

A GLIMPSE INTO ETERNITY

Luke 16:19-31

1. "After death, then what?" is a question that every thoughtful person has pondered in his life.
- 2 The fascination with "near death experiences" testifies to man's curiosity in this area.
3. Jesus gave us a real insight into what happens after death when he held back the curtain and let us have what I call a "glimpse into eternity".
4. Luke 16:19-31.

I. Note the series of contrasts:

A. Two men lived

1. One a man of great wealth. Note the details of his life. "Living in splendor" NASV
2. The other a beggar. The name Lazarus means: "God is my help." He had no other!
3. He did not beg for much! His was not a life of luxury, but a scramble with the dogs!
4. What do you think the rich man thought each time he passed the beggar, if he thought at all?

B. Two men died

1. The stark contrast continues in death.
2. One was buried, I am sure with all the pomp and ceremony due a man of his stature.
3. For the other, there is no mention of a burial
4. A point worthy of note: death came to both. Riches cannot buy off death. Death has been called "the great equalizer." As Solomon said, "One event comes to all," Eccl. 2:14, 9:2.

C. The contrast continues after death as Jesus lets us peek behind the curtain into eternity.

1. The rich man now in "hades" the unseen realm of the dead
 - a. But there he is a beggar!
 - b. It is a place of suffering.
 - c. He does not beg for much!
2. Now Lazarus is in the place of comfort ... Abraham's bosom.
 - a. This is Paradise. Where Jesus said the thief would go.
 - b. The beggar now has comfort.
3. Note three things.
 - a. The great gulf that is fixed
 - b. There is no passing back and forth.
 - c. The interaction of Abraham and the rich man.

II. From this we learn the following.

A Death cannot destroy consciousness. They were aware of what was going on around them.

1. Compare: Matthew 22: 31- 32.
2. The rich man was aware of his own suffering, Lazarus of comfort.

B. Death cannot destroy identity.

1. The rich man knew and identified Abraham and Lazarus and vice versa.
2. The answer to the question: "Will we know each other in beyond death?" is yes!

C. Death does not destroy memory.

1. Abraham called on the rich man to remember. He did.
- 2 He even remembered his five brothers.
3. Memory will "magnify heaven and intensify the agony and regrets of hell."

- D. Death will not change your eternal destiny.
 - 1. We have a tendency to speak too highly of the dear departed
 - 2. But as we are at death, so will we be in eternity.
 - 3. Only the blood of Christ can cleanse our sins.
 - 4. Death is not a purging or purifying process.

III. Let us consider the rich man's sin. Two fold

- A. It is not being rich or cruel. Abraham was a very wealthy man. He was indifferent.
 - 1. How long had Lazarus laid at his gate?
 - 2 Reminds me of another rich man Jesus encountered Matthew 19: 16-22
- B. He minimized the written word
 - 1. Suggested more is needed
 - 2 Jesus' response is the Word can convert!
 - 3. If you are waiting for more, it will not come!

IV. One final thought.

- A. There are some today who are arguing that punishment beyond death is not eternal.
 - 1. Again, this passage teaches suffering will be real.
 - 2. Remember death does not change destiny.
- B. Hell will be just as long as heaven.
 - 1. Matthew 18:8, 25:46
 - 2. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

- 1. Where would you be if death came to you today?
- 2. Would you be as the rich man or as Lazarus?

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