

**STORY**

The Rich Man and Poor Lazarus (The Poor Rich Man and Lazarus) - Luke 16:19-31

**TEACHER PRAYER**

Dear Lord Jesus, You want me to recognize at all times the power and the effectiveness of Your Word, the very hand that sustains me. You want me to know that it is only through Your Word that anything good on earth can be accomplished; only through Your Word that any man can be brought to saving faith. Through the power of Your Word, enable me to teach these truths to my students, that they too may develop a deep and sincere reverence for Your precious, saving Truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

**VOCABULARY**

*Fared sumptuously* – a life full of luxuries and earthly riches.

*Bosom* – the front part of the chest, where something very dear is cradled or held.

*Hades* – literally "the underworld" or "the place of the dead," here used as another name for Hell.

**OUTER AIM**

Jesus tells us a parable about true riches.

**INNER AIM**

Jesus teaches us about the power of His Word, which alone can convert and save sinners.

**BACKGROUND**

The Gospel of Luke, especially chapters 10-20, is rich in parables. A parable is a story from which we are to learn one central thought or truth. Though the central truth of this particular parable certainly applies to all of us, it was originally directed at the Pharisees "who were lovers of money..." (Luke 16:14) Earthly wealth neither saves nor condemns. It is not an indication of how God feels about the individual sinner. God looks at the heart, and the only thing that can change the heart is the Word of God. This is the central message of this parable: "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." (Luke 16:21)

v. 19-21

- ▶ Jesus' description of the characters in the parable.
- ▶ To the Pharisees, earthly wealth and prosperity were indications of God's approval.
- ▶ Hard times and physical afflictions were proof of God's disapproval.
- ▶ Even Jesus' own disciples believed this for a time (John 9:1-2).
- ▶ Jesus looks at the inside: "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts.
- ▶ For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:15 – which immediately precedes this parable.)

v. 22

- ▶ In the parable Lazarus died and went to Heaven.
- ▶ The rich man died and went to hell.
- ▶ Note that poverty on earth did not save Lazarus, nor did wealth damn the rich man.
- ▶ Lazarus was saved by faith; the rich man was condemned because of his unbelief.

v. 23-24

- ▶ Hell is a real place, with real pain lasting an eternity.
- ▶ It is neither a myth nor a mere symbol for nonexistence.
- ▶ Note the utter misery of hell if even a drop of water on his tongue would give the sufferer comfort.



- ▶ The picture of Lazarus resting in Abraham's bosom draws a sharp contrast with the agony of the unbeliever in hell.
- ▶ Note also that even in hell this unbeliever still views Lazarus as his slave.

#### v. 25-26

- ▶ There is simple irony in these words, not cause and effect.
- ▶ The one who suffered on earth now receives comfort; the one who enjoyed all of the comforts is now tormented.
- ▶ Note that Abraham here only points to this irony. He does not make it the cause of a man's state in eternity.
- ▶ Since we are to glean only one central truth from a parable, we are not to create doctrine from other aspects of the story.
- ▶ Therefore we are not to imagine that the souls in hell will forever be bothering the saints in heaven, or that there is a physical gulf fixed between heaven and hell that we can see across.

#### v. 27-31

- ▶ Convinced that he can gain nothing from Lazarus for himself, the thoughts of the selfish man now turn to his five brothers.
- ▶ He believes that if Lazarus would rise from the dead his brothers would believe. (The implication is that God could have done more to save him.)
- ▶ The man's request seems reasonable to our human minds, but not when we consider that faith is not a rational decision made by the mind of man, but a working in the heart by the Holy Spirit through the Means of Grace – the gospel, in word and sacrament.
- ▶ This truth was proved beyond any doubt when Jesus himself rose from the dead, and still the Jews refused to believe in him.
- ▶ Here in v. 31 is the key to this parable.
- ▶ The Word of God is the only power that can bring a man to faith. "Moses and the prophets" refers to the Old Testament, which was the only part of the Bible available in Jesus' day.

### **STUDENT PRAYER**

Dear Father in heaven, we can never thank You enough for giving us Your Word, the Bible. From this parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus, told to us by Your Son, we know that Your Word is the only power that can create saving faith in our hearts, and without faith we can't be saved. Help us to treasure Your Word all our lives, since Your Word has not only brought us to faith, it also is the hand that guards this faith in our hearts. Help us also to share Your Word with others, so that they may come to know You as their Savior. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **PRESENTATION**

The story appears only in Luke, and is short enough that it can be read in its entirety by the teacher or by the Middle and Upper students. As always, telling the story in your own words can help the concentration and retention of the student.

### **APPLICATIONS**

1. When things go wrong or we have problems in our lives, it is tempting to try to blame someone else. "Yes, I stole some of the apples from Mr. Johnson's tree – but he should have put a fence around his yard if he didn't want me to take them." The Rich Man wanted to make it God's fault that he went to Hell. It was the man's rejection of God's Word, not his wealth, which condemned him. Jesus tells us the only thing that can turn an unbeliever into a believer is the Word of God. How thankful we ought to be that we have that Word of God and can read it every day!

2. It is a good thing that we don't have to rely on signs today before we will believe. Magicians today can create illusions that are truly baffling – making people, animals, even huge objects like airplanes just "disappear." We know that these are only tricks, but what if we had to rely on our eyes before we would believe something. What would we believe?
3. Why is it so foolish to live for the things of this world? How long do they last when compared with eternity? That is why we believe that the most important and most precious thing on earth is the Word of God. We ought to treasure it.

## **PASSAGES**

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

### Lower

Psalms 119:105 - Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Luke 16:15a - God knows your hearts.

John 10:35 - The Scripture cannot be broken.

### Middle any of the above and...

Luke 4:4 - But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

Luke 16:15b - For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

Isaiah 55:11 - So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

### Upper any of the above and...

2 Timothy 3:15 - From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

## **HYMN CHOICES**

"Lord, Open Thou My Heart To Hear" (TLH #5:1-2)

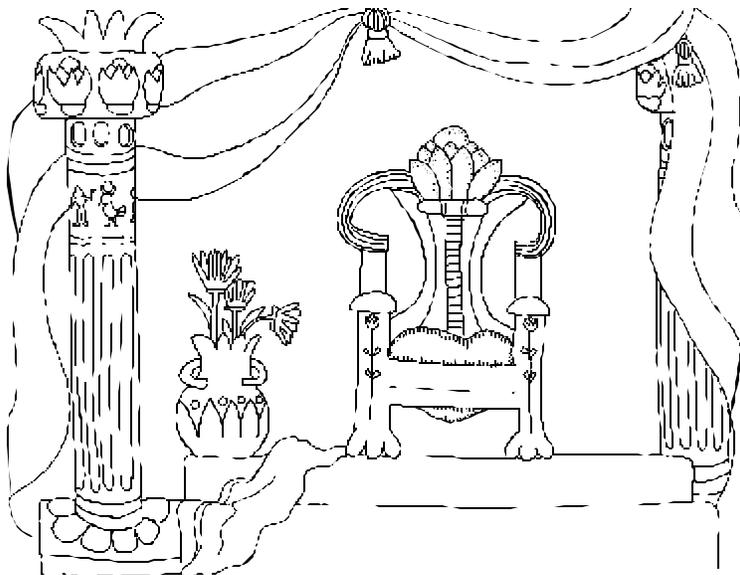
"Preserve Thy Word, O Savior" (TLH #264:1,5)

"O Lord Look Down From Heaven Behold" (TLH #260:1, 4-5)

"O Jesus King of Glory" (TLH #130:3, 5-6)

# The Rich Man and Poor Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31



## The Story

Jesus often told parables (stories) to help people understand important things. He taught this parable for people who were lovers of money. We can also learn from this lesson.

This is the story Jesus told about a rich man and a poor man named Lazarus.

The rich man wore fancy purple clothes. He had a life full of riches.

The poor man, named Lazarus, had to beg for food. His body was full of sores. Lazarus laid at the gate of the rich man's home hoping to be fed the crumbs of food which fell from the rich man's table. The dogs came and licked the poor man's sores.

Both the rich man and Lazarus died. Lazarus was carried by angels to heaven. The rich man was buried and went to hell. He felt terrible pain in hell. The rich man looked up and saw Lazarus living with Abraham in heaven.

The rich man cried and said, "Father Abraham, please send

Lazarus. Have him dip his finger in water and put a drop on my tongue. The water will cool my tongue in these fires of hell."

Abraham said to the rich man, "Remember that when you lived on earth you had good things and Lazarus suffered much. Now Lazarus has great joy and you are suffering. Besides, no one in heaven can go to you. No one in hell can come to heaven."

The rich man then asked Abraham to send Lazarus back to earth. He wanted Lazarus to warn his brothers about hell.

Abraham answered the rich man, "Your brothers have the Word of God, they should listen to the Word and believe it."

The rich man said, "Abraham, they won't believe God's Word, but they will believe someone from the dead."

Abraham told the rich man, "Only those who hear God's Word and believe it will have eternal life in heaven."

**Review** - Color the happy face if the sentence is true. Do not color the face if the sentence is false.

- ☺ 1. The rich man loved God.
- ☺ 2. Lazarus loved God
- ☺ 3. Lazarus went to heaven.
- ☺ 4. The rich man went to hell.
- ☺ 5. I believe God's Word.

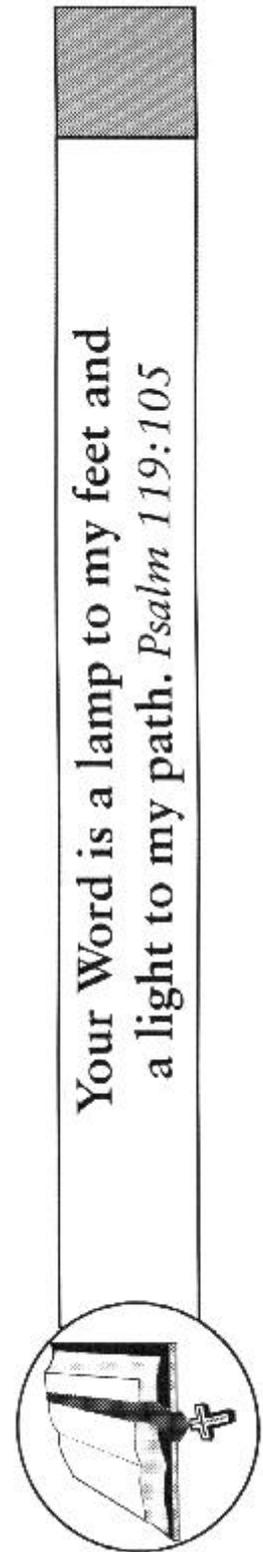
**Passages** - Color the pictures.

Ps. 119:105 "Your  is a  to my   
and a  for my ."

**Sing** - (To the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")  
Hear and learn the Word of God,  
Word of God, Word of God,  
Hear and learn the Word of God,  
In church and Sunday School.

### Talking to Jesus

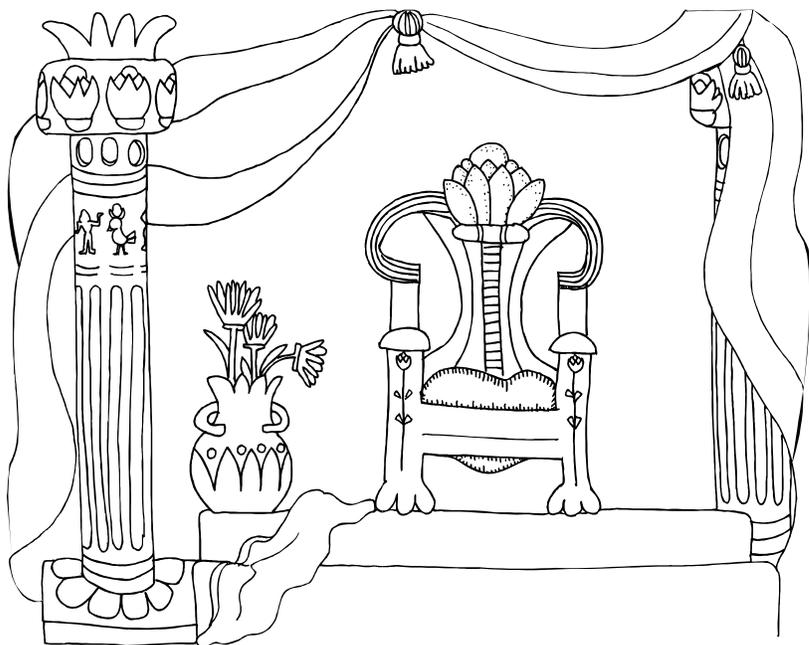
Dear Jesus,  
Thank you for the Bible. Amen.



Color and cut out this bracelet

# The Rich Man and Poor Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31



## The Story

Jesus often told stories. He taught this story to people who were lovers of money. We can also learn from this lesson.

Here is the story Jesus told about a rich man and a poor man named Lazarus.

The rich man wore fancy purple clothes. He had a life full of riches.

The poor man, named Lazarus, had to beg for food. His body was full of sores. Lazarus laid at the gate of the rich man's home hoping to be fed the crumbs of food which fell from the rich man's table. The dogs came and licked the poor man's sores.

Both men died. Lazarus was carried by angels to heaven. The rich man was buried and went to hell. He felt terrible pain in hell. The rich man looked up and saw Lazarus living with Abraham in heaven.

The rich man cried and said, "Father Abraham, please send Lazarus. Have him dip his finger in water and put a drop on my

tongue. The water will cool my tongue in these fires of hell."

Abraham said to the rich man, "Remember that when you lived on earth you had good things and Lazarus suffered much. Now Lazarus has great joy and you are suffering. Besides, no one in heaven can go to you. No one in hell can come to heaven."

The rich man then asked Father Abraham to send Lazarus back to earth. He wanted Lazarus to warn his brothers about hell.

Abraham answered the rich man, "Your brothers have the Word of God, they should listen to the Word and believe it."

The rich man said, "Abraham, they won't believe God's Word, but they will believe someone from the dead."

Abraham told the rich man, "Only those who hear God's Word and believe it will have eternal life in heaven."

**Passages** - Fill in the blanks using the words in the box.

Psalm 119:105 - "Your \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ to my  
\_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_ to my \_\_\_\_\_.

Scripture path	Word lamp	light feet	broken
-------------------	--------------	---------------	--------

John 10:35 - "The \_\_\_\_\_ cannot be \_\_\_\_\_.

**Activity One** - Fill in the letters using the names in the box. Letters can be used more than once. What word is spelled in the boxes?

- 1. I believed the Word of God.
- 2. I did not believe the Word of God.
- 3. I went to heaven.
- 4. I spoke to the rich man.
- 5. I told this story to people who love money.

I. Rich Man
B. Lazarus
E. Jesus
L. Abraham

## Song

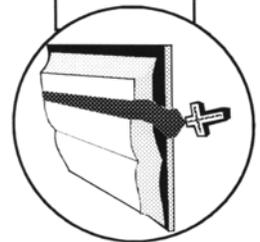
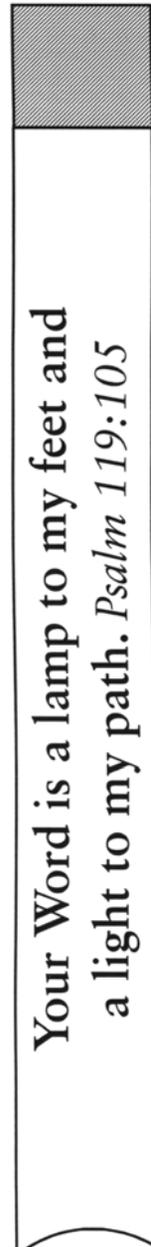
Sing to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

Hear and learn the Word of God.  
Word of God, Word of God.  
Hear and learn the Word of God,  
In Church and Sunday School.

## Prayer

Dear God,

Thank You for Your Word. Thank You for pastors,  
teachers, and parents who teach us Your Word.  
Amen.



Color and cut  
out this bracelet

# Parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus

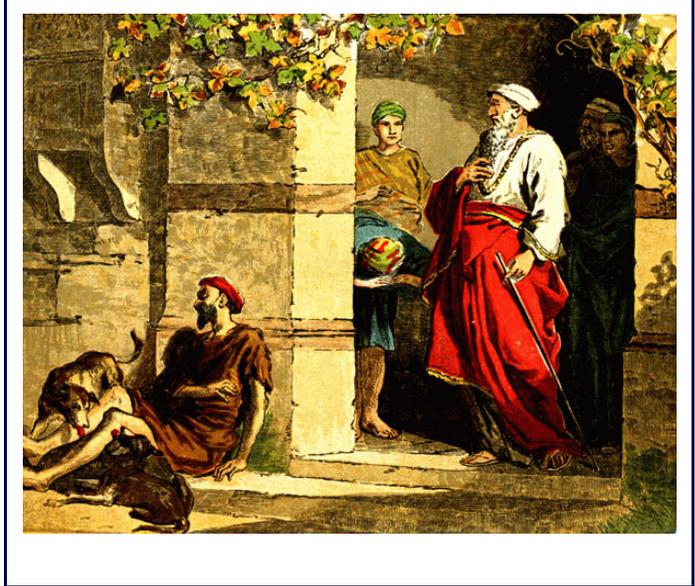
Luke 16:19-31

1. Where do you hear and learn the Word of God?
2. What does hearing and learning God's Word do for you?
3. Who teaches you God's Word?

## Prayer

Dear Father in heaven,

We thank You for Your precious Word. Please bless our study of Your Word. Help us to share Your Word with others, so that they too may learn of its saving power. In Jesus' name. Amen.



*The Rich Man and Lazarus*

## Parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)

Jesus spoke to the Pharisees who were lovers of money. He said, 19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover

the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 "Then 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.'

25 "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'

29 "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'

30 "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

**Outer Aim** - Jesus tells us a parable about true riches, hearing and believing God's Word.

**What the Story Tells Us** - Fill in the blanks.

1. Jesus told this parable to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This parable is about a \_\_\_\_\_ man and a poor man named \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The poor man had to \_\_\_\_\_ for food.
4. The poor man hoped to be fed \_\_\_\_\_ that fell from the rich man's table.

5. Lazarus was carried by angels to \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The rich man was buried and went to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The rich man saw Lazarus in heaven with \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The rich man wanted a drop of \_\_\_\_\_ on his tongue to cool it.
9. The rich man asked Father Abraham to send Lazarus back to earth to warn his \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Abraham told the rich man that only those who believe the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ will go to heaven.

**Inner Aim** - Jesus teaches us about the power of His Word, which alone can convert and save sinners.

### Write Yes or No

1. \_\_\_\_\_ The Pharisees were lovers of money.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Hard times and physical afflictions show God's disapproval of us.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Lazarus was saved by faith.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The rich man was condemned because of disbelief.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Hell is a mythical place.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ The Word of God can bring a person to faith.

## Passages - Use your Bible to complete the following.

Luke 4:4 "But \_\_\_\_\_ answered him, saying, 'It is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ shall not live by \_\_\_\_\_ alone, but by every \_\_\_\_\_ of  
\_\_\_\_\_.'"

2 Timothy 3:15 "From \_\_\_\_\_ you have know the Holy \_\_\_\_\_  
which are \_\_\_\_\_ to make you \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ through  
\_\_\_\_\_ which is in \_\_\_\_\_."

Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my \_\_\_\_\_ be that goes \_\_\_\_\_ from my  
\_\_\_\_\_ ; it shall not \_\_\_\_\_ to Me \_\_\_\_\_, but it  
shall \_\_\_\_\_ what I \_\_\_\_\_, and it shall \_\_\_\_\_  
in the thing which I \_\_\_\_\_ it."

## Hymn/Prayer - Use TLH 5 as your closing prayer.

Lord, open Thou my heart to hear  
And through Thy Word to me draw near;  
Let me Thy Word e'er pure retain,  
Let me Thy child and heir remain.

Thy Word doth deeply move the heart,  
Thy Word doth perfect health impart,  
Thy Word my soul with joy doth bless,  
Thy Word brings peace and happiness.

To God the Father, God the Son,  
And God the Spirit, Three in One,  
Shall glory, praise, and honor be  
Now and throughout eternity. Amen.

# Parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31

1. *Why is the Word of God so important in your life?*
2. *Why is it so important to hear, learn, and study God's Word?*
3. *What does God's Word have the power to do?*



*The Rich Man and Lazarus*

## Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, Your Word is so very powerful. Please bless our study of it today. Please continue to spread Your Word to the lost souls in this world. Make me a missionary of Your Word. Help me to spread the precious Gospel to my friends and relatives who do not know of Your saving Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## Parable of the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)

19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 "Then 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.'

25 "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him



to my father's house, 28 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'

29 "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'

30 "And he said, 'No, father Abraham;

but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

---

## Outer Aim

**Jesus tells us a parable about true riches.**

---

### What the Story Tells Us

- ▶ Luke 16:19 says that the rich man "fared sumptuously every day," what does this mean?
- ▶ According to Luke 16:22 what happened to the beggar when he died?
- ▶ Luke 16:23 says that the rich man was "in torments in Hades." Where is Hades and what does this passage mean?
- ▶ What did the rich man want Father Abraham to do? (See Luke 16:24, 27-31)
- ▶ What is a parable? What can we learn from this parable?

**Passages** - Read each passage and tell how it applies to you and the lesson.

Luke 4:4 - But Jesus answered him saying, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

Isaiah 55:11 - So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

2 Timothy 3:15 - From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thought and intents of the heart.

---

**Inner Aim** Jesus teaches us about the power of His Word, which alone can convert and save sinners.

---

## Hymn

Read Hymn #264 stanzas 1 and 5. Tell how these stanzas apply to this story. Illustrate the hymn (or part of the hymn) below or on a separate sheet of paper.

**Prayer** - Write a class prayer thanking God for His saving Word. Ask God to be with you as you work to spread His Word to the unbelievers of this world.