

The Parable of the Poor Man and Rich Lazarus

Today J tells a prbl re 2 men, very diff men, w/very diff: lifestyles, priorts, etrnts. This: prbl PM & RL. PM: is dressed in purple/linen clothing, finest \$ could; these clothes made social statement. RL: covered head/toe w/painful rashes/sores. PM feasts ev day on most scrumptious/delicacies; dinner table: spread w/banqts fit for king. In prbl Prodigl Son, fr killed fattnd calf, but only for special occsn. For the PM, fattnd calf is daily fare. It's like ppl in Amos: **"You dine on choice lambs & fattnd calves... You drink wine by the bowlful" (6:4-6)**. But RL: gets the scraps, smtms. A servant throws dinner scraps out into street for dogs/vermin; smtms RL nabs a bite. PM: social butterfly, w/lot frnds; hosts dinner parties all time. RL's only frnds: hungry street dogs, who snatch away food, licked wounds, won't leave alone. PM: expnsv house w/metal gate. RL gets dumpd at gate, to beg, bec homeless, jobless, probly crippld. 2 very diff men, w/very diff lifestyles.



Then they die, which is only thing they have in common – both mortal. PM: prob has lavish, ostentatious funrl procsn, maybe not as grand as QE's we saw this wk, but on same order. But RL: angels carry him to Abrm's side. RL: hvn forever. PM: hell forever. RL: only chrctr in any J's prbls given name; as if name written Lamb's bk/life. PM: given no name, bec name not written bk/life. And so for all these socio-ecnmc dispartns on display in their life, in their death is seen biggest diff of all: these 2 men served diff masters. PM served his \$; RL served Lord. Name Laz actly means "God is my help." That was his name/faith.

And so, what made PM poor: not his wlth; he obvslly had plenty! No, what made PM poor: spirtly bnkrpt; lived in a prvty of faith/love for God; just didn't care re his rel w/Lord, or re Lord's will for his life (like helping poor). In his soul he: penniless/broke. And, what made RL rich: not his wlth; he obvslly had none. But of the 2 men, Laz: by far the richer, bec his soul was filled with the love/God, and faith in God, and hope for etrnal life. It was the wlth/hvn that made Laz rich.

So what's point this parbl? Point/prbl not: all wlthy ppl, hell; all poor, hvn. Abrm self: very wlthy man, and clearly he's in hvn. So even though J did say: easier camel thru eye/needle than rich enter kngdm/God (Mt 19:24), that's not point this parbl. And point also not: you'll go to hell if don't help poor. God does want us help poor! J did say: sell possessns, give to poor, and you'll have trsr/hvn (Mk 10:21-22); and did say: when serve meal, invite poor/needly, and you'll be blsd (Lk 14:12-14). But that's not point this parbl.

No, point this prbl, PM & RL: do not put trust in wlth; put trust in God – bec while wlth may help you in this life, will not help you one bit in dth. And while trusting in God may not help you live a comfrtbl life here on earth, it is your only help/comfrt in dth. This prbl is all re priorities! What do you priortz in your life? What's most imp to you in life? Lord or smthng else? PM went hell bec priortzd wlth over God. 1) Ev day walked right past Laz; even knew name, but never gave him thing; showed no compssn. 2) Disgrdd GW; didn't care re what God had to say. Later, when trying save bros, and Abrm tells him they have M&P, he: No, not good enough; they need mrcl/res; that'll convince them. He didn't trust W/G or priortz in life. And 3) Assumed he'd go hvn simply bec Jew. Cried out to Fr Abrm, fr/ntn; but did not share Abrm's faith – just like Phars J speaking prbl to. One time Phars came to J, said: **"We: Abrm's descnts... Abrm: our fr."** And J: **"If you were Abrm's chldrn then you'd do what Abrm did" (Jn 8:33,39)**. And JB once: **"Do not begin say selvs, 'We have Abhm as our fr'" (Lk 3:8)**. And Paul in Gal: **"Those who have faith are chldrn/Abrm... Those who rely on faith are blessed along w/Abrm" (3:7, 9)**. But this PM put faith in self & wlth, not in Lord. He may've been a Jew, but wasn't true son/Abrm. His priorts were turned upside down, w/\$ way on top, and Lord & Word way on bottom.

And woe us when turn our priorts upsd/down, as well! Whnvr we relegate Lord way down here (by ignoring will, disrgrdng Word, taking grace for grantd), and elevate anthng else way up here (\$, hobbies, kids' sports, whtvr); whnvr we misplace our priorts & mess up their order/imprtnc, then we slipping into same sprtl pvrty as this man; and will end up w/same fate as this man, whom wrld consdrd rich, but God/hvn consdrd poor.

RL, on other hand, had diff priorts. We don't actly hear much re Laz's faith; don't hear him speak at all in this prbl, probly bec too weak to talk. But we know: Laz trusted in Lord; put his faith in God's proms and did not allow his pitiful life circmstncs to shake his confdnc/Lord. And we know this bec: angels carried him to hvn. And only way go hvn: trust in Lord by faith & priortz him above evthng else in life. Laz did that, in a quiet, humble way. So while world consdrd him poor, in eyes of God, Laz was the rich man!

And what J want you learn fr this prbl: J wants you be rich! Not rich like guy in purple, but rich like RL. He wants you priortz your Sav, salvtn, faith/Xp above evthng else in life. And way you do that: by priortzng his Word! Prbl ends w/PM in hell begging Abhm in hvn for few drops wtr. Abrm: no, we can't do that. So PM: could smone go warn my fam? Abrm says this: **vs. 29**. Which means, if you want be spared fr fires/hell, then priortz GW! M&P: term for OT, GW. PM rejctd GW, and apprtly so did his bros. But Laz embred/belvd/treasrd GW. And J wants us do same – bec in his Word, God: gives us his hrt; shows us grace; shows us Son, crucified to pay for our sins of misplcd priorities. Gos is MofG, the way God shows us his love. And so he comforts us w/his proms; washes us clean in his Bap; feeds our souls w/his Supper; promises us: no matter what our life circmstncs may be (even if covrd in rashes/sores; even if our meals are scraps for dogs), in Xp our names are written in Lamb's bk/life. And smday his angels will surround our deathbed and will carry our soul to Abrm's side. This is the love of God for you thru Xp, given to you in GW. You don't need a mrcl/res; you already have one! There's an empty tomb outside Jrslm that your Sav walked out of; and you get look into that empty tomb every time you look into his Word.

So get your priorities straight. Ask self: what's really imp to me in this life? This is an urgent msg, bec, as prbl teaches: hvn is real; and hell is real; and there is chasm that divides the two; and you cannot go from one to other; and your lifetime here on earth is your only chance to get this right. Would you rather live/die like PM, or bel/live like RL? I know what J wants for you. In Beatitudes: **“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kngdm/God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied” (Lk 6:20-21)**. And in Magnfct Mary sang: **“[He] has lifted up the humble [and] filled the hungry w/good things... He has helped his servant Israel” (Lk 1:52-54)**. Laz's name means: God is my help. Make sure he's your help, too.

Luke 16:19-31

¹⁹“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

²²“The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

²⁵“But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

²⁷“He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

²⁹“Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

³⁰“‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

³¹“He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”