

The Gospel According to Luke

ONLY ONE TIME AROUND

PART 8

Repent and Believe

READ LUKE 16:19-31

INTRODUCTION

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus we see an interesting contrast between life choices. Choice is such a big word in our current culture and it seems as though it has always had a gravity that pulls people to debate what choice looks like and to what extent we choose in life. While we do not have time to dig into all of that argument in this context, we will take a look at what the most important message is in what Jesus was saying: when it comes to salvation, the choice is only made available to us in our lifetime and then God will judge us according to that choice. (Hebrews 9:27)

Once a person dies, according to Scripture, he or she will stand in judgement of Christ. This means that their discipleship to Jesus will be looked at and what they did with the forgiveness and salvation of Jesus Christ will either condemn them to hell or save them from the flames into eternal rest. (Matt. 25:21, 23) This passage in Luke shows us a clear division between the two options. We see the rich man who had spent his life on his own terms and for his own purposes enter into hell and Lazarus enter into rest. The rich man begs for another chance, some reprieve from the torment but Abraham explains that there is no reprieve to the punishment.

Another important note to make is that we cannot warn people of the judgement after we have entered into eternity. Abraham makes it clear that people here on earth have the Scriptures, warnings and people to preach His Word to help them come to salvation through faith. We will either take that opportunity or miss out on it, but the decision is one that will be made one way or another and once it is made and we have died, we will be locked into that. This can be a daunting thought to us and it certainly gives a little more weight and clarity to Philippians 2:12 but, it is supposed to be a serious thing to follow Christ. (Luke 14:25-33) We should be taking our relationship with Christ seriously and we should be telling others of the salvation He offers so that they can also be saved from the judgement.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What can we do to remind ourselves that God is our judge? How will that make us live differently?
2. Read Hebrews 9:27. What significance does it have that we only live one life? Why should this change us as well as, how can we help others see how important Christ is?
3. Why do you think there are only two options in death? (Heaven or Hell) What characteristic of God do we see in this dichotomy?
4. How many opportunities has God given you to follow Him? How long did it take you to turn to Him? How can that information help in giving the Gospel of Christ to others?
5. Read Philippians 2:12. What does it look like to work out your salvation with fear and trembling? Why should we be concerned with our eternal future? Should it be more important to us than our current life or less? Why?

WRAP UP

We are to be giving the Gospel to any and all who would listen. This life is short in light of eternity and we need to be thinking ahead to where we will spend that eternity. The choice is pretty black and white at the end of the day. We can either spend eternity in judgement and punishment or in rest and Jesus' presence. When we look at it in these terms, it can seem like a simple choice but for many they are very attached to their sin nature. It is something that all of us struggle with and we must shed the old life and cling to the life that Christ gives us.