

# Luke 16:19-24. the Rich Man's Petition for His Own Relief.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of focusing on eternal things and living a life of faith and love for God, highlighting the consequences of indifference to spiritual things.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 21:13, Matthew 25:31, Luke 16:19, James 2:5, 1 John 3:17

**Topics:** "Eternal Judgment", "Gods Sovereignty"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, where the curtain is lifted to reveal the eternal world by Jesus, who sees all sinking into hell or soaring to heaven. The rich man's indifference to Lazarus's suffering leads to his torment in hell, while Lazarus finds comfort in the presence of God. The parable serves as a reminder of God's sovereignty in choosing His elect and the consequences of neglecting those in need. It highlights the importance of faith, humility, and compassion in this life to avoid eternal separation from God.

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## Transcript

In this parable, the curtain that conceals the eternal world is lifted up--and by whom? By Him who every moment beholds the sons of men sinking into hell, or soaring up to heaven. He described these solemn scenes that we might be filled with holy awe. They were ever before his eyes, and he wondered at the indifference of sinners to their approaching doom.

No doubt this rich man and this beggar were real people. He had no need to employ fiction, who knew all facts.

It may appear strange to short-sighted mortals that God should permit one of his own beloved to languish, covered with sores, before a lordly gate. But the eye of faith beholds the happy spirit of the beggar, conveyed by glorious angels along the path of life into the presence of God. Then the mystery is explained. The Holy Spirit had sanctified the sorrowful heart of Lazarus, and Jesus had pardoned all his sins. When we see a poor diseased object, let us remember Lazarus, and say, "This may be one of God's elect." But we know that there are many who suffer afflictions in vain; many who are not softened by poverty or sickness; many who curse God and die.

The rich man does not appear to have committed any flagrant crime; he seems to have been a respectable worldly man. His body was buried with pomp, but his soul was not conducted with honor through the regions of the air to eternal glory. "In hell he lifts up his eyes, being in torment!" What a change was this! instead of a bed of down--burning coals; instead of purple clothing--a flaming robe; instead of sumptuous food--the lack of all things, even of a drop of water. But what a glorious sight he beheld! heaven with its inhabitants. Do we envy him this privilege? How the sight must have added to his misery! We would like to behold the saints' abode, for we hope to reach it--but in hell, "Hope that comes to all, comes never." The flame must have seemed to burn with redoubled fury, when the lost spirit saw the stream which makes glad the city of our God. Among the guests at the supper of the Lamb, he saw Abraham and Lazarus. He had been brought up to revere Abraham as his great ancestor, and as the father of the faithful. Though he had never seen him before, yet he knew him. It is probable he had been accustomed to despise Lazarus as a loathsome object; now he saw this despised beggar seated next to the honorable patriarch. God had exalted Abraham when upon earth, and had abased Lazarus, but he had bestowed like precious faith upon them both. When we behold the company of the redeemed, we may expect to know them again, whether we were before acquainted with their persons, or only with their names. God grant that we may not behold them afar off, as the rich man did, but that we may be mingled in their society. We may expect to see among the eminent servants of God, among ministers, missionaries, and reformers, among prophets, apostles, and martyrs, others who have lived and died in lowliness and obscurity--blind beggars, hospital patients, and workhouse inhabitants. Some of these will doubtless occupy places next to such revered men as Luther or as Latimer--as Daniel, Job, or Noah.

The rich man must have been surprised to see the beggar in so honorable a place. Did he recognize none of his kindred, nor friends, nor servants, that he fixed all his hopes of receiving relief upon Lazarus? Where were his father and mother? Where were his friends and neighbors? Had none of them reached the place of rest? It is to be feared that there are ungodly families whose names are unknown among the blessed. They have encouraged each other in forgetfulness of God, and have sunk down together into the pit. Why did the rich man think that Lazarus would be ready to come to his aid? No doubt the crumbs from his table had often been given to the beggar who lay at his gate, and therefore he may have thought he had some claim upon his services now. But surely if this rich man had loved God, he would have bestowed more than crumbs upon the poor sufferer dying before his eyes. Now his condition was far worse than that of Lazarus had ever been. The least moisture upon his tongue was the only favor he asked, and it was denied him. The misery of hell is COMPLETE. Here in our present world, in our deepest sorrows there is some alleviation, some comforting circumstance, some ray of hope; but in hell there is none; all is darkness, desolation, destitution, and despair.

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