

Lift Up Your Eyes To See Abe and Laz

Luke 16:19-31 (ESV)

“There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house – for I have five brothers – so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

This story is not meant to give us a description of heaven and hell.

What can we learn by contrasting the rich man and the poor man?

The Rich Man: clothed in purple

The Poor Man: covered in sores

Lesson: What we are covered in now pales in comparison with what Christ covers us in eternally

Revelation 3:5 (ESV)

The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.

The Rich Man: unnamed

The Poor Man: known

Lesson: The anonymous in God's kingdom have a place of eternal belonging

Revelation 3:12 (ESV)

The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

The Rich Man: luxury in life

The Poor Man: lack in life

Luke's gospel talks more about the rich than any other book.

Plusios – one who has abundant resources

Lesson: An unshared abundance of earthly possessions leaves a person far from the throne of God

Revelation 3:20-21 (ESV)

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.

The Rich Man: died and was buried

The Poor Man: died and was carried

Lesson: Salvation is a gift. It cannot be earned, it can only be received

Revelation 2:17 (ESV)

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white

stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.

The Rich Man: alongside Hades

The Poor Man: alongside Abraham

Pluto – Roman god of the underworld

Hades – Greek god of the underworld

Lesson: The lowest in the Kingdom of God will receive the highest possible authority

Revelation 2:26-28 (ESV)

The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. And I will give him the morning star.

The Rich Man: feasted, then longed for a drop of water

The Poor Man: longed for a crumb, then feasted for eternity

Lesson: Nothing we desire today compares with what is in store for us

Revelation 2:7 (ESV)

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

The Rich Man: from comfort to anguished

The Poor Man: from anguish to comfort

Lesson: It is better to suffer for a little while than to suffer eternally

Revelation 2:11 (ESV)

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.

How can we be assured of a place in the eternal Kingdom of God?

Believe Moses
Believe the Prophets
Believe Jesus