

The Human Heart

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Luke 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

Luke 16:20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

Luke 16:21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

Luke 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

Luke 16:23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Luke 16:24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

Luke 16:25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Luke 16:26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Luke 16:27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

Luke 16:28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Luke 16:29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

Luke 16:30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

Luke 16:31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

“Send Lazarus—for if one go to them from the dead they will repent,” ver. 30. To this Abraham answers, “They have Moses and the prophets,” ver. 29; which plainly intimates they were all Jews, whether Pharisees or Sadducees, and had, or might have, the Sacred Writings in their hands; but we find they did not permit them to influence their hearts, nor regulate their conduct. Whatever evidences God may be pleased to give men of his will, so perverse is the human heart, they still seek more.

Proofs of the truth of divine revelation are furnished in abundance; but what are proofs to inattention and obstinate unbelief? It is not proofs that are wanting, but rational faith to receive them. After Christ had, in the most unequivocal and incontrovertible manner, manifested his eternal power by his miracles, the Jews came, saying, “Master, we would see a sign from thee.”

Rational faith finds itself fully satisfied with the proofs which God has already given. Infidelity never has enough. But if men hearken not to Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one came to them from the dead, ver. 31.

(Discourses on Various Subjects Relative to the Being and Attributes of God... Vol. IV., by Adam Clarke, London, 1845, 30, e-book, Paragraph structure modified)