



Gary Inrig – The Parables (Determining My Destiny)

Read the Chapter in Advance of the Weekly Study. Make a Mental Note or Jot Down Something That Struck You – “Strange, New or Different”.

Week 8 – Read Chapter Eight: “Determining My Destiny” (The Rich Man & Lazarus) Read – Luke 16:19-31

Opening Prayer: Begin the session with a prayer, asking Holy Spirit to bless the time, to reveal spiritual insights – any that we may have overlooked or taken for granted up to now. Give us fresh eyes to see - that one’s eternal destiny is decided not by their earthly circumstances, but by their response (and ours) to God's Word. Allow us Holy Spirit – to see these truths in a new or uniquely different way – show us those – who’ve you placed in our lives - that we might be strangely warmed to warn and to pray ... in Jesus name Amen!

Overview: Through the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, we come face to face with a stark “role-reversal” that should disrupt our notions about wealth, poverty, and what truly matters in life. The beggar Lazarus, covered in sores and longing for table scraps, is carried away by angels to Abraham's bosom, while the “rich” man who lived in luxury finds himself in a very different place – a place of torment. This has nothing to do with “wealth” – and it’s not a story of the “*wealthy end up in hell*”. —Abraham himself was wealthy—but about something far more important: whether we listen to and believe what God has already revealed to us in Scripture. Those who won't listen to Moses and the prophets won't be convinced even if ... “*someone were to rise from the dead*”. The question for each of us and those we love - is not whether or not God can prove Himself - “**RIGHT NOW**” - and ok then I'll believe - but whether we've heard and responded to what God has already spoken. “*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*” – John 20:29

"To trust God in the light is nothing, but to trust him in the dark. That is faith". - Charles Spurgeon

SOME KEY POINTS:

- ❖ **Death is inevitable and what comes after is determined by our choices in this life - We cannot achieve immortality by avoiding death; we must be prepared for what comes after.**
- ❖ **Heaven and hell are real, eternal destinations - The parable reveals that our eternal destiny is fixed at death based on our earthly response to Jesus Christ.**
- ❖ **Earthly circumstances (power/position/money/good works, etc.) won't determine our eternal destiny – these things don't qualify someone for heaven or hell. Only Faith in Jesus Christ will.**
- ❖ **Miracles don't create faith; God's Word does - People unchanged by Scripture won't be convinced even by supernatural signs.**



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. If you could ask someone who has passed away one question about the afterlife, what would it be? Why do you think we're so curious about what happens after death?

2. Take a minute to read **Hebrews 9:27** together. How does knowing that "man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment" - change the way we should live today?

3. Why do you think people are drawn to reincarnation theories, spiritists, or other alternative explanations of the afterlife rather than trusting what Scripture says?

4. After death, the situations of both men were completely reversed. What does this teach us about God's values versus the world's values?

5. Read Luke 16:19-21 again. What does the rich man's treatment of Lazarus reveal about his heart? In what ways might we be guilty of similar blindness to those in need around us?



6. Gary emphasizes that hell is: 1. Real (not symbolic or metaphorical) 2. Terrible (conscious torment, not annihilation) 3. Final (no second chances or escape). How does this description challenge popular cultural beliefs about the afterlife? How does it affect your urgency about sharing the gospel?

7. The rich man wanted Lazarus to return from the dead to warn his brothers. Why did Abraham refuse this request?

Things to Think On - Try to Do One This Week

- **Examine Your Heart** - Spend time this week reading through the book of James, which addresses the relationship between faith and works. Think on a practical way in which you might show your faith in caring for someone in need – be it the poor, the elderly, etc.
- **Thinking Different** – Think of one thing - God is calling you to change and act on it. Whether in Thought – Word – or Deed.
- **Share the Gospel** - Identify someone in your life who needs to hear about their eternal destiny. Pray daily for an opportunity to share the gospel with them this week.
- **Serve a "Lazarus"** - Identify someone in need in your community (homeless, elderly, sick, lonely). Think of some simple or practical action you could take to meet a physical need they may have and share the Hope of Jesus with them.
- **"Pick Three"** - Pray by name for 3 people in your daily prayers that you know - who don't know Christ, that they would hear and be saved. (When they do-switch in a new name).

Closing Prayer: *(this prayer is only a suggestion - please feel free and be encouraged to pray your own as the Holy Spirit leads) - Lord – we thank You for this time together to contemplate – both the “here and now” – but most importantly – “the - great hereafter” –we’re thankful that we know where we are going - help us to be bold to share Your truth with those you place on our heart -To show them that we care – not just about the practical things for today – but also for all their tomorrows! Help us to share the Hope we have in You! Help us to see more and more that there are eternal consequences for those we tell and those we don’t – In Jesus name we pray!*