



OVERLOOKED - LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN

4 JULY 2021 - SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Read Luke 16:13-15, and 19-31

On Sunday Shawn said, "People often read this passage as if it is about what happens when you die and miss that it's a powerful passage about money and power and living for others instead of ourselves." Do you agree, or disagree with this statement?

When looking at any passage of scripture it is good to understand what the speaker or writer is trying to communicate. How can we figure this out with a passage as complex as our passage for today?

Do you think this passage is a parable or a true story? What arguments could you make for each?

Parables can be prone to misinterpretation when we go beyond the purpose of the parable. Can you think of any examples of this? How might this passage be misused?

Read vs. 19-21

The contrast between the rich man and Lazarus is meant to disgust the hearer. What points here stand out to you? Why are these details included?

People often spend money on things for status. What examples can you think of this? Why do people do this? What can we do to correct this in ourselves?

Why do you think the rich man was nameless, while Lazarus was named? What reasons, do you think, there might be for this?

Read vs. 22-24

Why does the afterlife feature in this passage? What force does it give to what Jesus is saying?

Why is Abraham part of this passage? What effect would that have on the Pharisees?

Read vs. 25-27

In the middle of our passage, we get an example of arrogance when, in verses 24 and 27, the rich man suggests that Abraham ‘send Lazarus’ to do the things he wants. How might this have been natural in Jesus’ time, and does money and power lead to arrogance today?

If you are in a position of power, how can you have such a position without being changed by it? How can you protect yourself? Is it possible?

Read vs. 27-31

The theme, hardness of heart, comes up several times in this section of Luke. With the rich man, and with the Pharisees, we see a tragic hardness of heart. Can you think of examples of this from earlier in Luke? How do you see it in this passage?

When we see a hardness of heart in ourselves what can we do about it?

If someone has money or position, what can they do to see these things as belonging to God and use them for godly purposes?

We can be tempted toward collective complacency. How can we work against this in ourselves when we see it? How can we become aware of complacency that we might not want to see?

How do we balance what the Psalms says about enjoying God’s good gifts with our command to care for the poor?