LESSON 17

THE BEGGAR AND THE RICH MAN



Aim: **To teach the children that the choices we make in this life determine our position in the next world.**

Scripture Reading: **Luke 16:19–31**

Memory Verse: **John 1:13**

[C]hildren [of God are] born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

This is a long verse, but difficult to divide, so let the class spend two sessions learning it.

Presenting the Lesson

Starting point

What kind of life would you like to have if you were free to choose?

Main Points of the Lesson

1. Jesus told a story about another rich man who chose exactly how he wanted to live. **Describe the kind of life he chose (Lk 16:19).**
2. Lazarus was a very poor man who had to beg for a living at the entrance of the rich man's property. He had a terrible life (16:20–21). **Show Picture 17.** The rich man cared nothing for poor Lazarus, although he had plenty to share.
3. When Lazarus died, everything changed for him. His life in the next world was wonderful; he was given a place of honour in heaven, at Abraham's side. **Remind the children who Abraham was.** He was the father of the Jewish people (Gen 12:2) and the Bible calls him God's friend (Jas 2:23). The rich man died too, and his circumstances changed just as dramatically. He found himself in hell, where he suffered terribly (16:22–23).
4. **Describe how the rich man called out for help and the reply he received (16:23–26).** In his life on earth he had been unwilling to help anyone and now no-one was able to help him. He was cut off from all kindness and care.
5. It was only then that the rich man began to think of other people. He desperately wanted to warn his brothers, who probably were living as carelessly as he had lived (16:27–28). Jesus wants us to learn from this story that God's message is clear and available to all who will listen. Not even a messenger from the other side of the grave will make people who have closed their minds to God, listen (16:29–31).

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Our Response to the Story

Parents and other grownups often warn children about dangerous things, for example: "Don't touch that pot! It's just come off the fire and is still very hot." **As a teacher you should be able to give many more examples.** Sometimes we close our minds to their warnings and then suffer unnecessarily.

With this story Jesus wants to warn us that how we choose to live our lives in this world affects our position in the next world. If we fail to show love and mercy to God's creatures, how can we expect love and mercy from our Creator? Therefore, we should not only do good wherever we can; we should also never repay people for their cruelty or unkindness.

God longs to reward us, because he loves us and wants only what is good for us. Loving God and sharing what he has given us is the way he means for us to live. It's the best choice to make.

Instil the Memory Verse



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