: "When you die, they bury you in the ground and your soul goes to heaven, but your body can't go to heaven because it is too crowded up there already."

•SLIDE #4: "Maybe I'll die someday, but I hope I don't die on my birthday because it is no fun to celebrate your birthday if you're dead."

•SLIDE #5: "When you die, you don't have to do homework in heaven, unless your teacher is there, too."

•SLIDE #6: "Only the good people go to heaven. The other people to where it is hot all the time like in Arizona."

Great interest regarding life after death.

All of these confusing opinions sound rather strange to Jesus.
He does not speculate - He knows.
In Luke 16 He pulls back the curtain on eternity.

•SLIDE #7: READ LUKE 16:19-31.
("In hell..." What a shock! Most people stumble here. Surely there are other options.)

Series on the Teaching Jesus.
This may be a parable—since Lazarus is named, probably a real story.

•SLIDE #8: LUKE 16:19-21: There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

The rich man:

Unnamed by Jesus but named "Dives" by tradition. When Bible translated from Greek into Latin the Latin word for "Wealthy" is "Dives." So we will call him Dives.

Purple dye was very expensive. Made from a special fish and ranged in color from deep violet to deep scarlet. Fine linen was so delicate was called "woven air."

Set a fine table. Luxurious lifestyle.

Contrast Dives with Lazarus:
Beggar is a Greek word for utterly destitute.

Rich man covered with fine linens. Lazarus was “covered with sores” is the word “ulcerated.”
Medical term used by Dr. Luke.

“Longing to eat what fell from the table,” says that he did not get any crumbs. He just wanted some. So tantalizingly close; but so far away.

Only comfort he received was from the dogs that licked his sores.

Which one are you more like? You are stumped? Aren't you?

Well, I am not like Lazarus. Not that poor. I have food to eat, medical care. Dog has never licked my sores.

But, I am not like Dives either. I am not rich. I know people who live the life of luxury, but I am not one of them.

Ask the average American if they are rich and they'll respond: “No, I am not, I barely make it to my next pay check. But I know of people who are rich. I am not one of them.”

Why do we say that?

- SLIDE #9: Because we have been conditioned always to look up the ladder of wealth. No matter where we are on the ladder we can always find the people who have more than we have. We compare ourselves up the ladder and we feel we are not rich.

- SLIDE #10: We seldom look back down the ladder at all the people below us.

Jesus never said a word about the spiritual condition of these two men.

But, we can deduce a lot about Dives.

Our inner spiritual life is revealed by how we share our possessions with the poor.

- SLIDE #11: 1 John 3:17: “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?”

- SLIDE #12: James 1:27: Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress.”

STORY OF BRONWYN TAKING ME TO 4TH AVENUE LAST WEEK.

\$20 can't give them the money. Sandwiches, “we were just wondering what we were going to do for dinner.

Next Sunday: school teacher in thrift house: She felt humiliated. Wouldn't talk my money.

Homeless at McDonalds: “Here is \$20.”

Do you know how difficult it is to get a drink of water in this town?” He wanted to talk. He was lonely. He wanted a relationship—but Julie was inside waiting.

- SLIDE #13: LUKE 16:22: The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment,...

The rich man died and was buried... big funeral, pall bearers, expensive casket, lovely flowers, beautiful tomb.

The rich man died and was buried. The poor man died and was carried by Jesus—to glory.

Dives saw this dead man outside his door and invariably hired someone to drag the body away. To where? Place called Gehenna. Valley south of Jerusalem. Used in Israel's days of idolatry for sacrificing idols to fire god Molech. Later became place for burning dead bodies. By time of Christ had become a burning trash heap where the fires never out. Here they deposited the trash and bodies of dead animals and poor people like Lazarus that no one wanted.

“Gehenna” was Christ's most often used word for Hell. He used it 12 times in New Testament.

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT LIFE DOESN'T END AT DEATH.

Take out your bulletin and look at the CHART on the back of your insert.

This chart shows the state of a person--body, soul, and spirit--between the moment of death and the resurrection of his body.

SWITCH TO ROGER'S COMPUTER SO HE CAN DRAW.

¥SLIDE #14: Locate on the chart the word LIFE. Then follow the sequences shown on the chart:

At death, the bodies of all believers and unbelievers alike go to the grave.

At death, the spirits of believers go to paradise, in the presence of Christ.

At death the spirits of unbelievers go to Hades, which is the waiting place of torment.

Find the term RAPTURE, the bodies of believers will be resurrected from the graves and joined with their spirits and souls. This is the first resurrection.

Look at the GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT the bodies and spirits of all unbelievers will be resurrected from the graves and Hades, respectively (second resurrection). Every unbeliever will be judged. Lake of Fire is second death.

Avoid the second death at all costs.

•SLIDE #15: Luke 16:23-24: In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, “Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.”

If you have been in the hospital for surgery you can identify with his cry for just a drop of water. Have surgery and mouth is so dry. You will never forget that first ice chip.

People say, “I don't believe in Hell.

Jesus did.” 15 times in the New Testament Jesus described a place called Hell. Only 4 times did He mention The Lord's Supper.

¥SLIDE #16: WHAT IS HELL LIKE?

burning fire (Mark 9:43)

intense thirst (Luke 16: 24-25).

a place of darkness, depression, isolation, weeping and utter anguish. Read Matthew 25:30. There's no joy here - in sin or anything else. No joyous reunions as we so often pictured!

a place of torment (Luke 16:23-24).

a place of sorrow and remorse (Luke 16:25, 27-28)

Pilot of ASA: propeller breaks and engine left hanging: crashes, fire. Pilot died. Copilot trapped. People trying to get him out. Axe to break windshield. Fire behind cooks his back.

Awful. Shouldn't tell that in church. Well, at least I did not show pictures. Jesus did more than I did—He pointed to the fires of Ghenna.

Fly with cotton shirt and pants.

Once caught nylon robe on fire during a wedding.

Could the fire be symbolic? Many feel it is and that makes us feel better. I don't know why.

If the fire is a symbol then the reality is worse. Symbolism is used when conventional language is inadequate to describe something. The reality is always much more than the symbol.

•SLIDE #17: Different levels of Hell. Only one level in Heaven.

“Sheol” - Old Testament word used means place for wicked dead or simply the grave.

“Hades” New Testament Greek equivalent of Sheol.

“Gehenna” a burning trash heap where the fires were never allowed to go out. Christ chose to use this valley as a literal description of what hell was like.

“Tartarus” - used only in 2 Peter 2:4 - refers to the lowest Hell--the angels who sinned.

Lake Of Fire (Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8)

Adolf Hitler in lowest hell.

•SLIDE #18: Everyone is on the same footing at the foot of the cross—kneeling in worship and humility at the grace of Christ.

•SLIDE #19: God never intended for anyone to go to Hell (Mat. 25:41.) In fact, the Bible teaches that Hell was enlarged to make room for all the humans who were choosing to go there.

•SLIDE #20: Contrast: As horrible and tragic as Hell is, Heaven is that much comfort and fulfilling. READ REVELATION 21:1-5.

•SLIDE #21: LUKE 16:25-26: “But Abraham replied, “Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus his bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.”

•SLIDE #22: And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, not can anyone cross over from there to us.”

•SLIDE #23: By the way, insight into what is it like in the afterlife.

we are still alive

We are conscious of being ourselves. Lazarus is still Lazarus. Dives is still Dives

We remember our former experiences. Lazarus remembered Dives and Dives remembered

Lazarus. Dives remembered the life he used to live.

We are not all going to have the same destiny. Some are tormented in hell and some comforted in heaven.

Now let me make something clear. Almighty God in His grace gave this rich man every opportunity to be saved. This man woke up in Hell because this is where he chose to go.

- SLIDE #24: The first thing God did was to make him RICH. God blessed his investments and God prospered his farms and God used all of these material things to speak to his heart. In Romans 2, God says, "Don't you know that the goodness of God should lead you to repentance?"

Do you know why God has been so good to you? Many of you know this. Given you a good wife and healthy children and a lovely family and a certain amount of material blessings? Others, time to recognize God is being good to you because He wanted you to come to Him and acknowledge His grace.

When God saw that his riches would not bring him to salvation, God put a MISSIONARY on his front porch.

Remember Lazarus was the one Dives wanted to go to his brothers. Why? Because he had often heard Lazarus preach the gospel. The rich man would sit down to breakfast and off by the front porch he would hear Lazarus singing, "What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear..."

Every time he went out of his house Lazarus would witness to this rich man. He'd put his hands over his ears; he still wouldn't listen.

God used a third method to speak to this man's heart. LAZARUS DIED FIRST.

You would think that if you had somebody die on your front porch that you'd wake up. People go to funerals today and don't think that death may come to them. It's always somebody else.

God spoke to the rich man through material blessings...He spoke to him through Lazarus...He spoke to him through a man's death...and he wouldn't listen.

- SLIDE #25: LUKE 16:27-28: He answered, I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.

- SLIDE #26: LUKE 16:29-31: "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them." "No Father Abraham," he said, "but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent." He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

- SLIDE #27: Three Unanswered Prayers From Hell:

1. The rich man prayed for MERCY.

There will be no mercy in Hell. If we want mercy we had best ask for it now. The moment that we die, there will be no more mercy.

2. He prayed for a SPECIAL EVANGELIST to warn his brothers..

"Send Lazarus." Oh, no. He couldn't do that. Do you know why? Lazarus could testify no more.

When we leave this life to go to be with the Lord Jesus, our days of witnessing are over....Our days of soul winning are over...Our days of praying for precious souls are over.

By the way, God could not answer this prayer because Miracles don't save hard-hearted people.

"Surely if someone came back from the dead they would believe."

There was a another man named Lazarus who did come forth from the grave in John 11 and in John 12 the Jews tried to kill him to silence his testimony.

Some of you say this morning, "If I could just see something special happen...a miracle of some kind, I'd get saved." No, probably not.

Evidence of God is all around for those who look to see.

Listen dear people, Almighty God said to that man in torment in Hell, "They have the Bible. They have the Word of God. This is what leads a person to salvation."

3. The rich man prayed for WATER.

People have the crazy idea that you can satisfy spiritual needs with material things.

I have more and more counseled with successful people who are finding no satisfaction in all their work.

Achieved money, fame, success, power, look at me and say, "I am miserable. I have all these things I don't like who I am. This is not how I imagined it would happen."

"OK, I can help you straighten our your life and find fulfillment in the second half of you days.

If Lazarus to channeled the Mississippi River into Hell, the rich man would still be thirsty.

The sad thing is that this man today is still thirsty...He is still thirsty... and he will always thirst.

•SLIDE #28: One day the Lord Jesus stood up in the Temple and he cried out with a loud voice, "If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scriptures have said, out of his inner most being shall flow rivers of living water."

A few weeks later that same Lord Jesus was pinned between Heaven and earth with the rays of the blazing oriental sin blazing down upon His bruised body and he said, "I thirst!"

Do you know why He said, "I thirst"? He's just come out of the darkness of being made sin for you and me. He'd just been in Hell. He thirsted so we would not have to!

THE APPLICATION

•SLIDE #29: 1. Today is the day to decide for Christ. Our destiny for heaven or hell is set in concrete the day we die.

Rich man changed his mind about several things the minute he died.
Generous heart—Judgment—Lazarus—Destiny

(Repent)

μετάνοις = μέτα—νοις (change—mind)

Change your mind about Jesus

Having lunch with one of our members several weeks ago. Shared that he had been witnessing to a friend about Christ. The friend was deeply considering Christ, but had an interesting comment: "When I come to Christ, I don't want to be a hypocrite like so many others, and come to Christ just to keep from going to Hell. When I come to Christ, I want to come for a higher motive than that!" Sounds good, doesn't it?

Member went home and told his wife what he had said. She replied, "He must have no idea what Hell is going to be like. If he did, he would know that staying out of Hell is a great reason to come to Christ."

I came to Christ at seven because I did not want to go to Hell. Later on I grew into higher motives of following Christ.

•SLIDE #30: 2. Share Christ with others as a normal outgrowth of our everyday lifestyle. Our chance to share the gospel is over when we die.

I speak to some Christians today who have never won a soul to Christ.

Someday when our lives end we're going to realize how wonderfully precious it was to be able to win souls for Jesus. But then it will be too late. We have friends, neighbors, and loved ones who need Christ.

It's hard to preach on Hell: Must carefully keep emotions and issues in mind.

Church looking for a new pastor - applicant preached on subject; "The Wicked Shall be Turned into Hell." Committee turned thumbs down. Next candidate by strange coincidence preached from same verse; "Wicked Shall be Turned into Hell." - Committee said, "Call him; he'll do," Folks amazed - "Both used same text!" "Both preached 'Wicked Shall be Turned into Hell, but one was oh so sorry and the other was glad of it."