

The Life of Christ

Lesson 10

Luke 16:19-31

March 14, 2021

What Death Can Teach Us About Life

Introduction

There is the famous adage that “looks can be deceiving.” It is always surprising to us when someone famous struggles with mental illness and then commits suicide. However, studies have shown that the pressures of maintaining a lifestyle of fame, and the perception of that lifestyle, often leads those who are famous to severe mental health issues.

For our culture, this idea seems to be the opposite of what we’d expect. Wouldn’t those who have reached the pinnacle of their career and achieved fame and notoriety have everything they need?

Humans often have their priorities warped compared to our Creator’s priorities. We all too quickly look at outward appearances and not inward toward our hearts.

The people of Jesus’ day struggled with this too. They often believed those who were wealthy were more blessed by God than those who are poor. But this week, we’re going to see a story where Jesus flips that understanding upside down and shows us where real life can be found.

Memory verse: “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.’”—Luke 16:31

Pray and read Luke 16:19-31. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

What does the passage say?

1. How did the rich man dress and live? (Luke 16:19)
2. What was the beggar's life quality? (Luke 16:20)
3. Who did the rich man see far away? What did he ask of one of them? (Luke 16:23-24)
4. What was the response? (Luke 16:25-26)
5. What did the rich man request the second time, and why? (Luke 16:27-28)
6. Who should the rich man's family listen to instead? (Luke 16:29)
7. What did the rich man think would happen? (Luke 16:30)
8. What was the final response? (Luke 16:31)

What does the passage mean?

1. The rich man, from all appearances, looked like a man who had his life in order. In reality, he was far from God. What does God look at to determine who is and is not righteous? (1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 44:21; Proverbs 21:2; Jeremiah 17:10)
2. This story is a parable, so it is not a real story, but one that Jesus' audience would have related to easily. Each character and aspect of the story mirrors something in real life. Who would the rich man represent? (Luke 16:14) What about Lazarus? (Luke 15:1)
3. Throughout His ministry, Jesus continually pointed out how people had their understanding of who is and can be saved backward. Look at the Beatitudes in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Who is that is "blessed" (fortunate) before God? (Matthew 5:3-12) How is that different from what our culture expects?

4. "Moses and the Prophets" meant the entire Old Testament. It was all that was needed for someone to be convinced of the truth instead of a miracle. Why is it important to be convinced through the Scriptures instead of merely through miracles? (Matthew 7:22; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12)

Applying the passage

1. How have you looked at others' appearance and made judgments on their character, whether positive or negative? What steps can you take to see people as God sees them? (Matthew 7:15-20)

