

Walking with Jesus “A Tale of Two Lives”

Text: Luke 16:19–31

Big Idea: Walking with Jesus means opening our eyes at the gate now and living today in light of eternity.

Introduction: Seeing at the Gate

- Jesus tells a story of two lives: one rich, one poor.
- Same street, same day, two doorways but worlds apart.
- Not to shame wealth, but to expose **blindness**.
- Key question: Do you see the one at your gate and do you move toward them?

Exposition of Luke 16:19-31

1. vv. 19-21 Two Portraits at One Gate

- **The rich man:** unnamed, dressed in purple and fine linen, feasting daily—defined by luxury.
- **Lazarus:** named (“God helps”), laid at the gate, covered in sores, longing for scraps, unnoticed by the world.
- The **gate** is not miles apart, it’s a step. The sin is not wealth but blindness.
- *Luxury isn’t the villain, blindness is.*
- **Intertextual echoes:**
 - Isaiah 58:6-7: true fasting is mercy at the doorstep.
 - Luke 1:52-53: Mary’s song: hungry filled, rich sent away empty.
- Application: Who is at *your* gate?

2. vv. 22-26 The Great Reversal and the Great Chasm

- Death reverses the scene:
 - Lazarus is carried to Abraham’s side: banquet imagery, intimacy, honor, rest.
 - The rich man is in Hades, in torment, still treating Lazarus as a servant.
- Abraham’s word: *“Remember.”* Memory is part of judgment, our choices follow us.
- The **great chasm:** fixed, uncrossable. What was ignored at the gate is irreversible in eternity.
- *If we refuse to build bridges now, we will face a chasm then.*
- Application: Grace is abundant now, but not forever postponed. The way to close the chasm then is to cross the gate now.

3. vv. 27-31 Scripture Is Enough; Respond Now

- The rich man begs for a miracle to warn his brothers. Abraham replies: *“They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen.”*
- Jesus points ahead: even resurrection won’t convince hardened hearts.
- **Intertextual echoes:**
 - Deuteronomy 30:11-14: the word is near; no extra sign needed.
 - John 11: another Lazarus raised, yet leaders refuse to believe.
 - Luke 24: the risen Jesus opens the Scriptures.
- Scholarly note: Christopher J.H. Wright: Scripture is God’s chosen means of shaping obedience.
- Application: Don’t demand signs while ignoring Scripture. We already have the Word, the Spirit, and the Risen Christ. The issue is not evidence but obedience.

Three Lessons for the Road of Discipleship

1. **Open your eyes at the gate**
 - The rich man’s failure was blindness.
 - Our “gate” may be a hallway, classroom, or neighborhood.
 - Compassion doesn’t require a mission trip—just crossing the threshold.
 - *The poor are not projects for our clout; they’re people for our compassion.*
2. **Live now for then**
 - Eternity reveals our values; the chasm is formed by daily choices.
 - Bank statements and calendars are spiritual documents.
 - *What you treasure today will follow you into tomorrow.*
 - Build “eternity habits”: budget lines for mercy, time for proximity, rhythms of generosity.
3. **Hear the Word and respond without delay**
 - We don’t need fireworks; we need obedience.
 - Each delay hardens the heart; each step of obedience softens it.
 - *Revelation ignored builds calluses; revelation obeyed builds character.*
 - Don’t wait for a bigger sign- respond today.

Applications

- Identify “Lazarus at your gate” and act.
- Build a proximity rhythm: time with those in need.
- Add a mercy line to your budget.
- Prioritize Scripture: read and obey.

Lesson for the Road of Discipleship

Walking with Jesus means opening our eyes at the gate and ordering our lives for eternity: compassion now, because the chasm then is real.

Conclusion: Cross the Gate, Close the Chasm

- The parable is not meant to make us morbid, but merciful.
- Jesus crossed the ultimate chasm—“though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor.”
- Our response: cross the small chasms in His name.
- Invitation: If you feel far from God, come home. If you’ve been blind at your gate, ask for sight. If you’ve been waiting for a sign, respond to His Word today.