



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions Greatest Stories Ever Told Series, Lesson 14

Lesson Title: The Rich Man and Lazarus

Take Home Point: Don't miss your chance for heaven.

Warm-Up:

One of Satan's greatest successes in our culture is the common view of heaven and hell. No doubt you have heard jokes about hell not being not too bad – a little warm, perhaps, but you get to have the fun without consequences that are suffered on earth. And then there is his sell job of heaven – it's so boring! All we'll do in heaven is sit on clouds, play harps, not have any fun. And of course, Satan's greater success is convincing people of the belief that heaven and hell don't really exist at all, that a loving God would never send someone to hell the way the Bible says, and that heaven is not a real place. These are subtle, but eternally fatal, errors.

Read: Luke 16:19-31; Romans 6:23

Observation (What happened?):

How was the rich man's attitude similar when he was alive and when he was in hell?

What did Abraham say was the way the living could know eternal life before Jesus came?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think the rich man in hell thought his brothers would believe and repent if someone came from the dead to warn them?

What is the "death" that is the wages of sin? What does it mean?

Insight:

Is your view of hell that it will be a place of endless gratification and parties and doing whatever you want without anyone saying no? That is exactly what Satan wants you to think. But the Bible tells us reality: it is a place of endless burden, pain, sorrow, hatred, wickedness, and loss. It is a place of endless loneliness. Hell has absolutely no happiness or peace or friendship or love. None. Ever. Because all those things come from God, and God's presence and blessings will be utterly absent. As a friend of mine once said, "Five seconds in hell will make anyone an evangelist." Has your view of heaven been warped by our culture's shallow parody of clouds and harps and sitting around doing nothing? Or have you been turned off by the idea that all we will do is stand around and sing while God smiles benignly at the adoring crowd? If either of these is true, that's too bad. Heaven is going to be wonderful! Just think what it will be like to never do anything wrong again, never be hurt again, never suffer loss again. God is preparing a special place just for us. Now, if the God of the universe – the perfect Almighty Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer – is doing the preparing, don't you think it will be fantastic?

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How do you know you are going to heaven?

Who around you needs to be warned about eternal separation from God? What are you doing about it?