

Faith in the Home

Sermon Notes for the Kiddos (and everybody else)
Luke 16:19-31, "A Matter of Faith"

Today's sermon focuses on another parable of Jesus called the "Rich Man and Lazarus." It is important to note that parables are not to be taken literally, but they are to be taken seriously because they all convey truth about God's Kingdom. In this parable there a chasm is described between the Kingdom of Heaven and Hell. The rich man in Hell sees the poor man, Lazarus in Heaven next to Abraham (The Forefather of our Faith). The rich man has a conversation with Abraham asking if Abraham could send Lazarus to warn his loved ones of their impending doom if they do not repent.

Abraham responded, "'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

1. This parable does not mean that people can communicate between Heaven and Hell, and that is not the point. However, we can glean from this parable that there is a separation between God's eternal Kingdom and Hell that is permanent. Scripture supports this.
2. The first important point that Jesus is conveying is that being rich and having status in this world does not mean that you have God's favor and can assume that you are saved. (This is pointed to the rich religious leaders, but it applies to all).
3. The second thing that Jesus is conveying is that the point of our religion and practices is to be in relationship with Him. Abraham is used in this parable because of his monumental importance in the Bible. Also, of importance is to understand that "Moses and the Prophets" means the books of the Bible that make up what we call the Old Testament. Jesus is teaching that Abraham, Moses, and the Scriptures point to Him.
4. The final point Jesus is conveying is that even though He will rise from dead, some people will continue in unbelief even if they think they are following Abraham and Moses' teachings. Ultimately, people want to be in control of their

lives and they believe they can shape God to fit their own lives. They will be stubborn about this even with the truth right in front of them. This is foolish. There is objective historical evidence that Jesus lived, died, and rose again from the dead. But that doesn't stop people from rejecting that truth. We cannot make anyone believe, but we can live our faith and shine the light of Jesus. People can think you have all the answers, but it takes faith. God knew Lazarus in this story, the rich man was just the "rich man." In faith God knows you. He gives you that faith, and in your daily lives he grows your faith. It may feel foolish at times, but your faith in Jesus as the resurrected Son of God is what saves you.

How do we teach these things to our children?

1. Teach and reteach, and keep on teaching that Jesus is the Son of God, (and that means that He is God) and that He died on the cross and rose again, and faith is the only way to Heaven.
2. As our children grow up and encounter the world, they are going to meet people who do not believe. They will wonder why. We must rise to this challenge by not compromising God's truth, but reminding them that most people want be in control of their own lives and do not want to acknowledge Jesus. Note: The rich man was shouting orders even from Hell in this parable.
3. Finally, we all know and love people who are unbelievers. Our witness is important, but it is ultimately between them and God to come to faith in Jesus. God desires all to be saved, and He will bring many people through harsh trials in this world in order to get them to see their need for Him. Pray for your lost loved ones, and rejoice that God is never done seeking to save them while they still draw breath in this world.

Has this been helpful? Why/why not? Do you have any suggestions? Pastor Joel would really appreciate your feedback! Please contact him at luckemeyerj@gmail.com Thanks!