

180527-1 Luke Series, 16, 14-31, The Illustration of the Rich Man and Lazarus – Craig Thurman

For those interested, the study of the 'Illustration of the Unjust Steward' has been reduced into a very brief audio message with the transcript, and is posted on our Sermon Audio web site. It is a part of a running series called 'A Word in a Hurry.' Either look for the Series 'A Word in a Hurry,' or click on 'Bible Study.'

Only recently have I understood what this illustration was about, and certainly never understood what our Lord Jesus was saying when He directed these words to His disciples that day:

Lu 16:9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

First, that the stewardship was changing from Israel to another. Second, making friends of the mammon of unrighteous informed these Jewish disciples to deal graciously with *others* of the Lord's debtors with whom that stewardship shall be found. And third, then come into those places where that stewardship is. Together this means that the Lord shall lead the Jewish disciples to preach the gospel of Christ to the Gentiles, and in the time to come they must leave their homeland and join themselves to these Gentile believers which make up what will become a predominately Gentile church. And there serve the Lord as one, Jew and Gentile until Christ comes. That is the sum of the illustration which Christ our Lord delivered to His disciples that day.

We come now to the second division of this chapter. Jesus turns His attention back to the Pharisees. In the last lesson I ended with verse 13. But it could be that Christ in that moment directed these remarks to both His disciples and to the Pharisees that He anticipated to correct.

Mt 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Beyond question the Pharisees thought that they were serving God. But in reality they did not. They were enslaved to the lusts of the flesh; to lusts for earthly

riches. And that is precisely what the second division of this chapter tells us of them. They were covetous.

This second division consists of these three parts:

- The Pharisees mock Christ's previous illustration because they were covetous. (v.14)
- Jesus censures the Pharisees for resisting the unchangeable will of God. (vss.15-18)
- Jesus warns the Pharisees of certain and everlasting judgment coming (vss.19-31)

Chapter 14.14-31

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things:
lovers of silver

covetous, φιλάργυροι, nom. pl. masc. of φιλάργυρος, φίλος friend, love + ἄργυρος silver; ἀργύριον, silver, silver pieces, money; φιλάργυρος, KJV, *covetous* (2, Lk.16.14; 2Ti.3.2), and so the peculiar aspect of covetousness for *money*; φιλογογυρία, 1Ti.6.10, the *love of money* is the root of all evil.

and they derided him.

derided, ἐξεμυκτήριζον, 3ppl. imperf. act. of ἐκμυκτηρίζω, ἐκ + μυκτήρ, the nose; only by Luke, and twice **23.35**, *derided*; μυκτηρίζομαι, Gal. 6.7, *mocked*.

Note the words – *the Pharisees ... were covetous*. Covetousness manifests in many ways. Here it is revealed in those who have an inordinate love to amass *silver*. This marks the issue that the Pharisees took against Christ's illustration, that they overheard him deliver to His disciples, regarding the unjust steward. It is true that Christ's charge as unfaithful stewards applied to them all, disciples and Pharisees, the whole nation. But the Pharisees took exception to Christ's imperative, to *make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*. Christ's doctrine contradicted the whole mind-set of the Pharisees. Jesus was completely unknown to them. And in their mind

Israel didn't need the kind of salvation that Jesus worked because to them Israel wasn't unfaithful to God. To them it must have seemed to be misguided zeal on the part of the disciples to apply themselves and their *means* with the goal of coming into another stewardship apart from the nation. To them it was out of the question that Israel would be cast out of the stewardship of God. To them none of this made any sense whatsoever. So they did what folks like them do when confronted with an issue that simply cannot comprehend: they mocked Christ. It was easier to ridicule Christ, because they never prevailed against His doctrine to prove Him wrong. Their ever attempt failed.

'But it was easier to *ridicule* than to *refute* such teaching.' *J-F-B Bible Commentary*, vol.3, p.294

14 Ἦκουον δὲ ταῦτα πάντα καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι φιλάργυροι ὑπάρχοντες καὶ ἐξεμυκτήριζον αὐτόν

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men;

justify, δικαιοῦντες, nom. pl. masc. part. pres. act. of δικαίω, KJV, *to justify, free, to be righteous*; in this case they are *self-righteous* (justify themselves means to be righteous in themselves); these promote their own righteousness.

In the singular, *Lu 10:29 But he, willing to justify himself* (δικαιουν εαυτον), *said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*

Christ sharply censures the Pharisees. They are right even when God would say they are wrong. Though what they did appeared to be a righteous cause, no matter what it was they did, because it opposed the will of God it was unrighteous. They find themselves resisting the unchangeable will of God. (vss.15-18)

but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

highly esteemed, ὑψηλὸν, acc. sing. neut. of ὑψηλός, KJV, high, highly esteemed, higher.

What is this that is highly exalted by men but the worship of idols?
Covetousness is idolatry.

Col 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience ...

It is to put something, anything in the place of God. Anything or anyone that takes the affections and devotion from God is an idol. No one can serve God and mammon. The Pharisees could not, and the disciples could not. If Jesus Christ was not first in their lives it was because they have put something there to take His place. If He is not first considered in the decisions that we make, if he is not the first loved above everything else we aren't serving God. We have stooped to serve some fact of this creation.

15 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ὑμεῖς ἐστε οἱ δικαιοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὁ δὲ θεὸς γινώσκει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν ὅτι τὸ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ὑψηλὸν βδέλυγμα ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν

16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

all are forced

presseth, βιάζεται, 3ps. pres. ind. pass. and mid. of βιάζω, KJV, to press, and suffer violence; βία, a noun is always tss. violence (4).

Mt 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

The word *presseth* is translated from a Greek word that is translated in others places with the English word *violence*. My opinion is that this verse

communicates the idea, that while it is true that many, that is, all that come into the kingdom of God continue to enter, according to the will of God, but not without strong contradictions and oppositions by the religious and political ruling classes in national Israel. Christ is simply stating the nature of the opposition, and that the will of God continues essentially uninterrupted. Though hatred increases and violence is threatened all that believe that Jesus is the Christ continue to come to Him repenting of sins, receiving believer's baptism, and following after Him. In spite of what the Pharisees and others did, the masses came to Christ.

'... there was scarce a man but seemed very desirous of attending upon the preaching of it, and pressed hard for it; and with much force and violence, and with great eagerness and endeavour broke his way to it ...' *Exposition of the Old & New Testaments*, John Gill, vol. 7, p. 638

'[G]od will not want [lack, added] a people, though you mock and deride the gospel, instead of embracing of it, as you ought to do.' *Matthew Poole's Commentary on the Holy Bible*, Matthew Poole, vol. 3, p.249

Joh 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

16 Ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται ἕως Ἰωάννου ἀπὸ τότε ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίζεται καὶ πᾶς εἰς αὐτὴν βιάζεται

17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

By this Christ tells them that every word of God is sure, every prophecy shall be fulfilled, and every promise and every threat that God has given shall be kept. The truths Christ taught remained unchanged. For example ...

17 Εὐκοπώτερον δέ ἐστιν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν παρελθεῖν ἢ τοῦ νόμου μίαν κεραίαν πεσεῖν

18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.

Here Christ raises the issue of divorce, not to teach the topic of divorce at this moment, but to show how the Pharisees has contradicted God's word with their tradition.

Mt.5.31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

No matter what men say to the contrary the truth of God remains unchanged. Christ essentially tells them, 'say what you will and do what you do, the judgment of God remains the same.

Is.55.10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Since God has charged Israel with unfaithfulness it is sure that Israel has been unfaithful. If He would have His elect to prepare in the days ahead to leave their homeland they will prepare to leave their homeland, and in the very same manner in which He commanded them to do so. To do otherwise would be unbelief. So, the Pharisees mocked. And they are those who shall receive the righteous judgment of God when the time comes. (Ro.2.1-10)

The illustration which follows sets before the Pharisees the warning of coming and everlasting punishment should they remain in unbelief. (vss.19-31) Verse 31 tells of their demise.

Lu 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.

That is the crux of the matter. The Pharisees did not believe Moses, therefore they could not believe Christ.

Jn.5. 39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

...

44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

So Christ sets before the Pharisees the counterpart to that which He spoke to the disciples. There is a relationship of the second illustration to the first.

'And certainly those do not judge amiss who think that this discourse hath a great reference to what went before, ver. 9, 10, where our Savior had been exhorting his hearers to make themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, as also to the Pharisees' deriding him for his doctrine, ver. 14 ...' Matthew Poole's Commentary on the Holy Bible, vol. 3, p. 250

In the first illustration, Christ instructed His disciples to deal beneficently with others of the Lord's debtors so that they might be received into those places which shall receive the stewardship, which stewardship was once Israel's. In this, the second illustration, Christ cites the Pharisees' neglect of God's word, and the abuse of His people. So, not only will these suffer being cast out of the stewardship, but they shall receive at the end of their

unbelief certain and everlasting punishment; whereas the faithful shall be comforted for eternity.

‘As the steward made himself *friends* out of the mammon of unrighteousness, so this rich man made himself, out of the same mammon, an *enemy* – in the person of Lazarus – of a kind to make the ears of every one that heareth it to tingle.’ *J-F-B Bible Commentary*, vol.3, p.295

18 Πᾶς ὁ ἀπολύων τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμῶν ἑτέραν μοιχεύει καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀπολελυμένην ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς γαμῶν μοιχεύει

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

fared sumptuously, εὐφραϊνόμενος ... λαμπρῶς

fared, εὐφραϊνόμενος, nom. sing. masc. part. pres. mid. of εὐφραίνω, εὖ to do well + φρῆν to understand; KJV, *to be or make merry, to fare, rejoice, be glad*.

sumptuously, λαμπρῶς, adv. of λάμπω, *to give light, to shine*; the adj., λαμπρός, KJV, *gorgeous, bright, goodly, gay, white, clear*.

19 Ἄνθρωπος δέ τις ἦν πλούσιος καὶ ἐνεδιδύσκετο πορφύραν καὶ βύσσον εὐφραϊνόμενος καθ' ἡμέραν λαμπρῶς

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

beggar, πτωχός, KJV, *poor, beggar*. He is called a beggar because he was laid at the gate of the rich man desiring to receive something which fell from his table to eat. And so he *begged*. But the Greek is most often tss. *poor*. Lazarus was a poor man and therefore begged for another to help him in his destitute state.

Lazarus is said to have either of two meanings. The one, from Hebrew, לָעֲזָרָה, la[g]-zar, which is a rabbiic abbreviation of לְעֵזֶר אֱלֹהִים, el-[g]a-zar, the name *Eliezer, God is my help*; and the other from לְעֵזֶר אֵל, lo [g]e-zer, meaning *without help*. In this instance Lazarus is *without help* and therefore the latter definition would be applied to him. (cf. *Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*)

20 πτωχὸς δὲ τις ἦν ὀνόματι Λάζαρος ὃς ἐβέβλητο πρὸς τὸν πυλῶνα αὐτοῦ ἡλκωμένος

21 And desiring to be fed [but was not] with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

crumbs, ψιχίων, gen. pl. of ψιχίον, always tss. *crumbs* (3), and always with reference to that which falls from a table to the ground. (cf. Mt.15.27; Mk.7.28; Lk. 16.21)

Our Lord Jesus is citing, not a parable, but a real, historical event that two men, one of whom is named Lazarus, experienced in their lifetimes.

If Lazarus is a fiction, what about Abraham and Moses? What other parables give names in them like this one does? None of them do. This is a real event with real people who really lived and died, and shown to have real existence after their deaths.

These two men were in close proximity to each other. They met at the gate probably every single day.

Lazarus desired to eat the crumbs which came from the rich man's table; crumbs which fell to the ground that the dogs would eat. (Mt.15.27) It is not said that the rich ever reached out to help Lazarus, to so much as give him those crumbs that he has hoped to receive.

The purpose for the illustration is to show the certainty of judgment that shall come upon those who, like the Pharisees, continue in unbelief, *discounting, rejecting, and opposing* the veracity of God's word.

Lk.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.

21 καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν χορτασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τοῦ πλουσίου ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ κύνες ἐρχόμενοι ἀπέλειχον τὰ ἔλκη αὐτοῦ

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;

bosom, κόλπον, acc. sing. of κόλπος; KJV, bosom (5), creek (1).

was buried, ἐτάφη, 3ps. aor. pass. of θάπτω; 11 times and always tss. with the English word to bury.

There is nothing said about what came of Lazarus' body. It was very likely put into a common grave, perhaps like the *potter's field* which will be purchased later. But more important than how his earthly body was treated after he died, we are told what become of Lazarus after he died. We are told about Lazarus' transport from earth to a place of comfort by an heavenly host of God. He was transported to the bosom of Abraham. Wherever Abraham was Lazarus was brought there and to him.

But on the other hand it is noted that the rich was buried. His burial was evidently notable. But there is nothing said about how he came to his place after death.

The place where Abraham might have been before the resurrection of Christ the Lord:

About this place where Abraham, and those of the election of grace, were kept we know very little. What we believe we know is derived from a number of other texts. This place could hardly be called

heaven because we are told by the word of God that when Christ raised from the dead he took *captivity captive*.

Eph 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Those that were captive are said to have been kept in *prison*.

1Pe.3.19 By which [spirit, v.18] also he [Christ] went and preached unto the spirits in prison; [that had since died]

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

Contrary to what some say it we have reason to believe that this place which was a hold for the elect on one part, and the damned on the other, was in the heart of the earth.

*1Sa 28:13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods **ascending out of the earth**.*

*14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man **cometh up**; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.*

*15 ¶ And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, **to bring me up**? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.*

And with this illustration which our cites of the place where the rich man and Lazarus came I am inclined to say it was a place, until the time of Christ's death, which was located in the heart of the earth. And now the Lord Jesus, when he ascended into heaven took only those of His redeemed with Him. And where are they? They are *souls* that are, not yet clothed upon with their bodies from heaven (2Co.5.2), but they are under the altar in glory.

Re 6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held ...

And they and we shall all at the same moment be changed into the glorious image of Jesus Christ at the first resurrection, when He comes and catches the living away to meet him in the air with those He brings with Him.

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

22 ἐγένετο δὲ ἀποθανεῖν τὸν πτωχὸν καὶ ἀπενεχθῆναι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀγγέλων εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἀπέθανεν δὲ καὶ ὁ πλούσιος καὶ ἐτάφη

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

torments, βασάνοις, dat. pl. of βάσανος; three times and always with the English torment; the verb βασανίζω, is tss. torment, tossed, toiling, and pained.

Suddenly, upon the closing of his eyes in death in this world, in a blink he opened them being in the torments of a fiery hell.

Each man at that time came to a place which was for the souls of those which died prior to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I believe it was situated

in the heart of the earth, a place referred to as hell, or hades, or the grave. Wherever it was, it is said that they could see across the way to the other side and recognize others. In his place of torment the rich man recognized both Abraham, whom he had never seen in his lifetime (cf. Lk. 9.33, here Peter, James, and John recognized Moses and Elijah), and also Lazarus whom he had often seen laying at his gate. And the conversation between Abraham and Lazarus begins.

Now, it was not being rich that condemned, nor the poverty that commended to God. The states that each of these men lived was the Lord's chosen means for proving what was in their hearts. The illustration could have as easily been turned the other way around. The implication is that the rich man knew Lazarus and despised him, and that very likely because he was a righteous man even in that state, and a child of God. It is to be noted that the rich man *knew* who Lazarus was when he saw him lying in Abraham's bosom. I think it lends to the idea that when he lived among men he chose to show no mercy or to help him in his time of desperation. It is against this maltreatment that Lazarus bore his sufferings in a way that glorified God, else why would Christ use him for an illustration?

At least this much can be gleaned by any who will give enough consideration to this portion of God's word. It would be a serious perversion of God's word to suggest that it was wrong to be rich and necessarily righteous to be poor. The truth is, there will probably be more idolatrous, poor souls in hell than there will be idolatrous rich souls. Just as their will be more poor in glory than rich, simply because the majority of humanity have been poor, not rich.

Jas 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

1Co 1:26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

23 καὶ ἐν τῷ ἄδει ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ ὑπάρχων ἐν βασάνοις ὁρᾷ τὸν Ἀβραάμ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν καὶ Λάζαρον ἐν τοῖς κόλποις αὐτοῦ

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.

sorrowing

suffering, ὀδυνῶμαι, 1ps. pres. ind. pass. of ὀδυνάω; Luke, the evangelist only uses this verb: *sorrowing*, (Lk.2.48; Acts 20.28); am tormented (Lk.16.24, **25**); the noun, ὀδυνή, *sorrow* (Ro.9.2; 1Ti.6.10)

Now it is the rich man that has come into an hopeless and desperate condition; which hopelessness Lazarus never came into. Lazarus always had the hope of glory before him. The rich is resigned to this place of perdition. Notice that he doesn't given any indication of the hope for ever being delivered from this terrible place of suffering. He hoped for just a touch of water to cool his tongue because of the torments of the flame. So, he recognizes Abraham, the father of his own people after the flesh, from whom he was descended, he sees Abraham afar off and made appeal to him to send Lazarus on a *mission of mercy*; something which he never once showed to Lazarus when he laid suffering day after day at his gate. What a change in state there was between these two! There are two reasons why Abraham could not grant the rich man's request.

24 καὶ αὐτὸς φωνήσας εἶπεν Πάτερ Ἀβραάμ ἐλέησόν με καὶ πέμψον Λάζαρον ἵνα βάψῃ τὸ ἄκρον τοῦ δακτύλου αὐτοῦ ὕδατος καὶ καταψύξῃ τὴν γλῶσσάν μου ὅτι ὀδυνῶμαι ἐν τῇ φλογὶ ταύτῃ

25 But Abraham said, Son,

Abraham acknowledges the physical relationship between him and the rich man. But he was not related in Christ.

remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

sorrowing

art tormented, ὀδυνᾶσαι, 2ps. ind. pass.

Abraham cites to reasons why nothing will be done for the rich man. The first reason: it is unreasonable. You lived mercilessly. You showed no mercy to my son in the faith of Christ. Now you receive no mercy. God is not mocked.

Ga 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

25 εἶπεν δὲ Ἀβραάμ Τέκνον μνήσθητι ὅτι ἀπέλαβες σὺ τὰ ἀγαθὰ σου ἐν τῇ ζωῇ σου καὶ Λάζαρος ὁμοίως τὰ κακὰ νῦν δὲ ὅδε παρακαλεῖται σὺ δὲ ὀδυνᾶσαι

χάσμα

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed:

chasm

fixed, ἐστήρικται, 3ps. perf. pass. of στηρίζω; KJV, fixed, established, strengthened, stablished, stedfast.

so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

can ... pass, διαπερῶσιν, 3ppl. pres. subj. of διαπεράω, διά by, through + ἀπορέω to be in doubt, perplexed.

The second reason: 'It is impossible. ... "By an irrevocable decree there has been established [ἐστήρικται] a vast impassable abyss between the two states and the occupants of each.'" *J-F-B Bible Commentary, vol.3, p.296*

This is that judgment which God guaranteed to every soul that remains in the original state of unbelief.

26 καὶ ἐπὶ πάσιν τούτοις μεταξὺ ἡμῶν καὶ ὑμῶν χάσμα μέγα ἐστήρικται ὅπως οἱ θέλοντες διαβῆναι ἐντεῦθεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς μὴ δύνωνται μηδὲ οἱ ἐκεῖθεν πρὸς ἡμᾶς διαπερῶσιν

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

27 εἶπεν δὲ Ἐρωτῶ οὖν σε πάτερ ἵνα πέμψῃς αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς μου

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

As if the warnings he had received in his lifetime were insufficient. Do more to warn my brothers about this place. He shows the continued disdain for the veracity of the word of God. Do more! But what more should God have done?

28 ἔχω γὰρ πέντε ἀδελφούς ὅπως διαμαρτύρηται αὐτοῖς ἵνα μὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλθωσιν εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦτον τῆς βασάνου

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

29 λέγει αὐτῷ Ἀβραάμ ἔχουσιν Μωσῆα καὶ τοὺς προφῆτας ἀκουσάτωσαν αὐτῶν

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham:

In effect what the rich man confesses is that what had been done wasn't enough for him. All the goodness of God which would lead men to repentance wasn't enough. All of the word which God gave to the nation of Israel through Moses; all of the history recorded of the acts of the nation of Israel; all of the testimonies of the prophets; all of the saying of the wise men; none of this was enough. But it was enough! All that have ever come to Christ found His word sufficient to warn them away from sin, to flee from the coming wrath of God against sinners, and to come to the Christ of God as Savior of the world. This rich man, as all that shall perish, rejected the witness of God against them.

Ro.1.20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

...

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

...

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

He would not hear the word of God. And here are these Pharisees mocking Christ at this very moment who shall recall these very things when they also come into this very same place where the rich is. The rich man continues ...

but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

But is that true? Jesus would raise from the dead a dear friend of his that had died, whose name was also Lazarus. He raised him from the dead and what did these same Pharisees, with the chief priest do?

Jn.11.53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

What did they do when Jesus himself raised from the dead? Paid soldiers to lie about the body of Christ, that someone had stolen it in the night.

Mt.28.12 And when they [the chief priests, which were of the sect of the Pharisees] were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel [about what had happened to Jesus body], they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

The rich man would not hear; the Pharisees would not hear.

Pr.1.28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

30 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν Οὐχὶ πάτερ Ἀβραάμ ἀλλ' ἐάν τις ἀπὸ νεκρῶν πορευθῆ πρὸς αὐτοὺς μετανοήσουσιν

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.

And here is the major point of the discussion that Christ brings to the Pharisees. If they will not hear, obey, and believe Moses and the prophets, who spoke of Christ, certainly they will not hear, obey and believe Christ, even if he were to raise from the dead. And they shall receive their judgment.

Why did they not believe? Because they, like all men in Adam, are dead in sins. Why do any believe? Because they, like all men in Christ, receive the gift of grace to live and believe.

Php 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake ...

Though God come from glory to earth and live as a man, demonstrate the great power of God, to heal the sick, cleanse lepers, give sight to the blind, cause the lame to walk, and raise the dead, it is not enough to effect a change in sinners. Except God work efficiently to impose upon the sinner His divine nature, no matter what miracle-working might be done he will never believe to the saving of the soul. Never! But if God does create in one a new heart and a new mind he will certainly see Christ as the Son of God, come to save sinners, though they never see any miracle.

Jn.20.29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed:

Thomas had in him the life of Christ already. That's not the issue here. But what he did was let his eyes govern his faith so

that he refused to believe that His Lord has raised from the dead except that he see Him. But Jesus goes on to say to Thomas,

blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

*31 But these **are written**, that ye*

John is speaking to us that believe after this, that will never see Christ with their eyes and yet they will believe in Him and be governed by His word; *that ye ...*

might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

31 εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς Εἰ Μωσέως καὶ τῶν προφητῶν οὐκ ἀκούουσιν οὐδὲ ἐάν τις ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆ πεισθήσονται

The Pharisees have before them certain everlasting judgment, as does every sinner who does not believe that Christ Jesus came to save sinners. But if we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God we shall live blessed forever in the presence of God.

Ac 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.