

What The Rich Man Remembered

Brian recently offered an invitation based on the narrative of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). Primarily he focused on verse 25. *But Abraham said, **Son, remember** that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

While he was in torments after dying, the rich man was capable of remembering things. I do not want to repeat Brian's good invitation. Rather I want to just look at the text and observe five things the rich man remembered while he was dead.

Abraham first reminds him of the wealth he had while he was alive (25). Verse 19 introduces us to the rich man by saying, *"There was a certain **rich** man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:"* His wealth gave him the ability to do good things for others, but he did not.

Secondly, he was reminded of the poor condition of the beggar Lazarus. Lazarus was also dead, but he was in a place of comfort. In regards to his suffering in life we read, *"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was **laid at his gate**, full of sores, And **desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table**: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores"* (20-21).

When both men died they found their roles were reversed in death. Now Lazarus was comforted in Abraham's bosom and the rich man found himself begging. The rich man begins the conversation with Abraham and shows us he knew and remembered **Lazarus' name**. *24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.*

There is no evidence that Lazarus was aware of the rich man's presence or plight. Even if he was, he would have been unable to help due to a great gulf that separated them (26).

Being unable to help himself, the rich man then remembered his family on earth. *27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For **I have five brethren**; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.*

Abraham tells the rich man that his brothers already had God's word (*Moses and the prophets*) 29. This is what they would need to escape torments. This is the fifth thing the rich man remembered (**Moses and the prophets**). He did not need Abraham to explain to him what he meant by this reference. He knew God's word, and he knew he disobeyed it in life. He further speculated his brothers would follow his ungodly example and be condemned too. He wondered if a man sent back from the dead could convince them to change, but Abraham said no. It would not make a difference (30-31).

The rich man remembered his **wealth** which gave him the ability to help. He recalled **Lazarus' name** and **his situation** which was his opportunity to aid. His failure brought him to the place of torment where he suddenly remembered **his family**. The only comfort he could receive would be to know his brothers would not join him. They had **the word of God** which the rich man also recalled. But they also had the influence of their departed rich brother. His example showed his disregard for God's teaching and likely carried more weight than the Scriptures to his brethren.

We have one life to get it right. If we die and go to torments we cannot reverse our position or the influence we have left behind on loved ones. In hell lost souls will sadly recall the many times they neglected to respond to God's word.

