

The Gospel of Luke
Chapter 16
(Luke 16:1-31)

Outline of the Chapter:

- I. Preface: The Method and Purpose of Writing, **Luke 1:1-4.**
- II. The Identification of the Son of Man with Men, **Luke 1:5-4:13.**
- III. The Ministry of the Son of Man to Men, **Luke 4:14-9:50.**
- IV. **The Repudiation of the Son of Man by Men, Luke 9:51-19:27.**

- I. Instruction in the Light of Rejection, Luke 12:1-19:27.**

- 14. Concerning wealth, Luke 16:1-31.**

- a. The unrighteous steward, vs. 1-9.**
 - b. Principles on the righteous treatment of wealth, vs. 10-13.**
 - c. Rebuke of the Pharisees' love of money, vs. 14-18.**
 - d. The rich man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31.**

14. Concerning wealth, Luke 16:1-31.

In this Chapter, we have four main sections; The unrighteous steward, **vs. 1-8**; Principles on the righteous treatment of wealth, **vs. 9-13**; Rebuke of the Pharisees love of money, **vs. 14-18**; The rich man and Lazarus, **vs. 19-31**. The theme that ties them together is, "Overcoming temptation with faith." They are also an image of the need for disciples to be wise and generous with the resources God has given them. Beginning with the parable of the unjust manager, Jesus is calling for faithfulness and wisdom in handling money, followed by a series of exhortations that emphasize various points related to it. Then a shorter section rebukes the attitude of the Pharisees and declares the arrival of a new era, which although new, does not change the ethical standards that God requires. Then, we are given the story of the rich man and Lazarus that emphasizes the eternal results of unfaithfulness, which is demonstrated by one's unrighteous behaviors regarding wealth here on earth, versus faithfulness. The whole point is that Christ's followers, unlike the Pharisees, should not be lovers of money.

a. The unrighteous steward, vs. 1-9.

This first section uses a negative scenario to emphasize the positive. We will see that it is first a rebuke against the religious leaders of Jesus' day, and ours as well, yet, it uses the negative to teach a positive position. As such:

Vs. 1-4, deal with not gossiping, slandering, or maligning others. Yet, if we are the recipient of it, we are to trust in God and not ourselves.

Vs. 5-8, deal with personal faith.

Vs. 9, deals with the point that good stewards must be shrewd.

Vs. 1-4, deal with not gossiping, slandering or maligning others, yet if we are the recipient of it, we are to trust in God and not ourselves. There are three parts to this in analogy to the Pharisees, and all who reject God's plan:

1. The warning for mishandling God's gracious privileges and responsibilities, **vs. 1-2.**
2. The error of taking matters into your own hands rather than trusting in God, **vs. 3.**
3. Falsely trying to secure your eternal blessings, **vs. 4.**

In **Chapter 16**, we have two storylines that are only recorded in Luke's Gospel, just as the previous three parables of the lost sheep, coin, and sons of **Luke 15**, are only found in Luke's Gospel.

1. The warning for mishandling God’s gracious privileges and responsibilities, vs. 1-2.

Vs. 1

Luke 16:1, “Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions.”

Jesus is addressing His “**disciples**,” MATHETES, once again with a parable, and later will address the Pharisees. He once again was using the analogy of a “**rich man**” PLOUSIOS ANTHROPOS, as in **Luke 12:16**, but also that of a “**manager**,” OIKONOMOS that means, “a manager of a household or steward.” Here, the steward was “**reported**,” using the verb DIABALLO, which is only used here in the NT, that means, “slandered or accused.” Lexicons disagree on whether this was a false accusation or just simply an accusation against him. Whether a true or false accusation, it appears it was done maliciously. In either case, today we might say using the idiom, “he was thrown under the bus.” The accusation against him was that he was “**squandering**,” DIASKORPIZO, “scattering, dispersing, wasting, etc.,” (just as the Prodigal son did in **Luke 15:13**), his boss’ “**possessions**,” HUPARCHO. So, we see a malicious accusation that is brought against this man.

Vs. 2

Luke 16:2, “And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager’.”

When his boss “**heard**,” AKOUO, about the accusation, he asked him to “**give an accounting**,” APODIDOMI HO LOGOS, (give a statement or declaration) “**of your management**,” OIKONOMIA, “stewardship, administration, or management.” This word is used here three times, **vs. 2-4**. Paul uses it to describe his God given ministry, **1 Cor 9:17; Eph 3:2; Col 1:25**. It is also used to identify the various dispensations of human history that God created for the administration of His Plan, **Eph 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim 1:4**. Here, it is used literally for the management of his boss’ business or estate, where the boss asks for the books to be brought up to date, accounted for, and reconciled.

Next, it appears some things might have happened in between, or that the boss believed the accusations against the manager without any evidence because the boss, “the rich man,” jumps right to firing this manager, “**for you can no longer be manager**,” GAR DUNAMAI OUK ETI OIKONOMEO.

In Jewish law and society, this would have been an illegal thing to do, because there was apparently only one piece of evidence. The Law of Moses taught that you need two or three pieces of evidence to convict someone, **Deut 17:6; 19:15**, as we noted in **Luke 15:32**.

Therefore, we see that the worker was accused of mismanagement and the boss asks him to reconcile the accounts and then leave.

2. The error of taking matters into your own hands rather than trusting in God, vs. 3.

This is the beginning of operation Human Good works.

Vs. 3

Luke 16:3, “The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg’.”

Just like the Prodigal son did, this steward takes matters into his own hands, i.e., Operation Human Good.

Knowing that he was about to be fired, the manager takes some action to save his own skin, as it were, “**What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me?**” Here, he recognizes his boss as being His “**master,**” KURIOS, “supreme controller, owner, lord, master, etc.,” and that He is taking away his management responsibilities, APHAIREO, “take away, cut off, or remove,” with OIKONOMIA.

This is a veiled warning from our Lord that the Pharisees were about to lose their position of leadership over the dissemination of the worship of God.

The steward also takes recognition that he is incapable of doing anything else, “**I am not strong enough to dig,**” OUK ISCHOU, where the emphasis is a lack of power he truly possessed, with SKAPTO, “to dig,” one of the hardest lines of work. SKAPTO also emphasizes cultivating and planting seed, so we see witnessing and evangelizing by analogy. The Pharisees could not do this on their own. In addition, he recognized, “**I am ashamed to beg,**” AISCHUNO EPAITEO. In other words, the Pharisees did not have the fortitude to lower themselves; they did have humility of soul; they did have the strength to serve on their own and they did not have the requisite humility.

By analogy, we always must operate under the power and strength of God to execute the Christian way of life, and possess great humility.

3. Falsely trying to secure your eternal blessings, vs. 4.

Vs. 4

Luke 16:4, “I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes’.”

“**I know what I shall do,**” tells us he devised a plan to try to win the good graces of the people so that when he is removed from his job, he will have a place to land. Therefore, his big plan is to “win the people over” so that they will be gracious towards him once he is out of a job, “**the people will welcome me into their homes.**” He uses the Verb DECHOMAI in the Aorist, Middle, Subjunctive, Third-person, Plural that means, “They might receive, accept, or approve,” EGO, “me,” EIS, “into,” AUTO, “their,” HO OIKOS, “homes.”

Therefore, his solution was to “suck up” to the people and try to win them over, rather than turning to God in repentance. This is the analogy of the Pharisees trying to persuade the people to accept them rather than turn to God in repentance. As such, this is a works for salvation program, which does not save anyone. He was trying to save himself rather than accepting God’s plan of Salvation through the person and work of Jesus Christ, just like the Pharisees were doing.

On another note, this part shows what can happen to someone when they are gossiped about, maligned, slandered, falsely accused, etc. It can have a detrimental effect on their lives. Therefore, we should not gossip about, malign, or slander anyone. In addition, if we are the recipient of gossiping, maligning or slander, we are to trust in God to provide a solution rather than trusting in ourselves to solve our problems. Remember, God has 11 Problem Solving Devices (PSDs) that we are to have within our souls, ready to be deployed when any outward or inward attack or temptation tries to take us over. They include:

1. Naming your sins to God the Father, (Repentance / Rebound), **Psa 32:5; 1 John 1:9.**
2. Filling of God the Holy Spirit, **John 14:26; 16:12-14; Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16.**
3. Faith Rest Drill, **Psa 37:4-5; Rom 4:20; Heb 4:1-3.**
4. Doctrinal Orientation, **Heb 11:1; 1 Thes 4:13.**
5. Grace Orientation, **Eph 2:8-9; 3:20; 2 Cor 12:9.**
6. Authority Orientation, **Rom 13:1-7; Eph 5:21-24; Titus 3:1-2.**
7. Personal Sense of Destiny, **Eph 3:16; Phil 4:19; Rom 9:23.**

8. Personal Love for God the Father, **Rom 5:5; 8:28; 1 John 4:19.**
9. Impersonal, Unconditional Love for Mankind, **John 3:16; 15:12-17; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; 1 John 3:23.**
10. Sharing the Happiness of God (+H), **Prov 3:13; John 15:11.**
11. Occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ, **Luke 2:1-20; Eph 3:17; 1 Peter 1:8.**

Vs. 5-8, deal with personal faith.

In this negative scenario, the steward puts his plan into action to solve his problem on his own, rather than turning to and trusting in God.

Vs. 5

Luke 16:5, “And he summoned each one of his master's debtors, and he *began* saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’”

“**He summoned,**” PROSKALEOMAI, προσκαλέομαι, “summon, call to oneself, or invite,” “**each one,**” HEKASTOS HEIS, “**of his master’s debtors,**” HO HEAUTOU KURIOS HO CHREOPHEILETES. CHREOPHEILETES is only used here and **Luke 7:41**. It is made up from CHREOS, “debt,” and OPHEILETES, “one who owes.” Therefore, it means, “the one who owes a debt.”

In **Luke 7:41**, Jesus used it to teach on forgiveness, which He taught Simon the Pharisee. Here, Jesus used it to also teach about forgiveness of debt. In both, we see a sense of mercy on the part of the one who forgave the debt, as well as a sense of relief for the one forgiven. Therefore, if the Pharisees would have a heart of forgiveness then they too would be forgiven.

“**And he *began* saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’”** This uses the root of the previous word which is the Verb OPHEILO that means, “owe or indebted,” with KURIOS for “lord or master.” This represents the indebtedness we have to God for our sins.

Vs. 6

Luke 16:6, “And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty’.”

“**A hundred measures of oil,**” is HEKATON BATOS ELAION. BATOS means “bath,” which was a Hebrew liquid measure. It is only used here in the NT. It is approximately equal to one-tenth of a homer, about 6 gallons, or 22 liters. ELAION means, “olive oil.”

“**Take your bill,**” DECHOMAI, in the Imperative mood of command, GRAMMA, “**and sit down quickly,**” KAI KATHIZO TACHEOS, “**and write fifty’,**” GRAPHO PENTEKONTA. This “50” in the Greek might just mean a round number. So, this might have been a way to simply say round it down, or maybe it is the precise amount. Fifty is the number of jubilee or deliverance. It is made up of 5, the number of grace, multiplied by 10, the number of perfect order. So, we see the perfect order of grace in this situation, in the forgiveness of the debt.

Vs. 7

Luke 16:7, “Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty’.”

This time the steward only asks, “how much do you owe,” using POSOS and OPHEILO for “owe or indebted.” This person owed “**A hundred measures of wheat,**” HEKATON KOROS SITOS. KOROS means, “Kor, or a measure.” It too is only used here in the NT. KOROS of the NT is the Greek adaptation of the Hebrew word KOR, which represents the largest dry measure used by the Jews. A KOR equaled a “homer,” the Hebrew word for donkey; hence, originally, a “donkey load.” The same as 10 ephahs, cf. **Ezek 45:11**. As such the HOMER/KOR equaled about 10 bushels, a little over 48 gallons, or 220 liters.

This time the steward only commands them to “**take your bill and write eighty,**” DECHOMAI SU OH GRAMMA KAI GRAPHO OGDOEKONTA. ODGOEKONTA is only used by itself here in the NT. It is from OKTO, eight.” It is also in the number 84, in **Luke 2:37**, which was the age or years of widowhood, of Anna the widowed prophetess who received the baby Jesus and His parents in the temple. Eighty is made up of 8, the number of new beginnings and resurrection, times 10, the perfect order. Therefore, the number 80 represents the perfect order in new beginnings. As 50 represented the perfect order of grace in the forgiveness of debt/sin, 80 represents the perfect order of new beginnings aspect, as a result of the forgiveness of debt/sin. Therefore, we see cleansing with new beginnings in these two scenarios.

Vs. 8

Luke 16:8, “And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.”

When “**his master,**” KURIOS found out what he had done, he “**praised him,**” EPAINEO, “to praise, approve or give a public mark of esteem,” used also in **Rom 15:11; 1 Cor 11:2, 17, 22**. Therefore, his master praised his forgiveness and restorations.

Here the “**steward,**” OIKONOMOS, is called “**unrighteous,**” ADIKIA, “injustice, wrong, wickedness, wrongdoing, unjust.” This has given thought that the accusations against the steward were correct, but it just might be a continuation of the thought of the slander brought against him.

The reason he was praised by his master was “because he had acted shrewdly,” HOTIS POIEO PHROMINOS. PHRONIMOS is the adverbial form of the Adjective PHRONIMOS, “prudent, sensible.”

Bertram writes, “*Cleverly resolute action is imposed by the hopelessness of the situation and the resultant urgency. In acting as he does, even the worldly man can be a model for the children of light,*” (“PHREN,” Kittel, 9:234).

Then Jesus makes a statement in regard to the people of His day, “**For the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.**” Here the Adjective PHRONIMOS is used for “shrewd.”

Our Lord is saying in the parable that the everyday person is wiser than the way the Israelites are acting towards one another. In this worldly scenario, the steward was doing things to benefit himself. He was forgiving debt/sin. But, for the Israelites, especially the Pharisees they were not forgiving the sins of others and operating out of selfishness from their self-righteous, legalistic, arrogance.

Therefore, we are commanded to be shrewd in our dealings with the unbelievers of this world to win them over for Christ. Not in a sinful way though!

Vs. 9

Luke 16:9, “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.”

“Make friends,” POIEO PHILOS is the command from our Lord here. The means to do so is “by the wealth of unrighteousness,” EK HO MAMMONAS, “wealth or property,” also in **Mat 6:24; Luke 16:11, 13**. This type of wealth is “of unrighteousness,” HO ADIKIA. This seems like an odd thing for the Lord to say, given what comes later in **vs. 11, 13**. But this is a principle by analogy. In other words, we are to be like Paul stated when trying to witness to the unbelievers of the world in **1 Cor 9:22**, **“To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.”**

This does not mean we use sin to court the sinner, or that we flatter or manipulate to achieve the goal of greater good. It simply is an analogy of someone in the world’s way of doing things that were shrewd, as an example of the shrewdness a believer must have to win the unbeliever.

The analogy continues by saying, **“so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.”** When the wealth of others fails, EKLEIPO, “ceases, fails, dies off, or come to an end,” **“They will receive you”** uses the Aorist, Middle, Subjunctive of the Verb DECHOMAI, “receive,” with AIONIOS SKENE, i.e., an “eternal tabernacle, tent, booth, or dwelling.” This is speaking of the worldly unbeliever. But as you know, they cannot give you or anyone else an eternal dwelling. Only God can give anyone an eternal abode. So once again we see the worldly analogy, this time of securing an eternal dwelling place for yourself. In the steward’s case, it would be a worldly one, which in actuality is the Lake of Fire.

Therefore, by analogy, our Lord is saying here, “Forgive the sins of others, (in the perfect order of grace), just as God has forgiven you, and you will have a perfect order of new beginning / resurrection, as you dwell in your eternal abode given to you by God. Therefore, we see the worldly analogy that Jesus is using, (speaking in their own terms since they were worldly people), to make the point of what they should be doing in the reality of the spiritual life.

a. The unrighteous steward, vs. 1-9.

Vs. 9

Luke 16:9, “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.”

This parable taught us the image of God and Jesus Christ as the master of the house, which teaches us about the Lord’s ownership. At the same time, it teaches us about our stewardship. Those who serve God are stewards or servants in the house. He is the owner, we are stewards. The theme of stewardship runs throughout **Luke 16**. We relate to the steward, as **Luke 12:42** asks, **“Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?”** The Lord gives us the answer in **Luke 16**. Now, in **vs. 10-13**, we have principles for being a faithful steward.

b. Principles on the righteous treatment of wealth, vs. 10-13.

These verses are concerned with our faith in God. We are to do our duty and trust in His grace for our reward. Here, we see the Character we are to have in **vs. 10**, the Consequences of our actions in **vs. 11-12**, and the Challenge we are given in **vs. 13**.

Vs. 10

Luke 16:10, “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.”

This is the character portion. The principle of the first half of this verse is similar to the praise and promise of reward in **Mat 25:21, 23; Luke 19:17**. It is the positive aspect of this verse.

Mat 25:21, “His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master’.”

“He who is faithful,” is HO PISTOS that means, “trustworthy, faithful, reliable, credible.” It is the standard for living the Christian way of life, as we trust in God for our every need and are consistent with the intake and application of His Word.

“In a very little thing,” reminds us of the faith like a mustard seed analogy in **Luke 13:19; 17:6**. The Greek uses the Dative of Superlative Adjective, ELACHISTOS, “smallest, least, etc.” It is also used in **Luke 19:17, “And he said to him, ‘Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities’.”**

“Is faithful also in much,” EIMI PISTOS KAI EN POLUS. If we are faithful in the minute details of life, we will be faithful in the bigger areas as well. Demonstrate your faithfulness to God in the small, or finer points of life. Do not gloss them over, thinking they are insignificant or meaningless. For example, do not take the pen that your business provides for you to use on the job to use at home or for you own affairs, unless they give you permission to do so. This may seem trivial or insignificant, but if you are thinking about what is the right and wrong thing to do with something on that scale, you will be thinking about right and wrong on much larger issues as well. Remember a sin is a sin, whether large or small. Therefore, if we major in the minors, we will be graduates in the grand scheme of life. As such, work to be faithful in the small areas of life and you will also be faithful in the seemingly more significant things as well.

On the negative side, the second half of this passage calls out the one who is not thinking righteously regarding the smaller, less significant things of life, **“And he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.”** Here, we have the same Superlative ELACHISTOS but with ADIKOS that means, “unjust or unrighteous.” Luke’s Gospel only uses this here and **vs. 16**, and **18:11**. It is also used sparingly in the NT, including these verses.

1 Cor 6:9, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals.”

1 Peter 3:18, “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.”

2 Peter 2:9, “Then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the Day of Judgment.”

Therefore, if we are operating sinfully in small matters, we will also act sinfully in larger situations, i.e., **“is unrighteous also in much,”** EIMI ADIKOS KAI EN POLLO.

Here, we see the principle in financial matters and frankly all matters. We are to operate faithfully, which means, we must have the mental attitude and actions that align with God’s Word, will, and plan for our lives. But, if we do not, we will not be faithful towards God when the real crisis hits. The steward of God is to be faithful in all things.

Luke 12:42, “And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?””

1 Cor 4:2, “In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.”

“This isn’t simply a matter of ability; it’s a matter of character. That’s why the terms “faithful” and “unrighteous” are used. We’re looking at the character of the disciple. Character separates the good steward

from the bad one. The Lord doesn't say in **verse 10** "unskilled in little;" the Lord says "unrighteous in little." When the disciple fails to be a good steward, it is like promising God to take care of his things but then not doing it. It's cheating the Lord." (Christ-Centered Exposition.)

Vs. 11

Luke 16:11, "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you?"

This is the consequences portion. Here, we have the Conjunction EI, which is a first class "if" statement of cause and effect. The "cause" statement come first, "**if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth.**" It uses PISTOS once again, but with the negative OUK for "not been faithful." Then we have the object of the unfaithfulness, "**in the use of unrighteous wealth,**" EN HO ADIKOS MAMMONAS. As we noted in **vs. 9**, MAMMONAS or MAMMON, is only used in **Mat 6:24; Luke 16:9, 11, 13**. It means, "wealth, property, material goods." it represents the materialistic wealth of the world / Satan's cosmic system. Therefore, if you steal a pen from the office, you have not been faithful in the use of worldly wealth.

The then statement is, "**who will entrust the true riches to you?**" It uses the Interrogative Pronoun TIS, "who," with the Future, Active, Indicative of the Verb PISTEUO, with the Adjective ALETHINOS, "true, dependable, genuine, or real," and the Dative of HUMEIS, "to you." "Riches" is added for context to define the "true" as wealth in comparison to the unrighteous wealth of this world. The "true wealth" is God's blessings both in time and especially in eternity. This is the first time ALETHINOS is used in the NT, which governs its use throughout the rest of the NT. It means that which is Godly or Divine, established by God, or absolute.

Therefore, we see that God will not bless us in time or eternity, if we are unfaithful towards Him with the things or responsibilities we have in this world. That is why in all things and matters we are to be trusting in Him and relying upon Him.

The Pharisees were given much to be faithful with, but they were instead unfaithful, even in the small matters and details of the Law, as they twisted them to be a works for salvation program, rather than being a representation of what God would do for them. We too, as believers in the Church Age, have been given much, and therefore need to be faithful to God in handling those things. If we are not, we will have loss of reward. If we are, we will be blessed even further by God, **1 Cor 3:12-15**. That is what we noted in **Luke 12:48b**, "**From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.**"

Vs. 12

Luke 16:12, "And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?"

This is another way of saying the same thing as in **vs. 11**, regarding our responsibilities as stewards of God. In heaven, we will move from being stewards to being owners together with God. We move from being heirs and coheirs with Christ, **Rom 8:17**, to owners together with Christ in God's kingdom. If we are not faithful in time, our eternal blessings will be lacking.

Here, we have another if – then statement. The Protasis is, "**And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's,**" KAI EI OUK with the Aorist, Middle Deponent, Indicative of GINOMAI, "have been," PISTOS EN HO ALLOTRIOS. ALLOTRIOS is an Adjective used as a Substantive here, that means, "belonging to another, strange, foreign, or hostile." In other words, the riches or wealth belongs to someone else that has been entrusted unto you to manage. If we are unfaithful in the use of those things, is the "if" statement.

The “then” or Apodosis statement is “**who will give you that which is your own?**” TIS with the Future, Active, Indicative of DIDOMI, “give,” with HUMEIS HO HUMETEROS. HUMETROS is an Adjective that means, “your own, yours, or belonging or pertaining to you.” This is the possessive form of the Second Person Plural Pronoun HUMEIS.

This is an interesting statement, because typically what is yours is yours to handle and manage without the permission and authority of others. But here, it states that we will not even be given what is rightfully ours.

In relationship to the Pharisees, they were rightfully given the law, the temple, the profits, and the promises. They had a right to these things especially the Unconditional Covenants. Yet, because of their unbelief, they would lose out on what they could have rightfully had.

The same goes for the unfaithful believer of the Church Age. God has set aside blessings and rewards for you in eternity past. But, if you operate unfaithfully / sinfully, He will not grant you those rewards in eternity. For analogy, imagine that in eternity past, God has filled a room with blessings and rewards in heaven just for you that is 1,000 feet, by 1,000 feet. But to obtain those rewards you have to function faithfully. If you do, at the BEMA Seat of Jesus Christ, He will grant them to you. But if you operate unfaithfully, He will not be able to grant them to you, **1 Cor 3:10-15**. As a result, what was set aside for you, what was yours, is now lost due to your unfaithfulness.

Therefore, that is what is meant in our passage when Jesus says, “**who will give you that which is your own?**” The answer to this rhetorical question is, “no one will give you what was yours,” if you have been unfaithful. And in the same manner, the Pharisees were unfaithful in their dealings with the religion God gave them to protect and preach while in this world; therefore, they would not receive the eternal blessings He had set aside for them.

*“The subtle truth here is that all material things belong to the Creator; we are merely caretakers (cf. **1 Chronicles 29:14**). If we prove unfaithful in this God-given task, what right do we have to claim our heavenly reward, that which is ours forever?”* (Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)

Vs. 13

Luke 16:13, “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

This is the challenge portion. It is the main principle, which is also a very famous one. It is also used in **Mat 6:24**.

First, we have the principle, “**No servant can serve two masters,**” OUDEIS OIKETES DUNAMAI DOULEUO DUE KURIOS. Then is the practical aspect to support the principle, “**for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other.**”

Here, we have a “**love – hate**” relationship supported by a “**devoted – despise,**” analogy. In the first part, “**Hate**” MISEO, means, “hate, detest, abhor, etc.,” and “**Love,**” is AGAPAO. Notice the negative is first and then the positive. In the second part this is reversed, as “**devoted,**” is the positive and comes first, which is the Verb ANTECHOMAI, “to cling to, hold fast, or adhere to.” Then the negative follows with the Verb KATAPHRONE for “despise or think against.”

Therefore, we find that we cannot have split allegiances. We can only have one true allegiance in our lives and that should be with God. If we have sin in our lives, our allegiance is with the world, Satan’s cosmic system, which is designed to hate God. Therefore, if we love the things of this world, we will end up hating God.

John 15:19, “If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.”

Therefore, just take note as to who or what the world loves, and who and what the world hates. Then you will be able to see where your allegiances should lie regarding the people and things of this world. Yet, in all situations, our allegiance should be with God and the things of God.

1 John 2:15, “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Mat 16:26, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

That is why this verse ends with **“You cannot serve God and wealth,”** ΟΥΚ ΔΥΝΑΜΑΙ ΔΟΥΛΕΥΟ ΤΗΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΜΜΟΝΑΣ. Here, and above, the language is actually stronger in the Greek, as they use the Verb ΔΟΥΛΕΥΟ that means, “be a slave to or be subject to obey.” It speaks to the obedience we are to have towards God and His world compared to the material things of this world. As it states, we cannot serve both at the same time. If we are enslaved to the material things of Satan’s cosmic system, we will not be servants of the Lord. Yet, if we are servants of the Lord, we will not be enslaved by the things of this world. The choice is yours!

Remember that the master has exclusive possession of the slave. Slavery is not a part-time relationship. The slave is obligated to serve his master at any and all times. Likewise, the Christian must yield himself totally to the service of God. There is really no such thing as part-time Christianity.

Therefore, we cannot worship two gods. We must make up our minds. Will we serve the false god of money and possessions, which amounts to idolatry, or will we serve the One true living God who owns all things?

Col 3:23-24, “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

“The point is that we must keep our priorities straight. Wealth is to be used, not served. If all our efforts are to go to serving our Master, God, then the proper use of wealth is in service to God, not self. In a sense, the Unjust Steward is an illustration of this, for he certainly did not worry about wealth, but rather used it as a tool for his own self-preservation. The Christian, however, does not serve self, but God, and therefore any wealth he controls should be used for God’s purposes. (Matthew 6:24; 1 Timothy 6:6-10).” (Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)

In conclusion, these passages define for us what it means to be “faithful.” It means that we have good character, keep the consequences of all situations in mind, and keep God first and only as Lord in all that we do.

c. Rebuke of the Pharisees’ love of money, vs. 14-18 - Good stewards must be obedient.

Vs. 14

Luke 16:14, “Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him.”

Once again, we see the Pharisees **“listening,”** the Imperfect, Active, Indicative of ΑΚΟΥΟ, to Jesus’ teaching and rejecting Him and His teaching, as they were **“scoffing at Him,”** the Imperfect, Active, Indicative of ΕΚΜΥΚΤΗΡΙΖΟ, ἐκμυκτηρίζω that means, “ridicule, sneer at, deride, or scoff at.” It is only used here and **Luke 23:35**. Therefore, we see that their scoffing continued throughout our Lord’s ministry, even while He hung on the Cross.

Luke 23:35, “And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One”.”

EKMUKTERIZO is a compound of EK “from” and MUKTERIZO, “to mock, sneer,” that comes from the noun MUKTER, “nose.” It literally can mean, “to turn up one’s nose,” but comes to mean, “to despise, deride or scoff.” We have noted in the book of Proverbs how the nose was used as a euphemism for mocking or scoffing, **Prov 1:26; 12:8.**

The reason they were scoffing at Jesus was because of His teachings on the appropriate attitude towards wealth, which was contradicting their “**love of money.**” The phrase, “**who were lovers of money,**” uses the Adjective PHILARGUROS with the Verb HUPARCHO that means, “be, exist, have, or possess.” PHILARGUROS, φιλάργυρος means, “avaricious or fond of money.” It is a compound word from PHILEO, “to love or have affection for,” and ARGUROS, “silver or money.” As such, it describes those obsessed with concern for money. It is only used here and in **2 Tim 3:2**, in the NT.

2 Tim 3:1-2, “But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ²For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy.”

We have further instructions in the NT to “not be lovers of money,” APHILARGUROS, as it will have a detrimental effect on your spiritual life. In that, we see the requirements for being a Deacon of a church, which includes not being a lover of money, **Heb 13:5; 1 Tim 3:3; cf. Titus 1:7.**

Heb 13:5-6, “Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,” “so that we confidently say, “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?””

1 Tim 3:3, “Not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money.”

Paul also wrote how the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, and has a negative effect on the soul, **1 Tim 6:10.** There, Paul used the cognate noun form PHILARGURIA, which is only used there in the NT.

1 Tim 6:10, “For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

Remember, the scriptures do not say “money is the root of all evil,” it states “the love of money is...” Money is a necessary commodity in the world. It is the means of stating the prices of goods and services as well as expressing debts, salaries, wages, rents, etc. It is a medium of exchange whereby goods and services are paid for and debts are discharged. Money is necessary for the function of an economy. It is not carnal or sinful for the believer to possess money or use money in a legitimate way. Money is legitimate, its accumulation is legitimate and its use is permissible. The function of money is part of the work ethic. There are monetary principles in the work ethic: earning money, saving money, spending money, giving money, and investing money. Therefore, it is not wrong or sinful for believers to possess money, even in large amounts. It is a tool or resource we need and are to use wisely. It glorifies God when it is part of your escrow blessings.

On the other hand, its illegitimate uses include: bribery, trying to buy power, influence, or love, or to corrupt character. Money becomes a wonderful slave or a cruel master, depending on your spiritual condition, **Jude 11, “Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.”** The deceit of Balaam was monetary lust. Therefore, do not ever let money become your master, because, if you love money, it means you are inordinately lusting after it, and lust for money can destroy the right priorities for life, **James 4:13-14.**

James 4:13-14, “Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.”¹⁴Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.”

Remember, money cannot buy salvation, (the spiritual death of our Lord was the purchase price for our salvation). Money cannot buy love, it is not a means of happiness, nor is it a means of security, **Mat 6:24-33**. Money cannot buy everything. There are many other things that money cannot buy, such as security, perfect happiness from God, stability of soul, or peace of mind.

Money corrupted Solomon, **Ecc 5:10-6:2**, also Balaam as we noted above, **Rev 2:14-15**; and Ananias and Sapphira of the early church, **Acts 5:1-10**. Therefore, money does not mean prosperity, **Prov 11:28**, or capacity for life, **Prov 13:7, 11**.

Prov 11:28, “He who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like the *green* leaf.”

Prov 13:7, “There is one who pretends to be rich, but has nothing; *another* pretends to be poor, but has great wealth.”

For the unbeliever, there are dangers regarding money as it cannot buy salvation, **Mark 8:36-37; 1 Peter 1:18-19**. It causes the rich man to have faith in wrong objects, **Mark 10:25**. The “eye of the needle” was the small door in the main gate of the city. One man could just barely get through the door. The camel could not fit through the door, and in analogy, the rich man cannot buy his way into heaven. Therefore, money hinders the unbeliever from seeking salvation, as we will note in **vs. 19-31**. Money may have credit with people, but it has no credit with God, **Prov 11:4**.

Prov 11:4, “Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.” The righteousness of God is the credit you need to live with God forever. That is gained by faith, i.e., believing in Jesus Christ as your Savior. Some questions we can ask ourselves to see if we are lovers of money or not include:

1. Does my pursuit of money interfere with obeying God?
2. Do I always look for something that will benefit me financially, regardless of how it affects others?
3. Am I more concerned with what my cost will be instead of allowing myself to be moved by compassion?

Money related to right perspective and mental attitude is taught in **1 Tim 6:3-11, 17-19**.

Vs. 15

Luke 16:15, “And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.”

In this passage, Jesus exposes the fundamental sin of the self-righteous Pharisees as they “**justify themselves**,” which is DIKAI00 HEAUTOU. DIKAI00 means, “to justify, render innocent, or pronounce righteous.” They were doing this regarding themselves, “**in the sight of men**,” ENOPION HO ANTHROPOS. That is why we call this “self-righteous” arrogance. They justify their thoughts and actions as being holy and righteous against their own standards rather the standards of God, cf. **2 Cor 10:12**.

2 Cor 10:12, “For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.”

Luke also uses DIKAIOS in **Luke 7:29, 35; 10:29, 18:14**. The last two, **Luke 10:29; 18:14**, are similar in application to our passage.

Luke 10:29, “But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?””

Luke 18:14, “I tell you, this man, (*the tax collector, sinner*), went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Yet, those who are truly justified by God live by faith, as Paul stated when quoting the prophet Habakkuk, **Hab 2:4**, in his letter to the Romans, **Rom 1:17**. Cf. **Rom 4:3** with **Gen 15:6**; and **Rom 4:7-8** with **Psa 32:1-2**. See also **Isa 53:11; Rom 3:30; Gal 3:8**.

Isa 53:11, “As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see *it and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.”

Rom 1:17, “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by faith.””

Rom 3:30, “Since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.”

Gal 3:8, “The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, “All the nations will be blessed in you.””

Even though man may try to justify himself by his human good works, “**God knows your hearts,**” DE THEOS GINOSKO HUMEIS HO KARDIAS. This phrase is used in the Scriptures to describe the fact that God knows the inner thoughts of a man, not just the outward appearance as man sees, **1 Sam 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chron 28:9; Prov 21:2; 24:12; Acts 1:24; Rom 8:27**.

1 Sam 16:7, “But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.””

Prov 21:2, “Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the hearts.” Cf. Prov 16:2; 24:12.

For the hypocrite, like these Pharisees, this fact is unbearable because he realizes that his actions fool neither himself nor God. Therefore, even though we may hide our thoughts from man, there is no hiding of our thoughts before God, as He knows every one of them. God knows our attitudes, our motives, our feelings, and everything else that is under the surface regarding the thoughts of our souls. Our problem is our heart. As **Jer 17:9** says, “**The heart is more deceitful than all else, and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”**

We may fool ourselves and others, but we will not fool God. God knows who we are all the way down to the bottom of our souls. As such, we should not try to fool God, as we try to fool others and even ourselves. Therefore, knowing that God knows your every thought should lead you to have great honesty and integrity in your thoughts and your actions. If you have been putting on a façade for others, stop what you have been doing and start operating in the integrity of God with great faith as His Word flows through your soul.

This doctrine should be a great comfort for you, the believer, as you realize that human judgments upon your actions are not important. You realize that you serve a Master who judges your motives more than your

accomplishments. You seek to please no one but God. Paul states that the goal of Christian instruction is love coming from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith, **1 Tim 1:5**.

c. Rebuke of the Pharisees' love of money, vs. 14-18, good stewards must be obedient.

Next, in vs. **15**, our Lord states, **“for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.”**

“Highly Esteemed,” is the Adjective, used substantively, HUPSELOS that means “high” and usually is a modifier to describe high things. But, here it has a figurative or metaphoric use as a noun and is translated “highly esteemed.” It is modified by the prepositional phrase “among men.” Literally, the Greek reads “the among men high thing.”

Apparently, what the Pharisees thought was impressive to others, themselves, and God, was actually not impressive to God at all. In fact, it was the complete opposite. Previously, we have noted how the Pharisees would make a big deal about presenting their prayers and giving to the poor, so that they would impress others, **Mat 6:1-2, 5**.

Mat 6:1-2, “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. ²So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.”

Mat 6:5, “When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.”

In order to give, they had to have money. In order to have fine robes, they had to have money. But their lust for money went even beyond that. They thought that if they were rich, it was proof that they were truly righteous and God was blessing them, as He had done with Abraham, David, Solomon, etc. But Jesus was telling them that this is a reversal of God's value system. Their pursuit of material gain was actually an abomination to God, i.e., **“detestable in the sight of God.”** The Greek here is BDELUGMA ENOPION HO THEOS.

BDELUGMA, βδέλυγμα means, “abomination, detestable thing, or something morally repugnant.” It is used here and in **Mat 24:15; Mark 13:14; Rev 17:4-5; 21:27**. The other two Gospels usages, define who the Antichrist of the Tribulation is, “the abomination of desolation,” cf. **Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11**.

Mat 24:15, “Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand).”

Therefore, our Lord was saying to the Pharisees who loved money that their behaviors were like Satan and his Antichrist. The mentality of their soul was truly detestable to Him, not one that is justified by Him. We see in the OT, many things are an abomination or detestable to God, like deviousness, cheating in business, perverse hearts, lying, false worship, arrogance, scoffers and scoffing, etc. The most famous is **Prov 6:16-18**. Cf. **Prov 3:32; 11:1; 12:2; 15:8-9; 24:9; 28:9**.

Prov 6:16-19, “There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸A heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, ¹⁹a false witness *who* utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers.”

We could say that the way the Pharisees were operating due to lusting for money that they were doing all of these things in one way or another.

Prov 11:20, “The perverse in heart are an abomination to the LORD, but the blameless in their walk are His delight.”

Prov 16:5, “Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; assuredly, he will not be unpunished.”

Prov 24:9, “The devising of folly is sin, and the scoffer is an abomination to men.”

Prov 28:9, “He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, even his prayer is an abomination.”

Prov 15:8, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight.”

Prov 21:27, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, how much more when he brings it with evil intent!”

These last two are dealing with false religion and worship. Therefore, as the Pharisees were performing their worship with the intent for monetary gain, it was with evil intent, which is an abomination / detestable to God. Cf. **1 Tim 3:8; Titus 1:7, 11; 1 Peter 5:2.**

1 Peter 5:2, “Shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness.”

Vs. 16

Luke 16:6 “The Law and the Prophets *were proclaimed* until John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.”

“**The Law and the Prophets,**” HO NOMOS KAI HO PROPHETES, are two of the three parts that made up the Hebrew Bible. The other part is called the Poetical books. In all parts, the gospel of God’s plan of salvation for mankind were taught, shown, and depicted. These sections of the Hebrew Bible were taught right up to the time of John the Baptist, the forerunner to Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

“**Until John**” is the Preposition, MECHRI, “until,” with IOANNES, “John.” As noted above, this John was the Baptist, which we noted and studied about back in the early Chapters of Luke’s Gospel. Remember what Jesus said about John in **Luke 7:28a, “I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John...”**

“**Since that time,**” is APO TOTE, “from then, since then, or since that time.” This gives us an interesting division from the time of the Hebrew Bible being preached up to the time of John the Baptist, and from that time to now. From the Hebrew Bible to the time of John the Baptist, they were prophesizing about the coming Christ / Messiah / Savior. Since the time of John’s preaching to the current time, the Messiah was visibly manifested in the person of Jesus Christ and proclaimed by Him and His teachings, **Mat 4:23.**

Mat 4:23, “Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.”

*“In the Synoptists the presence and future of the divine rule are brought together in Jesus, who is the Bearer of salvation both present and future. Jesus speaks here as He who inaugurates the new epoch which replaces and transcends all that has gone before, the Law, the prophets and the Baptist. To this degree the saying underlies that of Paul in **Rom. 10:4**, i.e., that Christ is the τέλος of the Law (cf. **Jn. 1:17**).”* (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament - Volume I.)

Rom 10:4, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

John 1:17, “For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”

This is why some have considered a dispensation between the Age of the Law and the Age of Grace / the Church called the Dispensation of the Hypostatic Union. It is a unique time in the history of gospel preaching and a transitional period of uniqueness for living the spiritual life between the Law and Church.

Next, we get into a bit of a messy translation, as the Greek simply reads, HO BASILEIA HO THEOS EUANGELIZO. Literally it reads “the kingdom of God is proclaimed or preached.” The messiness comes in with the Verb EUANGELIZO, εὐαγγελίζω that means, “bring or announce good news, or proclaim or preach (the gospel).” Here, it is actually in the Present, Passive, Indicative. With the Passive Voice, it is the action of receiving the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. In the Present tense, it is an “Extending-from-Past Present tense,” where it describes action that has begun in the past that continues into the present. The emphasis however is on the present time, but it is translated like a past tense to encompass the past action that continues into the present time. Therefore, we could translate this as “the Gospel has been and continues to be preached to you, which you have received.”

In the NASB English translation, the meaning of EUANGELIZO is broken into two parts that surround BASILEIA OH THEOS, “the Gospel of the Kingdom of God has been and continues to be preached.”

The KJV uses the more literal translation and states, “**The kingdom of God is preached.**” Preaching the Kingdom of God is preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as He is the only way to enter the Kingdom of God. It also gives us the broader spectrum of not just our entrance into it at salvation, but also the eternal nature of it; living in the kingdom for all of eternity. That is what Jesus was trying to emphasize in this statement.

Matthew has a parallel passage that is in a slightly different context but helps to understand Luke’s, in **Mat 11:12-13**.

Mat 11:12-13, “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven 1) suffers violence, and 2) violent men take it by force.¹³For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John.”

Luke stated that “the Gospel has been and continues to be preached.” Matthew says this in **vs. 13**, by simply stating the prophets and Law, “**prophesied,**” which uses the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb PROPHETEYO προφητεύω that means, “prophesy, speak by divine inspiration, foretell the future, or be a prophet.” What the prophets and the Law prophesied was the Kingdom of Heaven, which is another way of saying, “the gospel of Jesus Christ,” that gives someone entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

From Matthew’s account, it seems like the gospel and Kingdom of Heaven are being attacked by violent men. But, in the context of the overall passage, it is actually stating how warriors are receiving salvation and entrance into the Kingdom. Nevertheless, given the words used in Matthew’s, which are metaphoric in the positive sense, when one of these words is used in Luke’s, it has the negative connotation of the original meaning.

1) In **vs. 12**, of Matthew’s account, we have the phrase, “**suffers violence,**” which is the Present, Middle or Passive, Indicative of the Greek Verb BIAZO, βιάζω that means, “to force, use violence, suffer violence, or enter by force.” It is only used here in Matthew and by Luke in our passage in the NT.

It indicates a forced, involuntary act. The compelling force may be through unauthorized persons or natural forces, externally or internally. The sense is “overpower, to compel, to force, or an unwilling conscript.” In the LXX, as in classical Greek, it is used most often to denote compulsion or coercion. Yet, it also has the idea of fervent effort.

Matthew uses this verb to indicate that the Kingdom Of God is forcefully advancing and forceful men take hold of it. This is the sense of the “Onward Christian Soldier.” It is sought after with fervent zeal in spite of violent opposition. This is the positive aspects of entering the Kingdom of God.

2) Matthew’s double emphasis with “**violent men take it by force,**” which uses the noun cognate BIASTES, βιαστής that means, “one who forces, a person of violence.” It is only used here in Matthew in the NT and is an extremely rare word in the Greek language. In classical Greek, it meant, “violent men” who achieve their desires by theft. But here, it is used metaphorically with the meaning of valiant men grasping and seizing the Kingdom of God through the preaching of the Gospel.

On the other hand, Luke uses only BIAZO to portray the picture of pressing into it with force, and uses the modifier PAS, meaning “all or everyone” for, “**everyone is forcing his way into it.**” BIAZO has the meaning of “entering violently” with forceful endeavor. It means one presses himself in to seize the kingdom with his own energy as if the kingdom could be had or grasped by one’s own efforts. The meaning indicated by BIAZO is “violently to assault the Divine rule, and to rob those who come to it of its blessing.”

In other words, the Pharisees were trying to force their way into the Kingdom of God with their self-righteous, legalistic, arrogant, human good works rather than by faith in God and Jesus Christ. It speaks to their thoughtless eagerness to seize the gospel / the Kingdom of God by their own self-righteousness. See the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament for a detailed explanation of the word usage of BIAZO, βιάζω under BIAZOMAI, for more definition.

As such, Matthew records Jesus using the positive aspects of the results of the missionary evangelistic work of John the Baptist, while Luke records Jesus using it in the negative sense of the Pharisees’ self-righteous, legalistic, arrogant thinking that by their good works of “keeping the Law,” they would be saved and enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus was saying this is the wrong type of thinking.

Interestingly, on face value, you would interpret Matthew’s to be a negative usage while Luke’s the positive. But in the context of the surrounding passages, we see Matthew’s as the positive and Luke’s as the negative. This is another verse in this chapter of some of the most difficult passages to interpret in the Bible, especially if you do not go into the depths of the Greek language as we have. Having done that, we understand that Jesus is reproving and rebuking the sneering Pharisees for their rejection of His teachings overall, especially of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, but more directly here in regard to their relationship with money.

By lusting after money and making it their master, they are sabotaging their own souls, being blinded to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as they lead others to blindness as well. Therefore, we too, who have already believed in Jesus as our Savior, are warned of the negative influence the “love of money” can have on our souls, where we will reject or be blinded to the Biblical principles of how to truly and faithfully live the unique spiritual life of the Church Age, as we should. Instead, we will be living for the materialism of this world, serving mammon / money as our master, and not be serving God or mankind as we should. At the same time, we will either be ineffective at leading others to Christ, or actually be a hindrance to them accepting Him as their Savior, or living the unique spiritual life of the Church Age for themselves. Therefore, serve God through faithfully taking in and applying His Word in your life daily, so that you are an overcomer, not overcome.

Vs. 17

Luke 16:17, “But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.”

“**But it is easier,**” DE ESTIN EUKOPOS. The Adjective EUKOPOS is used only 7 times in the NT, in three situations. Luke used it 3 times too.

The first account is the healing of the paralytic in **Mat 9:5; Mark 2:9; Luke 5:23**, where Jesus asked, “**Which is easier to say, ‘your sins are forgiven’ or ‘get up and walk?’**” Therefore, the first mention principle emphasizes the forgiveness of sin through the person and work of Jesus Christ upon the Cross, “**So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.**”

The second application was in the story of the “Rich young ruler,” in **Mat 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25**, where Jesus stated, “**It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.**” Here, Jesus was also speaking about the blindness the riches of this world can cause in the life of the possessor, when it comes to knowing God’s plan of salvation. For the rich man to enter the Kingdom of God he would have to believe in Jesus as His Savior. In the case of this rich young man, he loved his money more than he loved God. Because of his love for money, he was blinded to God’s plan and provisions of salvation for him. Therefore, in the second usage, it speaks to having faith for salvation versus being a lover of money.

In the first two instances, Jesus was making the point that with God it is not a matter of one condition being easier than the other, as God can forgive sins, heal, and make a camel pass through a needle’s eye just as easily as He can allow a rich man to enter heaven. The principle is, with God all things are possible, **Mat 19:26; Mark 10:27.**

In our passage, which is the third and last principle, it stands alone. EUKOPOS is used without any implication as to God’s ability. It is simply a contrast between heaven and earth passing away and the Law remaining intact. Nevertheless, it is part of the rebuke against the Pharisees, who were lovers of money rather than lovers of God, as to their self-righteous arrogance thinking that their works would save them. In that, they were rejecting God’s plan of salvation for the forgiveness of sins through the work of Jesus Christ. Their lust of money had blinded them to God’s plan as they rejected Jesus as their Savior / Messiah / King.

In this last phrase, our Lord was comparing the ease of “**heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.**” The Greek reads, HO HOURANOS KAI HO GE PARECHOMAI E HO NOMOS HEIS KERAIA PIPTO. “**Letter,**” is the Noun KERAIA that means, “apex, extremity, horn, or point.” Ancient grammarians used this word to describe the accents and diacritical points of Hebrew letters, “jots and tittles.” It is only used here and **Mat 5:18.**

Mat 5:17-18, “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.” The KJV uses, “jot,” IOTA and “tittle,” KERAIA.

In Matthew’s use of this phrase, Jesus was saying that the Law would be fulfilled or accomplished, which means God’s plan of salvation will be accomplished. He had come to fulfill the Law, not to destroy it.

In Luke’s usage, this phrase is in support of the previous verse that spoke of the Law as being one of the evangelists of the gospel of Jesus Christ for the believers in the Age of Israel / the Age of the Law. The Law preached the good news of the kingdom of God, which is the fact that Jesus would die on the Cross for our sins, and through Him we have salvation. Jesus is saying here that this truth is timeless, eternal, and absolutely reliable; it will never pass away or fail. As the Christ-Centered Exposition puts it, “*Nothing God has ever said and written*

in his Word has an expiration date. No requirement of God for his people has “void” written on it as if it were a cancelled check.” In other words, “the Law still stands,” as their tutor to lead them to Christ, cf. Gal 3:24-25.

It also gives us the comparison, like the story of the paralytic, that it is easier for God to rearrange things in this material world than it was for Him to complete His plan of salvation for mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, it is easier for God to destroy and rebuild the heavens and the earth, than it was for Him to send His Son to the Cross to suffer and die for the forgiveness of our sins. But nevertheless, even that was accomplished by God.

Similarly, in the story of the rich young ruler, what man sees as an impossibility, i.e., “a camel going through the eye of a needle,” God can and did accomplish; providing salvation for all of mankind through His Son Jesus Christ.

Because the Pharisees were so tied to keeping the Law as a means of their salvation, Jesus used the Law here as the final and absolute Word / authority regarding God’s plan of salvation, which the Pharisees could not deny. This rebuked the Pharisees who thought that they were the perfect keepers of the Law, in that they were blinded to its true message as a result of their love for money. Because of their blindness they could not see Jesus Christ as their Savior / Messiah / King, and therefore were missing out on entering into the Kingdom of God / Heaven.

This passage also supports that last phrase of **vs. 16**, “**everyone is forcing his way into it**, (i.e., the Kingdom of God).” Remember, this positive used negatively spoke of the Pharisees trying to forcefully gain entrance into the Kingdom through their human good works. They were trying to enter the Kingdom in a radical manner by their radical acts of human good works. Yet, to enter the Kingdom of God, it requires a renouncing of self and dedication to God through faith. It is the opposite of the hypocrisy the Pharisees were living in, which Jesus was attacking. Instead, they had to take their eyes off of themselves and their love of money, and focus on God and His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, as the parallel in **Mat 11:12-15**, was emphasizing.

Mat 11:14-15, “**And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come.** ¹⁵**He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”**

Finally, this phrase about not, “**one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail**,” also sets up the next passage that Jesus spoke regarding divorce according to the Law given to Moses. As the fourth saying serves as an example of the permanent force of the Law.

Vs. 18

Luke 16:18, “**Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.”**

This identifies the permanent force of the Law, as Jesus added one more reference to make His point even more forceful about correct attitudes in relation to money and God. “*Here the Lord calls to mind the most intimate and fundamental of relationships. He views marriage as a stewardship. How we manage or care for that relationship matters to God.*” (Christ-Centered Exposition.)

“**Divorces**,” is the Greek verb APOLUO that means, “release, let go, send away, dismiss, divorce, depart, etc.” The Hebrew equivalent is SHALACH. The technical/legal Hebrew word is KERITHUTH that means, “divorce, dismissal, or bill of divorcement,” **Deut 24:1, 3; Isa 50:1; Jer 3:8**. The Greek equivalent is APOSTASION, **Mat 5:31; 19:7; 10:4**.

APOLUO or divorce is a release from legal obligations in regard to the marriage between a husband and wife. This release of legal obligation was also given in the OT, to identify the lawfulness to remarry if one was

divorced. As we see in this verse, if one divorces his or her spouse and gets remarried, they are committing adultery. See **Deut 24:1-3; Mat 5:31-32; 19:1-9; Mark 10:2-12; 1 Cor 7:10-11.**

Mat 5:31-32, “It was said, ‘WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE’; ³²but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, (PORNEIA, πορνεία – fornication, prostitution, illicit intercourse, habitual sexual immorality, etc.), makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

In this case, PORNEIA cannot mean “fornication.” Because that is technically sex between two unmarried people. Therefore, PORNEIA here is any illicit sexual intercourse or habitual sexual immorality, which can include adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, pornography, pedophilia, etc. These things are forbidden by God, especially for the married person because **Heb 13:4, “Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”**

Interestingly, PORNEIA was also used in the ancient Greek for idolatry, (cheating on God as it were), that involves economic and social “adultery” against God, **Jer 3:8**, cf. **Rev 17:2, 4ff.; 18:3**. Therefore, when Jesus brought up this one aspect of the Law, He was speaking of the Pharisees’ adultery against God, their idolatry being lovers of money, among other things.

Also, PORNEIA meaning, “habitual sexual immorality or illicit sex,” is closely related to MOICHEIA, “adultery,” in **Mat 15:19; Mark 7:21**, and both come from the heart.

Mat 15:19, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.”

This links us to **vs. 15**, the “detestable things or abominations,” to God. Therefore, PORNEIA is an abomination to God and because of it He reluctantly allowed it to be the main grounds for divorce with the ability for the innocent party to remarry without it being adultery. The other two grounds for technical divorce with the ability to remarry are the death of the spouse, or in the case of an unbelieving husband or wife abandoning their believing wife or husband.

“Commits adultery,” is the Verb MOICHEUO in the Present, Active, Indicative. It is used twice in this verse for the husband who divorces his wife, or vice versa, (for grounds other than death, abandonment, or PORNEIA), and remarries (GAMEO), and for someone who marries a divorced person, (i.e., the innocent party). In our passage, both instances put the onus on the man/husband as the one who is committing adultery, whether they remarry after being divorced or marry a woman who has been divorced. **Mat 5:32**, also puts the man as the one who causes his divorced wife to commit adultery if she remarries. In **1 Cor 7:10-11**, Paul gave instructions from the Lord that the innocent divorced woman should not remarry, but can be reconciled to her husband. Likewise, the husband is commanded not to divorce his wife.

Yet, this institution was virtually erased from the OT with the Pharisees’ self-serving rules. The Mishnah preserved the oral tradition of the rabbis, yet following one of their hero Pharisees, Hillel, who lived shortly before Christ, they created reasons for easily divorcing their wives. The Pharisees, who favored the teaching of Hillel, said that marriage could be created on a whim and dissolved just as frivolously. For example:

- 1) By causing her husband to eat food that had not been first tithed.
- 2) By not keeping a temple vow.
- 3) By walking in public with her hair loose (down).
- 4) By flirting with a man.
- 5) By being noisy, so that neighbors can hear her arguing.
- 6) If the man found a woman who was more beautiful.

Therefore, they knew full well what they were doing by allowing divorce that was outside of the boundaries of the Law. As such, Jesus did not need a long discourse to prove His point. He merely referred to the marriage / divorce issue and their ridiculous dismantling of God's design and God's Word. As a result, the Pharisees wisely shut their mouths, at least for the moment, as He proved beyond any reasonable doubt that the Pharisees subordinated the Word of God to serve their own desires.

Marriage as taught in the NT, is founded upon God's Word and purpose, not upon the customs of man. Both Jesus and Paul taught about marriage in relation to God in His role as Creator, **Mat 19:3-6; Eph 5:31**, cf. **Gen 2:24**. God intends that men and women who join in marriage do so for life, and He has always intended that since the creation of mankind, **Gen 2:24**, cf. **Rom 7:1-4; 1 Cor 7:39**. As noted above, although the Law permitted divorce, this was not because God intended it to be; rather, it was because of the "hardness of people's hearts," and their inability or refusal to reconcile with each other. Originally, God did not want divorce, **Mat 19:8**, and the only grounds Jesus allowed for divorce was PORNEIA, "fornication, adultery, or sexual immorality," **Mat 19:9**, "**And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.**"

The interesting thing about Jesus stating this here was that He was not addressing the issue of marriage between a man and a woman, per se, but was addressing the marriage of Israel and God, which the Pharisees represented in this case. In fact, the laws about divorce are really about the laws for lawful remarriage. If there was a divorce, the only lawful reason for remarriage on the part of either spouse was because of death of the husband or wife, or a divorce due to sexual immorality where the innocent party could remarry, but not the guilty party. Likewise, in **1 Cor 7:15**, if an unbelieving husband or wife leaves/abandons/divorces the believing husband or wife, the believing partner can get remarried lawfully.

Nevertheless, all of this was to make a point to the Pharisees that their love of money had caused them to divorce their first husband, God. Because of their lust / love of money, it led them to all kinds of inordinate behavior, which was developed over the years because of their acceptance of the man-made religious edicts they had created regarding the Law of God. They had turned it into a system of works for salvation, with the ability to parlay the tithes and offerings into riches, wealth, power, and prestige for themselves. They liked what they had and did not want to lose it. As such, when the Messiah was presented to them, they were so blinded by their love of money and all that went with it that they refused to see the Christ in the person of Jesus.

*"Divorce would have been a vivid example of the pharisaic attitude toward the Law; they were always looking for a way to get around it. As developed already, the main teaching of Jesus was that of maintaining a right relationship to God and to men. This was the true purpose of the Law. Divorce was an example of how this concept could be twisted, and yet retain the appearance of legality. The Jews could easily divorce their wives (**Deuteronomy 24:1**), but to do so was a striking example of disregard for one's relationship to God and to his fellow man (**Matthew 5:32, 19:3-9**)."* (Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)

Therefore, this is the scenario of "**you cannot serve two masters**," from **vs. 13**. Because they were serving money, they were divorcing themselves from God and committing adultery against Him by going after money. They were now married to the divorcée called money, (which in this case, speaks to Satan and his cosmic system as well, who was previously divorced from God, i.e., their husband). Therefore, they are now committing adultery. In these cases, adultery is equivalent to idolatry, as money and wealth is what they were truly worshipping. As such, their actions of lusting for money was detestable / an abomination to God. This is what the rich man in our day is warned about and must be extremely cautious not to enter into, because if they are an unbeliever, they too, like the Pharisees, will not come to salvation. And, if they are already a believer, they will be committing idolatry, which is detestable / an abomination to God, which will result in Divine discipline and loss of blessings and rewards.

Nevertheless, we also see God's grace in all of this, as God was willing to forgive their sin of adultery, just as He does with man, so that if they would believe upon His Son Jesus Christ as their Savior, they would be joined to

God forever. This also has implications for the Church Age believer, as we have died to sin and the Law, and now are joined to / remarried to Christ forever, **Rom 6:1-23; 7:1-6.**

“Jesus speaks into that culture to remind us that we don’t steward only possessions, but we steward relationships as well. Though we live in a fallen world where marriages end for all kinds of reasons—sometimes good ones and sometimes despite the best effort of one spouse—God intends our marriages to be lifelong. He intends us to steward that relationship until the very end, the way Christ cares for his bride until the end. If we won’t steward the blessing of marriage but live adulterously, then we shouldn’t think we can steward the blessing of riches and live faithfully. We should not convince ourselves that we will be faithful to our covenant with God if we express covenant disloyalty in relationship with our spouse.” (Christ-Centered Exposition.)

“If “money” is your primary goal, then the kingdom of God is not. And your choices will reflect your priorities. Fortunately, most decision-making opportunities do not force us to choose between “money” and the kingdom of God. Generally speaking, moral choices are the best way to make money and please God. Obedience to the law and honest dealings are not only right, but they also pay good dividends—usually. Sometimes, however, the choice is not so simple. Sometimes doing what is right leads to suffering or requires us to sacrifice worldly success. And that’s when we come face-to-face with an ugly truth: We typically make decisions that serve the interests of “money” and then feel relieved when our choices also happen to be morally right. The Lord’s parable asks the rhetorical question, “What choice will you make when the interests of ‘money’ and the kingdom of God conflict? Which master will you serve when kingdom living doesn’t get you ahead in the world?” Citizens of God’s kingdom side with integrity, even when it hurts.” (Swindoll’s Living Insights New Testament Commentary.)

“We can’t fool God. God doesn’t love what we love. His Word stands forever. So, all who call themselves “Christians,” “disciples,” or “stewards” must obey God. Is there any area of your life where you trick others into thinking you’re religious but the truth is something different? Have you soberly considered that God knows your heart and can’t be fooled? Is there an area of our life where we think God must be pleased with us or with something we’re doing simply because it pleases us? Have we considered that that area or thing, if it’s contrary to God’s Word, is revolting in God’s sight? Have we been thinking God’s commands no longer apply to our life or that we do not have to obey God? Let us be suspicious of any notion that it’s okay to disobey God. Finally, how are you stewarding your relationships in your home, in the church, and in the community? Do we manage our relationships in

d. The rich man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31, good stewards will be rewarded.

Continuing His discourse on being a good steward of finances, our Lord’s rebuke of the Pharisees’ love for money leads Him to telling a story about the potential results of loving money in this life. It indicates that loving money leads to negative judgement in the afterlife. It continues the warning that loving money results in being blinded to knowing Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior, which results in spending eternity in the Lake of Fire. This story is only recorded in Luke’s Gospel.

Some believe this is another parable, and is not a true depiction of the afterlife. But, because Jesus uses an actual name in this story, Lazarus, it indicates it is a true story. If it were a parable, it would be the only one that Jesus taught which has an actual name in it, which would be out of character. Furthermore, parables are always identified or explained as parables. Therefore, this is a true story and actual depiction of life and the after-life.

This true story is also sometimes entitled, “Dead men tell tales.” This true story describes the first and second compartments of Sheol or Hades during the dispensations of the OT. There are three perspectives given in this passage.

- 1) The perspective of life, **vs. 19-21.**
- 2) The perspective of death, **vs. 22.**
- 3) The perspective of Sheol or Hades after death, **vs. 23-31.**

Vs. 19

Luke 16:19, “Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day.”

This is the description of the first main character the “rich man.” Apparently, he is a wealthy unbeliever. As in **vs. 1**, we once again have a “**rich man**,” ANTHROPOS PLOUSIOS, also in **vs. 21-22**.

There is nothing immoral, wrong, or sinful about being rich. That is an evil philosophy, which has extended into socialism and communism. There are certain worldly problem solving devices (PSD) connected with being rich and having an abundance of possessions, just as there are certain worldly problem solving devices connected with being poor.

When a nation has rich people, it means that nation follows the principles of free enterprise, which are a part of the laws of Divine establishment. Therefore, having wealth in a nation is a good and healthy sign that the nation is doing well and right, rather than poorly. The idea of redistribution of wealth is an evil that enslaves the masses, as illustrated by those under the domination of the Russian experiment since 1917. Nevertheless, the rich should not “lord” their wealth over those less fortunate, and there is no excuse for the poor envying the rich.

Unfortunately, one of the main problem solving devices of being rich is to ignore the fact that there is life after death. Many become self-indulgent, and forget **Mark 8:36-37, “For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? ³⁷For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”** So, they give no thought to eternity and life after death. Yet, time is just a drop in the bucket compared to eternity. Hence, the tendency of the wealthy person is to ignore the fact that only through personal faith in Jesus Christ can an individual have eternal life.

In other words, there is no way you can buy your way into heaven. Jesus Christ purchased our salvation on the Cross, as taught by the doctrine of Redemption.

But, like anything else in life, money has its problem solving devices and money has its benefits. Money often creates illusions, e.g., money means happiness or security, or that money can buy anything. That is not true. Money cannot buy eternal life, happiness, love, or virtue. It is not true that you are happy because you have money or miserable because you are poor. Happiness and misery are not based upon one’s economic status. People with very little can be extremely happy; people with very much can be very miserable, and vice versa.

Those who lust for money become a slave to money. But those who acquire wealth through the grace of God have discovered how to make money their slave. But the person who regards money as his #1 priority in life becomes a slave to money. Apply the priority principle. You concentrate on whatever is your #1 priority. Then you organize your life around priority #1. Therefore, you organize your thinking around priority #1. This determines the outcome of your life.

This rich man spent all his concentration, time, and life on self-indulgence. Some of the most important things in life cannot be purchased with money, such as eternal life, or sharing the happiness of God, love, and virtue. Again, those who lust for money become slaves to money, and it is one of the worst categories of slavery in the world. This principle applies to power as well. Those who lust for power are slaves to power, but those who acquire power through the grace of God can enjoy it without abusing it or stepping beyond their capacity for it.

Luke 16:13, “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Mark 10:25, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

Rich people and poor people are saved exactly the same way, by faith in Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, because the rich man tends to be preoccupied with himself and his life on this earth to the extent that he has forgotten about eternity, he is not interested in Jesus Christ.

This man is described in two ways, his dress and his lifestyle, as dressing well and living in the lap of luxury. The greatness of his wealth is indicated in the description of his clothing and life style, “**habitually dressed in purple and fine linen,**” and “**joyously living in splendor every day.**”

“**Habitually dressed,**” is the Imperfect Middle Indicative of the Verb ENDIDUSKO, ἐνδιδύσκω that means, “put on clothes or to dress.” It is only used here and in **Mark 15:17; Luke 8:27**. In Matthew, it is used for the clothing the Roman soldiers put on Jesus during His scourging prior to the crucifixion, to mock His messianic claims. In **Luke 8:27**, it is used for the demon possessed man who had not worn clothes for a long time. Therefore, we have an indication that ENDIDUSKO relates to sin, which Jesus paid for at the Cross.

This rich man’s clothing was colored “**purple,**” PORPHURA, πορφύρα. It is used in **Mark 15:17, 20**, for the robe the soldiers dressed Jesus with, and in **Rev 17:4; 18:12**, to indicate great riches and wealth of the false church of the Tribulation, “the Woman,” i.e., Mystery Babylon, who rides on the back of the “Beast,” i.e., the Antichrist.

PORPHURA was originally used for the murex, a special shellfish from which purple dye was obtained, cf. 1 Mac 4:23. Later the word came to designate the dye itself. In the NT, it denotes purple cloth. Because of the great expense involved in producing the dye, one gram required 8,000 mollusks, purple garments were always considered a sign of wealth, royalty, 1 Mac 10:62, royalty, and distinction. Cf. **John 19:2, 5; Acts 16:14; Rev 17:4; 18:16**.

“**Fine linen,**” is the Noun BUSSOS that was usually made of Egyptian flax. It was delicate, soft, and very costly. It is only used here and **Rev 18:12** in the same context, as an evidence of the rich man’s wealth.

Moving from the description of His wealth to the description of his gaiety, our Lord states, “**joyously living in splendor every day,**” EUPHRAINO, “to rejoice, be merry, be happy, etc.,” LAMPROS, “splendidly, magnificently, lavishly, brilliantly, etc.” It is only used here in the NT. And finally, KATA HEMERA, that means, “according to the day or daily.” Therefore, this rich man’s wealth was evident by what he wore and how he lived.

There is nothing wrong with dressing well and there is nothing wrong with luxury as such. There are problem solving devices with wrong emphasis on status symbols of life, money, power, success, approbation, pleasure, material things, luxury, social life, sex, health; i.e., anything that takes precedence over Bible doctrine. When these worldly PSD’s become prevalent to the exclusion of God’s Word and believing in Jesus as Savior, it is wrong.

The wealthy unbeliever enjoys life so much that he forgets about death and eternity. He forgets **Heb 9:27**, which says, “**And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.**”

Therefore, this rich man lusted for wealth and became the slave to wealth. As a slave to money and pleasure, he had no time for the gospel until it was too late, i.e., after he died.

Vs. 20

Luke 16:20, “And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores.”

Next, we are introduced to a suffering believer, as we have the description of the second main character, the “**poor man,**” PTOCHOS, “poor, oppressed, destitute, pitiful, or beggarly.” In **Luke 4:18; 7:22**, Jesus proclaimed to be the fulfillment of the prophecy of **Isa 61:1**, “**to preach the gospel to the poor.**” Luke also used PTOCHOS in **Luke 6:20; 14:13, 21**.

This man's name was "**Lazarus**," LAZAROS, Λάζαρος. Luke only uses this name in this story, **vs. 20, 23-25**. John used it for the brother of Martha and Mary who died and Jesus resuscitated, **John 11, 12**.

Not only was he PTOCHOS, but he was mistreated by society, as he "**was laid at his gate.**" "**Was laid at his gate,**" uses the Pluperfect, Passive, Indicative of the Verb BALLO, "to throw, cast, lay, etc." The Pluperfect is a fairly rare tense in the NT. It means completed past action with existing results in the past. Therefore, this action that Lazarus received was completed in the past, and has results that existed in the past. It indicates what happened to him during his life here on earth that is now over, as he died and is in Paradise. The Passive voice of BALLO indicates that Lazarus received the action of being thrown down at this gate. It indicates that he was acted upon by a cruel mob that tossed him away. By this language we see that Lazarus was helpless. He did not place himself there. In addition, once he was put there, apparently, he could not move from that spot. So, we see the great cruelty of man toward helpless man. It was violence against the weak and helpless, exactly what the Bible tells us not to do, **Zech 7:10**; cf. **Job 24:9**; **Jer 5:28**; **Mat 6:2-3**; **Luke 14:13, 21**; **Gal 2:10**; **James 2:2-6**.

Zech 7:10, "And do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another."

"**At his Gate,**" is an interesting statement, as it indicates he was thrown down at the "Rich man's" gate, using the Third Person, Singular, Pronoun of AUTOS. Then we have the location of where Lazarus was thrown away to, PULON, that means, "gate, porch, or vestibule." It describes the entrance way to a house, city, and even the New Jerusalem in **Rev 21**. Here, Lazarus was thrown down at the entrance to the rich man's home. We can possibly assume the reason the mob threw Lazarus there was that the "Rich man," might take pity on him and show some charity, as the wealthy of this world should do with their riches. Yet, given the language in the rest of this story, it appears that no charity was shown by the "Rich man" towards Lazarus. He most likely turned a blind eye towards him, while enjoying his lavish lifestyle. Therefore, not only do we see the cruelty of the mob towards Lazarus, but also the cruelty of the rich man towards him by not helping a man in need. Both had the opportunity to help him. Both were not operating as God's Word commands. So, we see that Lazarus had been thrown or cast at the rich man's gate, and he would lie there until he died.

Now, like the rich man, we have two descriptions of his wealth, or lack thereof, as in this case, he was destitute. He too is described in two ways; his dress, in this verse, and his lifestyle in **vs. 21**.

Here, we understand that he was "**covered with sores.**" This was his dress or covering, as compared to the rich man's purple and fine linen clothing. "**Covered with sores,**" the Perfect, Passive, Participle of the Verb HELKOO, ἐλκώω, "covered with sores, boils, or abscesses." The Perfect tense is like the Pluperfect where it describes completed past action, but differs in that it emphasizes the present condition. Interestingly, this alludes to the fact that he had sin upon him, as in the ancient world, if someone had an illness such as this, it would be the result of sin in his life. This points to the fact that we are all covered with boils. In other words, we all have sin and need a Savior. From the rest of this story, we understand that Lazarus understood that fact and had accepted the Messiah as His Savior. He recognized that His Savior would cover his sins. This is in contrast to the Rich man who was covered with worldly wealth and was blinded by it to see that he was a sinner and needed a Savior. As a result, he never came to salvation faith.

Being "covered with sores," sounds similar to Job's plight when he was placed under evidence testing by God through the hand of Satan, **Job 2:7**. This may have been leprosy, although Luke, the physician, would most likely have used LEPRO here if that were the case, as in **Luke 5:12-13**. Nevertheless, it was a terrible skin disease or ailment that was debilitating.

Therefore, there is a definite parallelism between Lazarus and Job. Both were mature believers facing evidence testing, but with different results. Both were covered with sores and ulcers. Hence, both Job and Lazarus had loss of health and were maltreated by people, because they were repulsive to the eyes of the beholder. Yet, what Job lost in time he regained in time; what Lazarus lost in time he regained in eternity as he was being blessed in

Abraham's bosom / Paradise. Job emphasizes living grace in Evidence Testing. Lazarus never recovered his health and eventually died. Therefore, Lazarus emphasizes dying grace related to Evidence Testing.

Vs. 21

Luke 16:21, "And longing to be fed with *the crumbs* which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores."

The second description of Lazarus' destitute situation during his life on earth is described in this verse. "**Longing to be fed,**" is the same phrase used for the Prodigal son's longing to eat what the swine were given for food in **Chapter 15**. It first uses the Present, Active, Participle, Nominative of the Verb EPITHUMEO that means, "desire or long for." Then it uses the Aorist, Passive, Epexegetical Infinitive of the Verb CHORTAZO, that means, "satisfy, satiate hunger, or fill." The Epexegetical Infinitive doubly emphasizes his longing or desire to have scraps of food. The Passive Voice says that he receives the action of this verb too.

Interestingly, in the parable of the Prodigal son, the son was in this destitute situation because of his poor choices in life. His free will volition chose to live sinfully which led to his Divine discipline of self-induced misery. Yet, on the other hand, Lazarus is not seen to be a sinner, but still found himself in a destitute situation. Therefore, "You cannot judge a book by its cover." In other words, whether someone is rich or poor is not an indicator of their spiritual life. Therefore, we should never judge people based on their socio-economic status.

Then we have what he was longing for, "***the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table,***" APO HO PIPTO APO HO TRAPEZA. "*Crumbs*" was added to some later manuscripts for emphasis, but is not in the original Greek. It simply states he was longing for that "**which fell from the table,**" which we can assume is some sort of food falling off. Yet, if this was a money changing table, he longed for the pennies that might have fallen from it.

Assuming we are talking about food, this food was "**falling from,**" PIPTO APO, "**the rich man's,**" HO PLOUSIOS, "table," TRAPEZA, indicating it was the leftovers and scraps that the rich man did not care for. But yet, even this was not given to Lazarus by the rich man, as he had no concern for him at all. TRAPEZA means, "table or bank," and is used for the money changers tables, cf. **Mat 21:12; Mark 11:15; John 2:15**. As "money-changing tables," like the ones Jesus overturned, this may allude to the sinful nature of the rich man's table.

It also may allude to the faith that Lazarus had, as the Canaanite woman demonstrated her great faith with a similar phrase in **Mat 15:27-28**.

Mat 15:27, "But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table"."

In addition, it alludes to the great blessing he will receive in the eternal state, just as the Apostles of Jesus will receive great blessings in the eternal state in **Luke 22:30, "That you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."**

And, like **Luke 16:13**, Paul used it to demonstrate that you cannot serve two masters, **1 Cor 10:21, "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons."**

Therefore, as the Rich man was dressed in purple-colored fine linens, Lazarus was dressed with sores and boils. While the Rich man was joyously leading a lavish lifestyle of eating and drinking the finest foods and beverages, Lazarus was starving, longing for the scraps that fell off of the Rich man's table, which he did not receive. This last part is also in parallel with the Prodigal son, as in **vs. 16b, "no one was giving anything to him."** For the

Prodigal son, it was a sign of Divine discipline. For Lazarus, it is a sign of undeserved suffering for blessing under Evidence Testing, due to the hard heartedness on the part of the Rich man and society.

Like the Prodigal son, as if Lazarus' destitution was not severe enough, we see insult added to injury as, **“besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores,”** ALLA KAI HO KUON ERCHOMAI EPILEICHO AUTOS HO HELKOS. EPILEICHO, “lick or lick over,” is only used here in the NT.

“Dogs,” KUON, κύων is also used in **Mat 7:6; Phil 3:2; 2 Peter 2:22; Rev 22:15**. It was not thought of back in the day as “man’s best friend,” as it was used to describe the lowliest of people, that which is impure or unclean, enemies of unrighteousness, and scavengers. Since dogs were scavengers, the ancient Greeks often used KUON as a derogatory epithet. Maybe it was an allegory for the evil people of the society. Nevertheless, these dogs were coming to Lazarus trying to heal him, as dogs lick their wounds in order to heal them. They were his only friends. Therefore, Lazarus was lower than the lowliest, as his body being cared for by the dogs.

In the description of Lazarus' poverty, we see he was going through Suffering for Blessing, a suffering which glorified God to the maximum, like that of Job; a suffering that makes Lazarus one of the great all-time believers, recognized as such by our Lord.

Lazarus had loss of health, and real pain. He was cut off from any form of love, friendship, or compassion. In fact, he experienced only cruelty from people. People ostracized him, rejected him, and ridiculed him. Though he was totally helpless and weak, they pushed him around and threw him around. Finally, they tossed him at the Rich man's gate. Lazarus' only compassion came from the dogs. But Lazarus was a mature believer and realized the importance of his suffering. He would demonstrate to both mankind and angels the importance of eternity compared to time. In contrast, the rich man was demonstrating daily that to him, only time was important; eternity did not matter.

We apply to Lazarus **1 Cor 10:13**, **“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”** Therefore, Lazarus did not complain or fall apart, even though he had normal desires.

Solomon was a believer who had everything in life, and yet he was very miserable. Lazarus was a believer who had nothing, but he was very happy. Lazarus demonstrates the principle of being happy without having anything at all. While Lazarus had nothing, he had the true Problem Solving Devices, like +H, and he used them.

d. The rich man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31, good stewards will be rewarded.

2) The perspective of death, vs. 22.

Vs. 22

Luke 16:22, **“Now the poor *man* died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried.”**

Here, we see the death of both main characters. The **“poor *man*,”** PTOCHOS, **“died,”** the Verb APOTHNESKO ἀποθνήσκω, which is also used in **Luke 8:42, 52-53**, that means, “die, be put to death,” or sometimes “renounce.” Likewise, the **“rich *man*,”** PLOUSIOS, **“died,”** APOTHNESKO. Therefore, both men died, as all men do, with the exception of the Rapture generation, **1 Thes 4:15-17; Enoch, Gen 5:24; Heb 11:5; and Elijah, 2 Kings 2:9-12.**

Gen 5:23-24, **“So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”**

Yet, there were two very different outcomes for these two men upon their death, as the poor man “**was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom,**” and the rich man “**was buried.**” It was a glorious event for the poor man and a rather somber, non-eventful one for the rich man.

“**Was carried away,**” is the Verb APOPHERO, “carry or lead away,” also used in **Mark 15:1**, for Jesus being led away by the Pharisees to Pontius Pilate; **Acts 19:12**, for handkerchiefs being taken from Paul’s presents to the sick for healing; **1 Cor 16:3**, for carrying gifts; **Rev 17:3; 21:10**, for John being carried by the angel to the visions of the end times.

“**By the Angels,**” is HUPO HO and the Plural of the Noun AGGELOS, ἄγγελος. ANGELOS means, “one who brings a message.” In the OT “angels” are revealed as heavenly beings sent by God to carry messages and perform certain tasks. One of the main Hebrew words translated with ANGELOS in the Septuagint IS MALAKH that means, “messenger.” They were also called “sons of God, spirits, or winds” in the OT. The Sadducees of the Sanhedrin did not believe in angels, or the resurrection, or in spirits, **Acts 23:8**.

These are the elect angels as part of God’s creation before the creation of mankind. Angels are generally classified as 1) unfallen, holy, elect, **Mark 8:38**, or 2) fallen, **Mat 25:41**, were as the “fallen angels” are typically classified as such or as demons.

Here, we see elect angels in their office as ministers to the heirs of salvation, **Mat 24:31; Mark 13:27; Heb 1:14**.

Heb 1:14, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”

Mat 24:31, “And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”

Mark 13:27, “And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.”

A brief study of the elect angels includes:

1. Angels are created beings, **Psa 148:2, 5; Col 1:16; Rev 4:11**. According to **Col 1:16**, creation included “things” invisible as well as things visible and angels are among the things that are invisible.

Psa 148:5, “Let them praise the name of the LORD, for He commanded and they were created.”

Col 1:16, “For by Him (Jesus Christ) all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.”

2. They make up an innumerable company of spirit beings, **Rev 5:11**, that the Scriptures give much testimony about.

Rev 5:11, “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands.”

They are mentioned 117 times in 108 verses in the OT and 182 times in 172 verses in the NT, predominately in the Gospels and Revelation. “Angel” in the Hebrew is MALAK that generally means “messenger.” But in the Greek, it is AGGELOS where we get our English word “angel,” (*a double “γ” or “g” in Greek, is pronounced*

like ng in English.) In any case, ANGELOS also simply means “messenger,” and in rare instances it is used of men, cf. **Luke 7:24; James 2:25; Rev 1:20.**

3. They are spirit beings, **Psa 104:4; Heb 1:13-14; 12:22-23; Col 1:16**, although at times can take on visible form according to God’s will, cf. **Luke 1:11-38; 2:13-15.**

Luke 2:13, “And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying...”

4. They are immortal, **Luke 20:34-36**, though not eternal beings because they were created, yet they will have no end.

Luke 20:36, “For they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

5. They are presently higher than man, **Psa 8:4-5; 103:20; Heb 2:7; 2 Peter 2:11**, yet in heaven we will be higher than angels, **1 Cor 6:3.**

Psa 8:5, “Yet You have made him (*Jesus Christ*) a little lower than God (*angels*), and You crown Him with glory and majesty!”

1 Cor 6:3, “Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?”

6. They have freewill, **Isa 14:12-14; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6, 9.**

Jude 1:9, “But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!””

7. They are legion, **Psa 68:17; Dan 7:10; Mat 26:53; Heb 12:22; Rev 5:11**; they form the hosts of heaven, **Luke 2:13.** Numerically, angels neither increase nor decrease.

Heb 12:22, “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels.”

Rev 5:11, “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands.”

8. Although we have a description of Satan, the Seraphim (six winged angels), and Cherubim (four winged angels), we are not given description of the rank-and-file angel’s bodies. However, we know they are spirit beings, **Psa 104:4; Heb 1:13-14; 12:22-23; Col 1:16.** They appear as men when so required, **Gen 18:2; Mat 28:3; Mark 16:5; Luke 24:4; John 20:12; Heb 13:2.** They are said to fly, **Isa 6:2; Ezek 1:6; Dan 9:21; Rev 14:6.**

Isa 6:2, “Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.”

Luke 24:2-4, “And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing.”

Heb 13:2, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

9. Their abode is evidently in heaven; but reference is made to the second heaven, the stellar universe, **Mat 24:29**. Christ passed through the angelic sphere going to and coming from earth, **Eph 1:21; Heb 2:7; 4:14**.

Heb 4:14, “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”

10. The ministries of the angels are varied and are described in the Bible, but generally they serve and worship God. **Psa 34: 7; 91:11; 103:20; 104:4; Dan 4:13, 17, 23; 6:22; Mat 4:11; Luke 16:22; Acts 5:19; 8:26; 10:3; 12:7; 27:23; 1 Cor 11: 10; Col 2:18; Rev 22:8-9**.

11. The vast empires of angels are occupied with many enterprises and the execution of their governments, and they behold the things of earth, **Luke 12:8-9; 15:10; 1 Cor 11:10; Eph 6:12; Col 1:16; 1 Tim 3:16; Rev 14:10**.

Col 1:16, “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.”

12. Their presence is recorded at creation, **Job 38:7**, at the giving of the Law, **Acts 7:53; Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2; cf. Rev 22:16**, at the birth of Christ, **Luke 2:13**, at the scene of His temptations, **Mat 4:11; Luke 22:43**, at the resurrection, **Mat 28:2**, at the ascension, **Acts 1:10**, and they will be at the Second Coming, **Mat 13:37-39; 24:31; 25:31; 2 Thes 1:7**.

13. There will be war in heaven between the two classes of angels in the end times, **Rev 12:7-10**.

So, there were at least two angels who escorted the poor man to “**Abraham’s bosom**,” ABRAAM KOLPOS. This indicates that the believer will be personally escorted by angels at their death to heaven.

This ABRAAM is the OT character as the father of the Hebrews and of all those who believe. KOLPOS, means, “bosom, breast, chest,” here and **vs. 23**, with **John 1:18; John 13:23**; and **Luke 6:38**, “lap,” and sometimes as “bay,” **Acts 27:39**. In the NT, it is used to express a very close and personal relationship. In **John 13:23**, it was used during the Passover banquet to relate the close relationship of John to our Lord. It is used figuratively to denote paradise in our passages and heaven in **John 1:18**.

John 1:18, “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”

Therefore, to be in “Abraham’s bosom,” was to be in a place of honor and fellowship; on the couch at Abraham’s right at the banquet table. As such, the poor man is being honored by enjoying close fellowship with Abraham at the Messianic banquet, cf. **Luke 13:29**. As the poor man Lazarus was shunned and abused by society and the rich man, being left in great hunger, in the eternal state, he was given great honor and is enjoying a great banquet.

Next, we see what happened to the rich man upon his death, “**and the rich man also died and was buried.**”

“**Rich man**,” is PLOUSIS once again, and “**died**” is APOTHNESKO as seen previously for Lazarus’ death.

“**Was buried**,” is the Aorist, Passive, Indicative of the Verb THAPTO, θάπτω that means, “to bury.” It is used in **Mat 8:21-22; Luke 9:59-60**, for the principle taught by our Lord, “**Let the dead bury the dead**,” for the burial

of John the Baptist, **Mat 14:12**; for the fact of the burial of David, **Acts 2:29**; for the Sin Unto Death disciple of Ananias and Sapphira, **Acts 5:6, 9-10**; and for our Lord's burial regarding the Gospel principles, **1 Cor 15:4**.

THAPTO was used in classical Greek for all the activities involved in "burying someone," including funeral rites, expenses, and even cremation. In this story, our Lord did not use this word for Lazarus' death, but only for the rich man's. It indicates the continuation of his earthly wealth and riches, having a funeral and prestigious place of burial, cf. **Mat 27:57-60**.

Therefore, it emphasizes his earthly riches, which could not save him. As such, the rich man simply died and was buried, without any heavenly honors. To the end of his life, he enjoyed luxury and did not suffer any earthly loss. But death is the great equalizer, even reverser, since after death the one thing that counts is the human heart. Possessions and status symbols are all left behind. As the saying goes, "You can't take it with you." What God considers is not written down with numbers and dollar signs.

As such, Lazarus dies and is welcomed into Divine favor; being placed in Abraham's bosom. He is in the place of blessing. Yet, when the rich man dies and is buried, and as we will see in the next verse, he ends up in Hades, a.k.a., hell, in torment, far away from Lazarus. In that place their roles are reversed. Lazarus is now in a place of prominence; the rich man is now outside of that place looking in, laying at the gate in agony, as it were. Cf. **Psa 49:16-20**.

Psa 49:16-20, "Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased; ¹⁷For when he dies he will carry nothing away; His glory will not descend after him. ¹⁸Though while he lives he congratulates himself— and though *men* praise you when you do well for yourself— ¹⁹He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they will never see the light. ²⁰Man in *his* pomp, yet without understanding, is like the beasts that perish."

3) The perspective of Hades / Sheol after death, vs. 23-31.

Vs. 23

Luke 16:23, "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom."

Here we see the two contrasting environments of Hades prior to the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

"In Hades," in the Greek is, EN HO HADES, where HADES, ᾗδης is the Greek Noun that is transliterated in the English to Hades and means, "the underworld or the realm of the dead." It is used in **Mat 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; Acts 2:27, 31; Rev 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14**.

Rev 20:13, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. ¹⁴Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire."

There are three Greek words that can refer to "hell," including Hades, Gehenna, and Tartaroo, not to mention the "Lake of Fire." In ancient Greek usage and culture, Hades was the name of the Greek god of the underworld and the name of the underworld itself.

Another seeming synonym is the word Gehenna, but it is analogous only to the compartment in Hades called the Place of Torments, where the rich man resides, and also for the Eternal Lake of Fire. Gehenna is from two Hebrew words GE HINNOM meaning "valley of Hinnom." It originally referred to a ravine on the south side of Jerusalem where pagan deities were worshiped, **2 Kings 23:10; Jer 7:32; 2 Chron 28:3; 33:6**. Later, it became a garbage dump outside of Jerusalem and a place of abomination, where fire burned continuously, **2 Kings 23:10**; cf. **Mat**

18:9; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; James 3:6. Gehenna became synonymous with “a place of burning,” and therefore hell or later the Lake of Fire.

Next is the Greek word TARTAROO, “cast into hell,” that we call Tartarus, **2 Peter 2:4**. The word appears in classical Greek to refer to a subterranean region, miserable and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks as the abode of the wicked dead. It was thought of as a place of punishment. In the sole use of the word in the NT, it refers to the place of punishment for rebellious fallen angels.

2 Peter 2:4, “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment.”

The NT understanding of Hades is built upon the OT, with the Hebrew word Sheol, (SHE’OL, שְׁאוֹל), and closely parallels the conceptions of later Judaism. Sheol is used 65 times in the OT. With rare exceptions, like Elijah, **2 Kings 2:1-12**, all people were believed to go to Sheol when they die, **Job 3:11-19; Psa 89:48**. It is a place which is “down” in contrast to heaven which is “up,” **Mat 11:23; Luke 10:15**. It is the place where the soul goes, **Acts 2:27**, while the body is destroyed, **Acts 2:31**.

In our passages, Jesus made a close distinction between the two conditions in Hades, at that time. Lazarus was in “the bosom of Abraham,” where he was being comforted, while the rich man was at the “place of agony,” where he was suffering. As we will note below, the compartment of Hades called Abraham’s bosom was taken to heaven upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ, **Eph 4:8; cf. Psa 68:18**.

On the cross, Jesus promised the repentant thief, “**Today you will be with me in Paradise,**” **Luke 23:43**. Later, Paul wrote that he was caught up into paradise (the third heaven), **2 Cor 12:2-4**. It is interesting that nowhere in the NT epistles does it say that the believer of the Church Age who dies goes to Hades, but it does say that he goes to be with the Lord, **2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23**. Today, Christ is in heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father, therefore, Jesus is not in Hades today, neither is Abraham’s Bosom / Paradise, as they are now with Christ in heaven / Paradise, **Eph 4:8**, as all Church Age believers go directly to upon their death. **2 Cor 5:6-8; Phil 1:23; Rev 6:9; 7:9ff; 15:2ff**, all teach that the current abode of believers immediately after death is with Christ and God in heaven.

Phil 1:23, “But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better.”

d. The rich man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31, good stewards will be rewarded.

3) The perspective of Hades / Sheol after death, vs. 23-31.

Vs. 23

Luke 16:23, “In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.”

In our study of Hades, we also see that Jesus holds the keys to both Hades and death, **Rev 1:18**. As such, it is still an active place today, but for who? Well, that is the place where the rich man went and remains today, as all unbelievers have gone there upon their death, and will continue to go there until the Great White Throne Judgement Seat of Jesus Christ, when he casts Satan, the Fallen Angels and all unbelievers throughout all time into the Lake of Fire, **Rev 20:14**.

Rev 1:18, dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”

Rev 20:14, “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.”

Jesus's soul visited Hades after His death upon the Cross until His resurrection, **Acts 2:27, 31**, as prophesized in **Psa 16:10**, where the Hebrew equivalent is Sheol, cf. **Eph 4:9**.

Eph 4:9, “Now this *expression*, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?”

His Spirit went to the 3rd Heaven to be with the Father, **Luke 23:46**, **John 19:30**, and His Soul went to Hades, **Luke 23:43**, **Acts 2:27, 31**; **Eph 4:9**, while His body remained in the tomb, **Luke 23:50-53**. After three days, the Father brought His Spirit back to His body, **Eph 1:20**; **Col 2:12**; **1 Thes 1:10**; **1 Peter 1:21**; **Heb 13:20**, the Holy Spirit returned His Soul from Hades, **Acts 2:24**; **Rom 1:4**; **8:11**; **1 Peter 3:18**, and Jesus raised His own Body from the tomb, **John 10:17-18**.

In David's prophecy of **Psa 16:10**, he said, “**For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.**”

Notice that David makes a distinction between Paradise or Abraham's bosom where the soul is located and the grave where the body is located. David was not speaking about himself, because his body has undergone decay, **Acts 2:29**, and his soul went to paradise after he died. **Acts 2:29**, “**Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.**” David was prophesying about the soul of the humanity of Jesus Christ in Hades after his physical death.

No OT believer could go to the 3rd heaven until Jesus Christ had been judged for their sins upon the Cross. At that point, the OT believers were all transferred in a triumphal procession into the presence of God in heaven. Today, after the Cross, when any believer dies, his soul and spirit is absent from the body and face to face with the Lord in heaven, **2 Cor 5:6-8**; **Phil 1:23**.

2 Cor 5:6-8, “**Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight—⁸we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.**”

Therefore, we know **Psa 16:10**, does not refer to David but is a prophecy referring to Jesus Christ because it is quoted by Peter in **Acts 2:27**, “**Because You will not abandon My soul to hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.**” This verse is then interpreted in **Acts 2:31**, “**He looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.**” Our Lord only spent three days in Hades.

As Satan had “the power of death,” **Heb 2:14**; cf. **Rev 6:8**, Hades was a place where the dead would go, and due to sin being in the world because of Satan, it is that stronghold over death and Hades that was conquered by Christ at the Cross, **Col 2:15**. As such, Christ can proclaim His victory in the realm of the dead, **1 Peter 3:19**.

Col 2:15, “**When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities (*Satan and the Fallen Angels*), He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.**”

1 Peter 3:19, “**In which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, (*incarcerated demons*).**”

This is why Jesus said to Peter in **Mat 16:18**, that the gates of Hades will not overpower / prevail against His Church.

Therefore, Hades is an intermediate state between death and resurrection, divided into two parts; one, the abode of the blessed, and the other of the lost. At the time of Christ's speaking, Hades was the interim place for believers to reside until His resurrection and ascension. And, it was, and is today, the prison where the wicked dead are

held until their resurrection to the second death at the Great White Throne Judgment day, when at that time both death and Hades are cast into the Lake of Fire, **Rev 20:14**.

“Language about hell seeks to describe for humans the most awful punishment human language can describe to warn unbelievers before it is too late. Earthly experience would lead us to believe that the nature of punishment will fit the nature of the sin. Certainly, no one wants to suffer the punishment of hell, and through God’s grace the way for all is open to avoid hell and know the blessings of eternal life through Christ.” (Holman Bible Dictionary).

There are several erroneous views of Hades / Hell.

1) The second chance view: After death there is still a way to escape hell.

Answer: Heb 9:27, “It is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment.”

2) Universalism: All are eternally saved.

Answer: It denies the truth of salvation through Christ, which means that a person decides to either trust in Christ or else he/she rejects Christ and goes to hell, **John 3:16; 3:36**.

3) Annihilationism: Hell means a person dies like an animal; they cease to exist.

Answer: It denies the resurrection of the unsaved, **John 5:28**. It denies conscious torment, like in the case of the man. **John 5:28, “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, ²⁹and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.”**

In conclusion, we see that the unbelieving rich man was residing in the compartment of Hades called the Place of Torments, as he himself was in torment, and the believer Lazarus, the poor man, was now in a place called Paradise or Abraham’s Bosom being comforted, blessed, and honored.

For the rich man, we see his eternal state of **“being in torment,”** which starts with the Verb HUPARCHO that means, “be, exist, have, or possess,” which is an ironic word choice, as this is all that the rich man possesses for all of eternity, in contrast to the great riches, wealth, and joyous living he possessed in life. The only thing he possesses is **“torment,”** which is the noun BASANOS, βάσανος that means, “torture, torment, or great pain.” It is only used three times in the NT, its cognates BASANIZO, BASANISMOS, and BASANISTES are used more frequently. BASANOS is only used in this story here and **vs. 28**, and in **Mat 4:24**. The latter describes the torment people were in who sought Jesus to heal them. Ironically, because the rich man did not seek Jesus, he did not believe in the Messiah, he is now and forever in torment. This suffering is described further in **vs. 24**.

These are just a few of the verses that describe what Hades / the Place of Torments and the Lake of Fire are like for the occupants. Other verses that speak to the abode of the unsaved include, **Isa 66:24; Mat 3:12; 8:12; 13:41-42; 22:13; 25:30, 41; Mark 9:43, 48; Jude 1:7, 13; 2 Peter 2:17**.

Isa 66:24, “Then they will go forth and look on the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die and their fire will not be quenched; and they will be an abhorrence to all mankind.”

Mat 3:12, “His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Mat 8:12, “But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Mark 9:48, “Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”

Jude 1:13, “Wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.”

Therefore, for the unbelieving rich man, as to his soul, he was alive, fully conscious, in exercise of his mental faculties, yet in great torment. And, unlike the compartment called Paradise, which has already been taken to heaven, it is thus apparent that insofar as the unsaved dead are concerned, no change in their abode or state is revealed in Scripture in connection with the ascension of Christ, and it will not change until the Great White throne Judgement of **Rev 20:13-14**.

Now, when the suffering rich looked across the great chasm into the other compartment in Hades called Paradise, he “**saw,**” HORAO, “**Abraham,**” ABRAAM, “**from afar,**” the Adverb, MAKROTHEN, μακρόθεν that means, “from afar or from a distance.” This indicates the long ways away from the holiness and righteousness of God this unbeliever was, as all unbelievers are, especially in the eternal state.

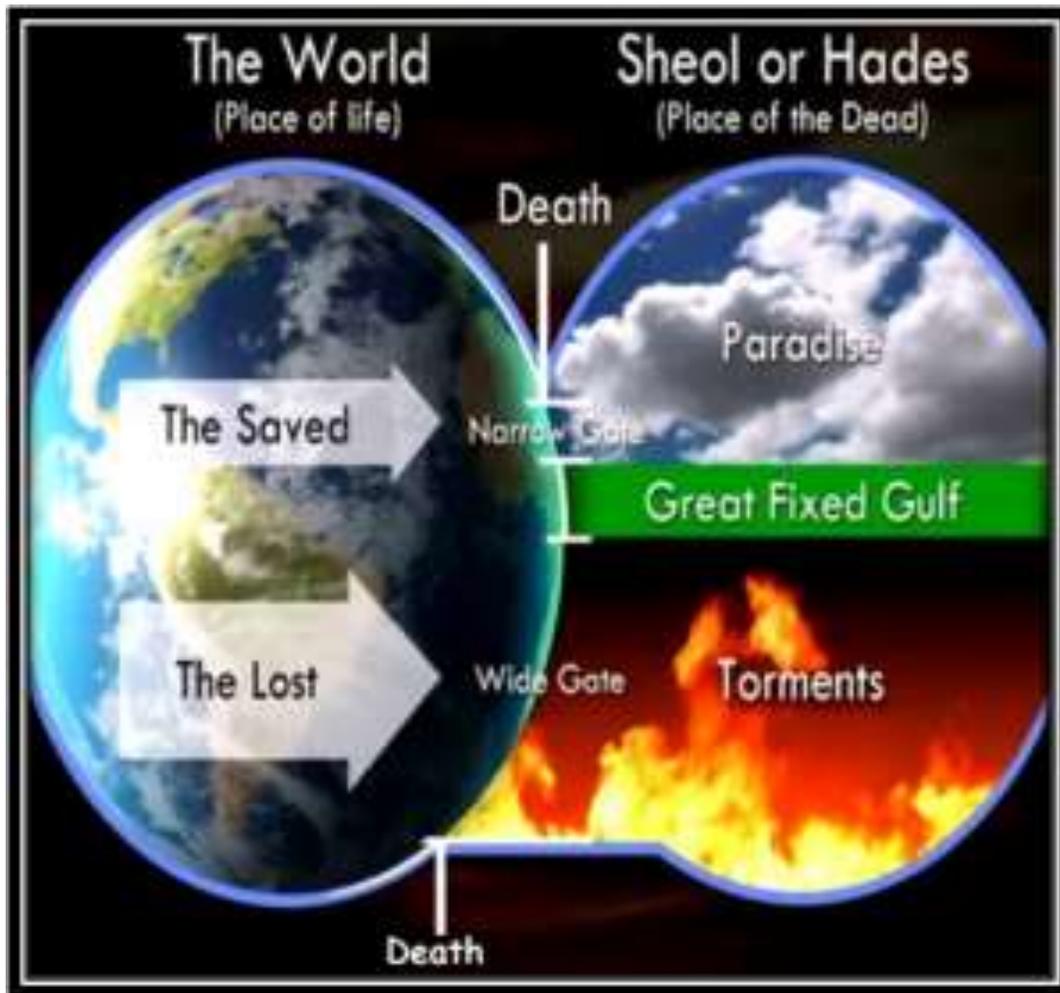
Not only did he see Abraham, but he saw Lazarus “**in his bosom,**” EN AUTOS HO KOLPOS. As we have noted in **vs. 22**, this phrase indicates a close relationship, place of honor, favor, blessing, and comfort. This is what Lazarus was now enjoying for all of eternity, in contrast to the suffering he endured during his earthly life.

As Lazarus suffered in his physical life, he did so to demonstrate the importance of eternity compared to time. Time is just a drop in the bucket compared to eternity, according to **James 4:14, “Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor for a little while and then vanishes away.”**

Time is the only opportunity to gain eternal life, **2 Cor 6:2, “For He says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is “the acceptable time,” behold, now is “the day of salvation”.**”

It only takes one second in time to believe in Jesus Christ, yet the rich man did not even take that one second to do so, yet Lazarus did. Time is the special opportunity for the believer to glorify God, and to demonstrate to the angels the greatness of God’s justice, wisdom, and grace policy. **Phil 4:11, “Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.”**

Time is the mechanism for resolving the Angelic Conflict. Lazarus was one of the greatest testimonies to angelic creatures as to what is important in life. As such, for the believer, time is the opportunity to glorify God, and to demonstrate to angels the greatness of God’s justice and wisdom.



d. The rich man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31, good stewards will be rewarded.

3) The perspective of Hades / Sheol after death, vs. 23-31.

Next, we will see the sinner's continued self-centeredness as the rich man begs for relief from his suffering, demanding that Lazarus provide him relief when on earth he did not provide relief for Lazarus' suffering.

Vs. 24

Luke 16:24, "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame'."

Ancient Jewish literature, cf. 2 Esdras 7:85, 93, does express the belief that communication is possible between the two divisions of Hades, just as we see here that the rich man called to Abraham.

The rich man, "cries out," PHONEO, to Abraham calling him "Father Abraham," PATER ABRAAM. This indicates that the rich man was a Jew, not a Gentile. This is a huge statement, as the rich Jewish Pharisees thought they had a direct ticket to heaven, just by being of the tribe of Abraham. But Jesus is pointing out that heritage does not save anyone. Only faith in the Messiah / Savior / King saves anyone.

By calling Abraham Father, the rich man was guilty of the very presumption which John the Baptist had earlier condemned: "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father" Luke 3:8. The Jews of Jesus' day were convinced that they merited eternal life simply because they were descended from Abraham. John 8:31-59. On the contrary, said Jesus, their real father

was not Abraham because they did not do the works of Abraham; rather, their father was the devil, the father of lies, because they did his works instead, **John 8:39-44**.

The same is true of the rich man in this story. He had no right to call Abraham “Father,” because he had not done the works of Abraham, (i.e., believe / have faith). Therefore, it was useless for him to claim that relationship. Jesus made this clear when He said that at His Second Coming even some who spoke in His name would be condemned because they worked iniquity, **Mat 7:21-23**.

This rich man then asks Abraham for “**mercy**,” ELEEO, ἐλεέω that means, “have mercy or pity on (someone), or show mercy.” It is in the Aorist, Active, Imperative, for a strong request from the rich man to Abraham.

This is the first time Luke uses ELEEO. He will use it again in **Luke 17:13; 18:38-39**. In those three usages, it is followed by people who wanted healing, but also had faith for salvation. Interestingly, those cases were during their life on earth, where they had the opportunity to receive salvation. But in the rich man’s case, he is now in the afterlife, where it is too late to receive salvation, just as it is too late to lessen the severity of his punishment.

Principles:

- Time is the only time that one can believe for eternal salvation.
- Time is the only time that one can believe so that their suffering in the afterlife is removed.
- Once you reach the afterlife, your eternal fate and situation is sealed for all of eternity.

The other point we see here is the continued arrogance of the unbelieving rich man and lack of remorse he has regarding his earthly life, as he demands mercy for himself, even though he showed no mercy towards Lazarus during his suffering on earth. In addition, he had the gall to ask Abraham “**to send**,” the Aorist, Active, Imperative of the Verb PEMPO, Lazarus to perform the merciful act. The fact that he knew Lazarus’ name indicated that he had been familiar with him and his plight in the previous life, although he did nothing to ease Lazarus’ suffering at that time. What arrogance, as he still saw himself as superior to Lazarus even in his current situation.

This is the problem with the self-righteous arrogant person, believer or unbeliever. They always want everyone to feel sorry for them and do things for them to make them feel better, yet they never lift a finger to help those who may be hurting around them. The believer in Jesus Christ must take their eyes off of themselves and look to how they can help others, without whining and complaining about it. If you whine or complain you have blown it!

The act of mercy the rich man demanded was for Lazarus to “**dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue**.”

Interestingly, “**dip**,” is the Greek Verb BAPTO, “to dip or immerse,” where the word baptism comes from. Because he did not get baptized for salvation in time, he will not get a baptism for relief in the eternal state. In this life repentance is possible, in the next it is not.

“**The tip of his finger**,” is the Adjective AKROS, ἄκρος, “end, extremity, tip or outermost,” that is only used four times in the NT, **Mat 24:31; Mark 13:27; Luke 16:24; Heb 11:21**. The other three have to do with seeing the fulfillment of God’s plan of salvation, which the rich man is missing out on.

This is used with the Noun DAKTULOS, δάκτυλος, “finger,” that is first used in the NT in **Mat 23:4**, regarding the arrogance of the Pharisees and Lawyers for not preaching the truth of the Gospel, while having the people serve them, cf. **Luke 11:46**.

Mat 23:4, “They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger.”

The other usages have to do with Jesus' healing, providing salvation, and forgiving sin, **Mark 7:33; Luke 11:20; John 8:6; 20:25, 27.**

Therefore, we see this request/demand from the rich as a continuation of his self-righteousness, unmerciful, self-centered arrogance to relieve his pain and suffering. And, because he did not lift a finger to help Lazarus in time, he will not receive help in the eternal state.

This also shows us the severity of suffering in the Place of Torments, as even a minute drop of “**water**,” HUDOR, would have provided tremendous relief. Likewise, as stated above, because he did not receive the water of life in time, **John 4:14; Rev 7:17; 21:6; 22:1, 17**, he will not receive a drop of relief in the eternal state.

John 4:14, “But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

The rich man wanted Lazarus to give him a drop of water to “**cool off his tongue**,” that uses the Verb KATAPSUCHO, “cool or refresh,” only used here in the NT. The root word PSUCHE means life or soul. So, we have a subtle meaning here of “soul refreshment,” which the rich man desired but is prohibited from receiving.

With that is the Noun GLOSSA, “tongue or language.” The first use in the NT is in **Mark 7:33**, that also is used with “finger,” DAKTULOS, and has to do with Jesus healing and providing salvation. Because the rich man did not even use his words for refreshment, (i.e., speak the gospel of Jesus Christ), in time, he is unable to even be refreshed on his tongue in the eternal state.

Next, he describes the suffering he is under in that place of torments. In **vs. 23**, the rich man said he was “in torment,” which was the noun BASANOS, βάσανος that means, “torture, torment, or great pain.” Here he states, “**for I am in agony in this flame**’.”

“**Agony**,” is the Verb ODUNAOMAI, ὀδυνάομαι that means, “cause pain; feel pain, or be tormented.” The latter is why this compartment of Hades is called the “place of torments.” It is used here and **vs. 25**, and in **Luke 2:48**, for the anguish Mary and Joseph had when they left Jesus behind in Jerusalem and could not find Him for 3 days. It is also used in **Acts 20:38**, for the Ephesians heartfelt sorrow when Paul had to depart them realizing they would not see him again. From those usages we see the torment being one of an absence of lost relationship, that is, with God in this case.

In its active sense it means, “to cause intense pain,” and in its passive sense it means, “to be anguished or tormented.” Here, it is in the Middle or Passive Deponent, which means the action of his life has led to him receiving this agonizing suffering. As such, the rich man was physically, mentally, and spiritually, “tormented,” as all unbelievers are who are in Hades.

“**In this flame**,” is EN HOUTOS HO PHLOX, where the Noun PHLOX means, “flame or flaming fire.” It is first used here in the NT, and also in **Acts 7:30; 2 Thes 1:8; Heb 1:7; Rev 1:14; 2:18; 19:12.**

In **2 Thes 1:5-9**, it describes the judgment for the unbeliever, as in our passage, “**This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. ⁶For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.**”

Therefore, we see that “flame or fire” describes the environment of the Place of Torments, as it does for the Eternal Lake of Fire. It is hot and incredibly dry, feeling like you are burning without being burnt up, and thirsty

where your thirst cannot be quenched. All of this suffering is the result of rejecting Jesus Christ as your Savior / Messiah / King during your life here on earth.

Vs. 25

Luke 16:25, “But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony’.”

Here, we have Abraham’s reply regarding the reality of both men’s situation. Abraham starts by addressing the rich man as “**child**,” TEKNON, τέκνον that means, “child, descendant, or posterity.” This confirms his Jewish heritage, and that heritage does not save anyone, **Mat 8:12**.

Mat 8:12, “But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

“**Remember**,” is the Aorist, Active, Imperative of the Verb MNAOMAI, μνάομαι that means, “be mindful of, to turn one’s mind to a thing, remember, or to court or woo (as turning the mind to seek a bride).” Because the rich man did not turn to his Lord for salvation, he is in this place. Nevertheless, Abraham wants him to remember the kind of life he had on earth compared to Lazarus and how the rich man loved money and wealth more than God, thereby never coming to faith for salvation. Here, we see that those in the afterlife can and will remember their life on earth. For the unbeliever, there will be much regret for squandering their opportunities for salvation. And for some believers there will be temporary shame for lost opportunities to glorify God, **1 John 2:28**.

Luke first used MNAOMAI in **Luke 1:54, “He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy.”** As noted above, the rich man rejected the Lord’s mercy, and “**during his life he received his good things**.” In other words, he lived a “good” worldly life inside of Satan’s Cosmic System, and Abraham wants him to remember that “good life,” where he rejected the Lord, so as to show the justice of God for the position he is currently in.

The contrast in lifestyles here on earth:

“**Received your good things**” is the Verb APOLAMBANO in the Aorist, Active, Indicative, with the Pronoun SU and the Adjective AGATHOS. With this is “**in your lifetime**,” EN SU HO ZOE. Notice the Personal Pronoun is used 3 times in this statement, showing that this is what the rich man valued during his life here on earth, rather than valuing a relationship with God.

Jesus warns in **Luke 6:24, “But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full.”**

In contrast is Lazarus’ life who Abraham says only received “**bad things**,” the Adjective KAKOS that means, “bad, evil, wicked, worthless, depraved, etc.” Therefore, while the rich man was living “high off the hog,” that is, a good life of wealth and riches in time, Lazarus had a life filled with bad things happening to him, both physically and materially. Lazarus endured these things under suffering for blessing. This shows that it is not what you have in life that matters.

Jesus points out here that those who live for this life of wealth and riches, fun and enjoyment, have a good chance of missing out on the faithful belief in the Savior for salvation, while those who have had a difficult life have a better chance of faithfully receiving the Savior for salvation. Cf. **Mat 19:16-24; Mark 10:23-25; Luke 12:16-21; 18:18-25; James 1:11**.

Mat 19:23-24, “And Jesus said to His disciples, “Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God”.”

The contrast in lifestyles in the eternal state:

In this portion, Abraham gives Lazarus' eternal state first, **“but now he is being comforted here,”** DE NUN PARAKALEO HODE. PARAKALEO typically means, “to call or invite,” which Lazarus was called or invited to salvation which he received. But, here it is used in its third of five applications for the act of “exhorting or encouraging” with the idea of “console or comfort.” It shows the contrast of his earthly life that was filled with bad things happening to him. Now, in the eternal state truly good things are happening to him. But remember, it is not because of the bad things that happened to him that he is now being comforted, it is because he believed. As such, all of our suffering will be turned to comfort when we reach the presence of God. Suffering will give way to glory. The first will be last, and the last will be first.

In contrast, Abraham states the rich man's eternal state, **“and you are in agony,”** which uses DE SU ODUNAOMAI. We noted ODUNAOMAI in **vs. 24**, as the rich man described his own suffering. Here, Abraham confirms it that he is in pain and torment physically, mentally, spiritually, and soulishly, as we noted in **vs. 24**, all due to the absence of a relationship with God in the eternal state. And, just like Lazarus, it is not because he lived a wealthy life that he is now suffering. It is because he rejected God's plan for his salvation. He chose to live a worldly life rather than accepting His Messiah / Savior / King, and living for Him.

James 5:1-7, “Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. ²Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. ³Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! ⁴Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, *and* which has been withheld by you, cries out *against you*; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. ⁵You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned and put to death the righteous *man*; he does not resist you. ⁷Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.”

Therefore, we see Abraham pointing out the contrast between the two individuals in both time and eternity. Because the rich man squandered his time on earth, he is now in the Place of Torments. Abraham points to the contrast between time and eternity to show that it does matter what we do in time, because it will determine our eternal state. Likewise, once we are in the eternal state our fate is sealed forever, and it cannot be changed. It is too late!

Vs. 26

Luke 16:26, ““And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and *that* none may cross over from there to us’.”

Abraham, points out the futility of the rich man's request by giving another reason for the impossibility of the request for mercy being fulfilled in the eternal state. He starts by saying, **“and besides all this,”** meaning what he just stated about their time on earth that resulted in their eternal state.

He then points out a feature, (part of the topography), that once existed in Hades, **“between us and you there is a great chasm fixed,”** METAXU HEMEIS KAI HUMEIS MEGAS CHASMA, (only used here in the NT), STERIZO. This feature may still exist, but is no longer needed, as Abraham's Bosom is now in heaven, as we have noted previously in this study.

The Verb STERIZO means, “fix, set firmly, establish; support, confirm, strengthen.” This chasm has been established by God the Creator.

Chasm is the noun CHASMA, χάσμα, which is a figurative extension of CHASKO, “yawning,” that is not used in the NT. It is a deep, unbridgeable valley or trough between two points in Hades, Abraham’s Bosom/Paradise and the Place of Torments. It references the impassable space between these two parts of the supernatural abode of the dead. Interestingly, this account differed from the teaching of the Jewish rabbis, who claimed that only a finger’s breadth separated the places of Paradise and of torment. Jesus once again debunks their false teaching.

Abraham tells why the chasm was there, speaking from both vantage points.

1) **“So that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able,”** HOPOS HO THELO, “to wish or desire, purpose to, or willing to,” DIABAINO, “go through, cross, or go over,” ENTHEN, “from here,” only used here and **Mat 17:20**, PROS HUMEIS ME DUNAMAI, “be able, have power to do so, have the capacity for.” As such, we see that those who resided in Abraham’s Bosom, who may have wanted to visit or help those in the Place of Torments, are prohibited from doing so.

2) **“and that none may cross over from there to us,”** MEDE, “nor, not even, neither, etc.,” DIAPERO, “pass over or cross,” EKEITHEN, “from there,” PROS HEMEIS, “to us.” This tells us that those in the Place of Torments cannot cross over to the other compartment in Hades, Abraham’s Bosom.

This barrier is a reflection of the barrier between the rich man and Lazarus that had existed during their lifetimes, i.e., pride, arrogance, and selfishness on the part of the rich man that prohibited from granting mercy to the poor and humble Lazarus, was now permanently fixed. The gulf which the rich man could have bridged while alive was now uncrossable. It also shows that there was no fellowship between the saved and the lost in the afterlife.

Therefore, there is neither help coming to those who reside in the Place of Torments nor is there any escape from the Place of Torments. It indicates that for those who reside in the Place of Torments, their fate is sealed for all of eternity without diminish or reprieve. There are no second chances or further opportunity to repent after death.

In addition, the gulf cannot be crossed because it symbolizes the separation between light and darkness. **1 John** makes it clear that sin and righteousness are utterly incompatible, **1 John 1:5-2:11**. As such, there will be no communication between those in heaven and those in hell because sin cannot

14. Concerning wealth, Luke 16:1-31.

d. The Rich Man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31, good stewards will be rewarded.

3) The perspective of Hades / Sheol after death, vs. 23-31.

Vs. 27

Luke 16:27, “**And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house—**”

The rich man’s suffering is intensified by his overwhelming regret that leads him to have a small heart of compassion, but only for his brothers. “**I beg you,**” is the Present, Active, Indicative of EROTAO that means “ask, request, etc.”

He wanted Abraham, addressing him once again as “**father,**” PATER, to “**send him,**” PEMPO AUTOS, speaking of Lazarus, to his “**father’s house,**” PATER OIKOS.

Once again, we see the arrogance of his request as in **vs. 24**, where he is petitioning Abraham to send Lazarus to his father’s house to warn them. Why does this guy continue to think he can boss Lazarus around? He continues in his arrogance of feeling superior to Lazarus based on their previous life here on earth. Yet, Lazarus is now far superior to him in the eternal state. The arrogant always view themselves as superior to others.

In addition, why does he only request for the message to be brought to his family and not for others, especially those less fortunate than they, as Lazarus was. Remember what Jesus taught about service towards others in **Mat 5:46-47; Luke 6:32-33**.

Mat 5:46-47, “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”

Luke 6:32-33, “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.”

“Although this seems to indicate the delayed dawning of virtue upon the part of the rich man, his request had several underlying insinuations which show he had not changed much. First, there was an implied accusation. The rich man was saying, ‘I was not sufficiently warned, otherwise, I would not be here.’ Second, part of the motivation for the request was indeed selfish. The rich man desired to relieve himself of the obligation he felt toward his brothers, and desired that they not join him in torment (which would simply add to his misery).”
(Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)

Therefore, even though the rich man had regret and sympathy for his brothers, he still did not have a righteous heart, nor will he ever have one, as his state of being cannot be changed in eternity. He will always be an arrogant wretch.

Vs. 28

Luke 16:28, “For I have five brothers—in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment’.”

“**Five Brothers**,” is PENTE ALDEPHOS. Five is the number of grace in the Bible. It is by the grace of God than anyone is saved. The first use of PENTE in the NT is **Mat 14:17**, for the five loaves to feed the crowd, along with the two fish, cf. **Luke 9:13f**, signifying that Jesus is the bread of life for salvation. The rich man desired that his brothers be saved, but was it for the right reasons.

“**In order that he may warn them**,” uses the Verb DIAMARTUROMAI, διαμαρτύρομαι from the root Verb MATUREO for “bearing witness” and comes to mean, “charge, warn, testify, confirm, witness, etc.” This type of witness would warn them of the tragedy of their brother, “**so that they will not also come to this place of torment’.**” “**Place of torment**,” is the noun TOPOS, “place, location, region, etc.” with the Noun BASANOS that we noted in **vs. 23**, that means, “torture, torment, or great pain.” It is synonymous to the Verb ODUNOAMAI that we noted in **vs. 24-25**, which has given this compartment in Hades where all unbelievers reside its name.

So, he wants Lazarus, the one he never showed an ounce of mercy towards, to be the messenger boy for him, to warn his brothers about going to the “Place of Torments.” Yet, we do not see him desiring to have the Gospel preached to them, even though we know that is the information necessary for anyone to avoid the Place of Torments. This is just more subtle clues from our Lord that the unbeliever remains in the self-centered arrogance and rejection of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Vs. 29

Luke 16:29, “But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’”

Here we have Abraham’s denial of the rich man’s request, but with the proper potential for answering it. Because the rich man was not desiring for the Gospel to be preached, Moses clarifies the issue, that it is the Gospel that keeps people from the Place of Torments, as he says, “**They have Moses and the Prophets,**” ECHO MOUSES KAI HO PROPHETES. This means the two parts of the Hebrew Bible to witness to them, the Law and Prophets. The third part of the Hebrew Bible is the poetical books like Psalm, Song of Solomon, Proverbs, etc. Interestingly, having these two witnesses fulfills the Law, **Deut 17:6; 19:15; Mat 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1; Heb 10:28.**

Deut 17:6, “On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.”

Deut 19:15, “A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.”

As such, Abraham states that all they need to know in order to escape the judgment of Place of Torments is found in the Bible, just as it is today, cf. **Luke 16:16, “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.”**

“**Let them hear them,**” is the Aorist, Active, Imperative of the Verb AKOUO that mean “to hear,” but also “to learn through the ear gate.” It is equivalent to the Hebrew SHEMA that applies obedience to the Scriptures. If one did not obey a command, it is said they really had not heard it. Interestingly, as the rich man used the Imperative mood to entreat, with a bit of mandating, his superior Abraham to have Lazarus perform several tasks for him, Abraham gives a mandate for the rich man’s brothers to learn / obey the Gospel from the Bible. In fact, this is how everyone learns the Gospel of Jesus Christ, through the Bible, whether personally read or as witnessed to them by a believer.

Therefore, through two of the three witnesses found in the Hebrew Bible, they had more than enough information and opportunity to be saved and escape the judgment of the Place of Torments, as the rich man desired. If they deny these two witnesses, they are rightly and justly condemned to Hell.

Vs. 30

Luke 16:30, “But he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’”

Here, we have the rich man’s rebuttal to Abraham’s instructions. “**No, father Abraham,**” is OUCHI PATER ABRAAM. OUCHI indicates a strong objection by the rich man, by no means or not at all. He most likely is objecting strongly here because he knows his brothers, and like himself, the rich man assumes his brothers will reject the teaching in the Bible. Therefore, he desires an alternative course of actions, “**but if someone goes to them from the dead,**” ALLA EAN TIS POREUOMAI PROS AUTOS APO NEKROS. This act would have been accomplished in the form of a miracle and would have been a type of sign for them. This is what Paul called out the Jews for in **1 Cor 1:22, “For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom.”** Instead of having faith to believe, many look for signs, miracles, and wonders. But if your faith is based on those things then you are on a slippery slope as Jesus warned in **Mat 24:24; John 4:48.**

John 4:48, “So Jesus said to him, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.””

Mat 24:24, “For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.”

Nevertheless, God did show the people of Jesus’ generation and the early Church many signs, miracles, and wonders through Jesus and Apostles, so that they would be without excuse and lead many to the Gospel or bolster their faith, **Acts 2:22; 5:12; Rom 15:19; 2 Cor 12:12; Heb 2:4.**

Acts 2:22, “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know.”

Acts 5:12, “At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.”

Rom 15:19, “In the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”

Heb 2:4, “God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.”

But remember, signs, miracles and wonders can be counterfeited by Satan and the Antichrist to lead many astray, **2 Thes 2:9.** That is why we are warned not to base our faith on them, rather, we need to learn the Gospel of Jesus Christ as taught in the Bible and believe.

2 Thes 2:9, “That is, the one, (*the Lawless one / Antichrist*), whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders.”

Therefore, this indicates that the rich man implied in his request that the God-ordained warnings, (i.e., Moses and the Prophets), were inadequate and impotent. In his former life his master had been money and wealth, **vs. 13**, and although this master failed him without reward or hope in the eternal state, he was unable to submit to the other master, God. He felt that the testimony of the dead would be more effective than the message of God Himself through His inspired Word.

As such, the objectionable rebuttal by the rich man rejects the teaching of Abraham too, showing his arrogance once again, thinking he knows better than Abraham about spiritual things. In that, the rich man is convinced that if some miracle is performed, (i.e., a dead person goes back to his brothers and tells them about the Place of Torments), his brothers would come to faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Vs. 31

Luke 16:31, “But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead’.

Finally, we have Abraham’s rebuttal to the rich man. This is like the Angelic Conflict where God will have the final rebuttal to Satan’s rebuttal. Abraham’s rebuttal is, “If they reject the Scriptures, they will reject the witness of a dead person too.”

It starts with a first-class conditional “if” statement with the Conjunction EI, “if,” and the negative Particle OUK meaning “**if they do not.**” The thing they may not do is, “**listen to Moses and Prophets,**” which uses AKOOU MOUSES PROPHETES once again, meaning they do not learn the gospel from two of the three parts of the Hebrew Bible.

The “then” statement is, “**they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.**” This phrase begins with the Negative OUDE, “and not, nor, or neither,” and ends in the Greek structure with the Future, Passive, Indicative of the Verb PEITHO meaning, “to be convinced, persuaded, etc.” In English, we combine them for “Neither will they be convinced or persuaded.”

Then we have a third class “if” statement using EAN, “if,” with the Subjunctive Mood of the Verb ANISTEMI meaning, “raise, raise up, bring to life, stand up, appear, or to rise again,” with the added emphasis of EK NEKROS, “from the dead.” This gives us a hypothetical situation for the potential of someone rising from the dead to go witness the gospel to the rich man’s five brothers.

Putting it all together Abraham’s rebuttal is, “if they do not listen to the Gospel as told in the Hebrew Bible, neither will they be convinced or persuaded if someone rises from the dead to tell them about the Place of Torments in order to avoid its judgment.”

Principles:

1. *“Part of the task of preaching, or acting as God's spokesman, is indeed to warn the hearers of the coming consequences of their present course of life. The Old Testament prophets are full of such admonitions (**Isaiah 1:16-20; Jeremiah 4:13-18; Amos 2:4, 5; Zephaniah 2:1-3; see especially Ezekiel 3:16-21** for the responsibility of the prophet to warn). Paul took his role as one who warned very seriously (**Acts 20:31; 1 Corinthians 4:14**). The teachings of Jesus frequently contained a note of warning (**Matthew 10:28; Mark 9:42-48**). Modern preachers who neglect this side of God's message are not fulfilling their responsibility.”* (Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)

2. *“The words of Abraham foreshadowed two miraculous events which were yet to come in the life of Jesus. John 11 tells of Jesus' bringing His friend Lazarus back from the dead. While the result for many was belief (**John 11:45**), for the religious leaders it began the plot to murder the miracle worker (**John 11:53**). Later Jesus himself suffered death and was brought back from the dead. The response of many was again faith (**John 20:26-29**), but not so with the religious leaders (**Matthew 28:11-15**). Faith is more than a sense of wonder at miraculous signs. Faith requires commitment and a change of life.”* (Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)

Summary & Conclusion of Chapter 16

As we have noted in our outline of the Gospel of Luke, we are on the fourth major point:

IV. The Repudiation of the Son of Man by Men, Luke 9:51-19:27.

Under that heading, Chapter 16 is the fourteenth sub-point:

14. Concerning wealth, Luke 16:1-31.

In this Chapter our Lord is teaching on the right dealing with the wealth of this world. We have broken it down into four sections:

- a. The Unrighteous Steward, vs. 1-8.**
- b. Principles on the righteous treatment of wealth, vs. 9-13.**
- c. Rebuke of the Pharisees' love of money, vs. 14-18.**
- d. The Rich man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31.**

a. The Unrighteous Steward, vs. 1-8.

Vs. 1-4, deal with not gossiping, slandering, or maligning others. Yet, if we are the recipient of it, we are to trust in God and not ourselves, **vs. 5-8**, deal with personal faith, and **vs. 9**, deals with good stewards being shrewd in a good way.

In **vs. 1-2**, we have a warning about mishandling God's gracious privileges and responsibilities.

In **vs. 3**, we noted the error of taking matters into your own hands rather than trusting in God.

In **vs. 4**, we noted how some are falsely trying to secure their eternal blessings.

Then, in **vs. 5-8**, it dealt with personal faith using a negative scenario. In this negative scenario, the steward puts his plan into action to solve his problem on his own, rather than turning to and trusting in God. Our Lord desires that we turn to Him for solutions for every problem we face in life, **Psa 55:22; Mat 6:25; Luke 12:22-31; 1 Peter 5:7**.

Mat 6:25, "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?"

In addition, we are commanded to be shrewd in our dealings with the unbelievers of this world to win them over for Christ. Not in a sinful way though, but as such to be able to give them the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This parable taught about God and Jesus Christ as the master of the house, and the Lord's ownership. At the same time, it teaches us about our stewardship. Those who serve God are stewards or servants in His house. He is the owner, we are stewards.

b. Principles on the righteous treatment of wealth, vs. 10-13.

These verses are concerned with our faith in God. We are to do our duty and trust in His grace for our reward. Here, we see the character we are to have in **vs. 10**, the consequences of our actions in **vs. 11-12**, and the challenge we are given in **vs. 13**.

In all, if we are operating faithfully in small matters, we will act faithfully in larger ones too. On the other side, if we act sinfully in small matters, we will also act sinfully in larger situations.

Luke 12:42, "And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?""

1 Cor 4:2, "In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy."

God will not bless us in time or eternity, if we are unfaithful towards Him with the things or responsibilities we have in this world. That is why in all things and matters we are to trust in Him and rely upon Him.

As believers in the Church Age, we have been given much, and therefore need to be faithful to God in handling those things. If we are not, we will have loss of reward. If we are, we will be blessed even further by God, **1 Cor 3:12-15**. That is what we noted in **Luke 12:48b**, “**From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.**”

In **vs. 13**, we had a “**love – hate**” relationship supported by a “**devoted – despise,**” analogy. In that, we cannot have split allegiances. We can only have one true allegiance in our lives and that should be with God. If we have sin in our lives, our allegiance is with the world, Satan’s cosmic system, which is designed to hate God. Therefore, if we love the things of this world, we will end up hating God.

1 John 2:15, “**Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**”

John 15:19, “**If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.**”

Therefore, take note as to who or what the world loves, and who or what the world hates. Then you will be able to see where your allegiances should lie regarding the people and things of this world. Yet, in all situations, our allegiance should be with God and the things of God.

Mat 16:26, “**For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**”

We must make up our minds. Will we serve the false god of money and possessions, which amounts to idolatry, or will we serve the One true living God who owns all things?

Col 3:23-24, “**Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,** ²⁴**knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.**”

c. Rebuke of the Pharisees’ love of money, vs. 14-18, good stewards must be obedient.

Paul also wrote how the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, and has a negative effect on the soul, **1 Tim 6:10**, “**For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.**” Remember, the scriptures do not say “money is the root of all evil,” it states “the love of money is....”

As we noted, money cannot buy everything, especially salvation, (the spiritual death of our Lord was the purchase price for our salvation). Money cannot buy love, it is not a means of happiness, nor is it a means of security, **Mat 6:24-33**. There are many other things that money cannot buy, such as security, perfect happiness from God, stability of soul, or peace of mind.

Some questions we can ask ourselves to see if we are lovers of money or not:

1. Does my pursuit of money interfere with obeying God?
2. Do I always look for something that will benefit me financially, regardless of how it affects others?

3. Am I more concerned with what my cost will be instead of allowing myself to be moved by compassion? Money related to right perspective and mental attitude is taught in **1 Tim 6:3-11, 17-19**.

We also noted the principle that even though we may hide our thoughts from man, there is no hiding of our thoughts before God, as He knows every one of them. God knows our attitudes, our motives, our feelings, and everything else that is under the surface regarding the thoughts of our souls. Our problem is our heart. As **Jer 17:9** says, **“The heart is more deceitful than all else, and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”**

We may fool ourselves and others, but we will not fool God. God knows who we are all the way down to the bottom of our souls. As such, we should not try to fool God, as we try to fool others and even ourselves. Therefore, knowing that God knows your every thought should lead you to have great honesty and integrity in your thoughts and your actions. If you have been putting on a façade for others, stop what you have been doing and start operating in the integrity of God with great faith as His Word flows through your soul.

In **vs. 15**, we understand that loving money is one of the “detestable things / abominations” to God.

Vs. 16, showed us that the Gospel has been, is, and always will be available to man to believe for salvation. But, unfortunately, due to the love of money, many people reject the gospel and try to find their own way or means to salvation. This is what Jesus meant by “forcing their way into it.” Rather than trusting in God’s plan for salvation, they try their own way, typically through human good works.

Vs. 17, notes that the Word of God is everlasting and will never diminish or fail. God’s plan of salvation is absolute and all sufficient.

In **vs. 18**, the doctrine of Divorce is used to show the unchanging and everlasting nature of the Word of God. There, we noted the principles for legitimate and illegitimate divorce, and the ever endurance of the Word. Yet, it brings out the application of serving money, as people divorce themselves from God and commit adultery against Him by going after money. They are now married to the divorcée called money, (which in this case, speaks to Satan and his cosmic system as well, who was previously divorced from God, i.e., their husband). Therefore, they are now committing adultery against God, which amounts to idolatry.

d. The rich man and Lazarus, vs. 19-31, good stewards will be rewarded.

This true story is also sometimes entitled, “Dead men tell tales.” This true story describes the first and second compartments of Hades / Sheol during the dispensations of the OT. There are three perspectives given in this passage.

- 1) The perspective of life, **vs. 19-21**.
- 2) The perspective of death, **vs. 22**.
- 3) The perspective of Sheol or Hades after death, **vs. 23-31**.

1) The perspective of life, **vs. 19-21**.

This rich man lusted for wealth and became the slave to wealth. As a slave to money and pleasure, he had no time for the gospel until it was too late, i.e., after he died. Yet, Lazarus was a poor man both in health and wealth. This was a blessing in two ways: a) He was not distracted by worldly riches from knowing and believing in the Gospel, and b) It provided him the opportunity to go through suffering for blessing, which maximizes giving glory to God.

2) The perspective of death, **vs. 22**.

Here, we noted two very different endings that were really beginnings of their eternal life. They both received a complete reversal of their earthly situation. In that section, we also noted a brief study about angels.

3) The perspective of Hades / Sheol after death, **vs. 23-31**.

In their reversal of fortunes, we noted how the rich man remained in his self-centered arrogance, even though he was suffering greatly for all of eternity. The heart does not change in the eternal state.

In this section we noted the nature and topography of Hades, how believers went to the section in Hades called Abraham's Bosom or Paradise, while unbelievers went to the section called the Place of Torments. Between the two is a great chasm that could not be traversed by the inhabitants on either side. This was the fact up until the death and resurrection of our Lord, when He brought those in Paradise to Heaven where they now reside for all of eternity. Yet, for the unbeliever they continue to go to the Place of Torments upon their death, and then will go to the Great White Throne Judgment of our Lord and be cast into the Lake of Fire for all of eternity, due to their rejection of Jesus Christ during their time here on planet earth, **Rev 20:10-15**.

Therefore, our Lord taught throughout this Chapter about the right and wrong treatment of wealth in this life, especially related to your relationship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 13, is the key verse of this Chapter, **Luke 16:13, "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."**