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Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

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LESSON FOR JANUARY 28

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

LESSON TEXT—Luke 16:19-31.

GOLDEN TEXT—Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.—1 Tim. 6:17.

REFERENCE MATERIAL—Psalm 49:6-20, II Cor. 8:1-9, 1 Tim. 6:17-19.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Story of a Rich Man and a Beggar.

JUNIOR TOPIC—The Poor Rich Man and the Rich Poor Man.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Penalties of Selfishness.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Right Use of Wealth.

In this lesson we are afforded a peep into two worlds where we see disclosed extremes of character and conditions. No more graphic picture could be drawn showing the contrast of two lives. These lives were intended to be representative. The rich man descends from the highest pinnacle of worldly enjoyment to the depths of endless misery. The poor beggar ascends from utter wretchedness and misery to the loftiest heights of blessing.

I. Contrasted Lives (vv. 19-21).

1. The Rich Man (v. 19). He lived in a mansion secluded from the common people. He was clothed in costly raiment; his outer garments were of purple and his inner garments of fine linen. He fed upon the richest food that could be provided. His sin was to selfishly indulge his appetites without consideration for others.

2. The Beggar (vv. 20, 21). He was laid at the rich man's gate with the hope of getting at least the crumbs from his table. The dogs of the street were more kind to him than the rich man. Lazarus means "God is a help," indicating that a godly life shone through his poverty. We learn from these contrasted lives that worldly condition is no sure test of a man's state in the sight of God. Rich men are not all wicked or selfish, and not all poor men are godly.

II. Contrasted Deaths and Funerals (v. 22).

1. The Beggar. He was found dead and his body hurried off to a pauper's grave. No notice was taken of it by the world.

2. The Rich Man. He also died. His gold could not bribe the messenger of death. Doubtless a costly funeral was held, attended by those who moved in his class of society. Death is the common end to which all classes must come.

III. Contrasted Destinies (v. 23).

1. The Beggar. He was at once carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The souls of believers are especially cared for at the hour of death.

2. The Rich Man. Though he had an elaborate funeral he lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment. When the veil of futurity is lifted we see that the positions of these men are reversed. The poor man was in the company of just men made perfect, because of his godly life while on earth, and the rich man is stripped of his purple and fine linen and cast into hell with all wicked men, because while on earth he only lived for selfish ends.

IV. The Reality and Fixedness of Life Beyond the Grave (vv. 24-31).

1. The Cry for Mercy (v. 24). Dives, which is the Latin name for "rich man," was now willing to claim relationship to Abraham. He was keenly conscious, and the appetites which controlled him while on earth were still with him. Instead of a means of gratification they were now an instrument of torture. Part of the torment of hell will be the cravings of appetite and lust, with no means of their gratification.

2. Abraham's Reply (v. 25). This reply cast the matter back upon the man's memory. He said, "Son, remember." The lashings of a guilty conscience will be most real in hell.

3. Their Fixedness (v. 26). Human destinies are fixed by the choices during the life. When one passes out of this life he enters into an unchangeable state and condition.

4. God's Word and the All-Sufficient Light (vv. 27-31). Dives now requested that Lazarus go on an errand of mercy to his brethren. He regarded the testimony of a spirit of more value than the Word of God. Many today are more willing to trust the rappings of a ghost than the sure Word of God. Abraham declared that God's Word is sufficient—that those who reject Moses and the prophets would not repent though visited by one who had risen from the dead. The greatest miracles will not affect the hearts of men who reject the Bible.

Development.

Development seems to be the method by which God works, and development is change—change which, by no means, involves imperfection; and this for the reason that lays, which obtain in the realm of the finite, may, or may not, obtain in the realm of the infinite.—Rt. Rev. N. S. Thomas, D. D.

Man Lives His Beliefs.

A man lives his beliefs however much he may betray his creed.—Sir Henry Jones.



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THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPIC

By Rev. Charles E. Schaeffer, D. D.

January 28th—What Are the Rightful Claims of Our Church Upon Us? Heb. 10: 19-25.

The week upon which we are entering is to be known as "Christian Endeavor Week." This is to form a suitable prelude to Christian Endeavor Day on the first Sunday of February, when the anniversary of the Society is to be properly observed. Inasmuch as the Christian Endeavor Society is an integral part of the Church, an organization within the body of the Church, it is fitting that this topic be considered at this time. What are the claims of the Church upon us—as a Society? as individuals? Does the Church have any rightful claims upon us or do we make our demands from the Church? The answer to these questions depends upon our conception of and our attitude towards the Church. If we regard our belonging to the Church as a means whereby we can get a great deal from the Church, then we make demands of it rather than it from us. But if, on the other hand, we think of the Church as an institution through which we may render service, then it has rightful claims upon us.

The Church is the fellowship of believers in Christ. A group of like-minded individuals who love Jesus and who seek to establish His Kingdom in the world, have banded themselves together in a fellowship with each other and with Christ. They possess a common spirit and a common purpose. It is their love for a common Lord that thus draws them together. They may have certain social interests in common. They live in the same community, and thus they have organized themselves into a body of believers. They realize that they can do far more effective work and that their own interests are more fully safeguarded by thus coming together than by each one going on his own individual course. In this fellowship they seek to do a number of things:

First, to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. They want to tell all the world about Jesus, about His life, His death, His resurrection, about the salvation which He offers to the world. They wish others to share this good news and in this fellowship, so they create societies and agencies whereby this good news may be proclaimed most effectively throughout the world. Each one regards himself as a witness of Christ. This witness is to take the form of word and work. It is to be a testimony by lip and life. You can now see that the first claim of the Church is upon us, either as a group or as individuals. We are to bear testimony to Jesus. We are to be His witnesses. We are to be missionaries of the Christ, ambassadors of His, representing Him in all the world and telling others of the blessings which have come into the world through Jesus.

Second, to perpetuate the life of Jesus in the world. The Church continues the life of Jesus among men. If the Church had not been founded after the resurrection of Jesus it is likely that His whole life and work would have been forgotten during the ages that followed, but the Church kept these things alive. It handed the same down from one generation to another, and thus it gave permanency to the life and work of Jesus. Now, that is needed today. If you take the Church out of any community you will open the way for the removal of the life and spirit of Jesus eventually from that community. The succeeding generation will find it more difficult to maintain high social and ethical standards if the Church is removed than it otherwise will. So the Church perpetuates the life of Jesus in the world from one generation to another. It seeks to incorporate that life into the varied relationships of human life. It is not enough simply to proclaim the gospel of Jesus into the ears of men. That gospel must be incarnated into the life of humanity, so that it throbs and expresses itself in man's social, economic and national as well as religious life. This is a great claim which the Church makes upon us. It makes our religion real and tangible and definite. It brings it down from the clouds and embodies it in the daily life of people.

Third, to educate people in their relations to Jesus and to one another. The Church is a great training school. It teaches men their duties towards God and their fellowmen. Every member of the Church, therefore, becomes a disciple, a learner, and the Church demands of us that we should be as apt in learning the things which it has to offer as we possibly can. Here emerges the whole program of religious education. The youth of the Church must be taught and trained so as to come to the proper understanding of the things of God and the purpose of life.

The Church also makes a claim for good citizenship. We are citizens of the nation, as well as members of the Church, and we owe duties and obligations to the State. The Church develops citizens of a high order, who will apply Christian principles to the affairs of government and the welfare of the nation.

Having stated these general claims which the Church makes upon us by reason of its rightful mission in the world, there are several specific claims which must be heeded:

First, attendance at its services. What is the use in belonging to an organization if you don't attend the same, Absentee membership in the Church amounts to but very little. If you are a member of the Church and recognize its claims, then the Church has a right to expect you to be present at the services in God's house. The gospel is not propagated by empty pews, nor is the life of Jesus perpetuated among men when they do not come into personal touch and contact with each other. The modern tendency of forsaking the assembling of people together for worship is ominous. It shows that men's loyalties lie elsewhere than in the Church. It shows also that they are putting the claims of the Church to a subordinate place in their life and that there are other claims that have mounted into the ascendency. It shows also that people's love for Jesus is not as pronounced and does not have a great a hold upon them as the love for pleasure or profit or personal convenience.

Second, interest in its program. Every individual Church ought to have a definite program, a clear-cut objective and goal, and the Church has a right to ask of its members that they take an individual and active interest in the carrying out of that program. This does not imply a blind following, but an understanding sympathy and interest. Consequently we must study the whole program of the Church and familiarize ourselves sufficiently and intelligently into it.

Third, contributing to its support. No Church can be run without money. The day when we must apologize for the public mentioning of money for Church purposes is past. A big business, the biggest on the earth, as is represented by the Church, demand large sums of money. It is only narrow-minded, selfish and uninformed people who object to the mentioning of money in the conduct of the Church's work. But money is not enough. The Church makes a far heavier demand. It asks for service. It asks for men and women who will give their lives and their all upon the altar. Thomas Tiplady has the following to say:

"The modern Church has never asked too much of men. It has always asked too little. It asks a man to give up a pint of beer, when it ought to ask him to give up a brewery. A man is asked to give a donation to the Church when he ought to be asked to give a fortune. Many refuse the small request who would grant the great. We ask a man to give his spare time, when we ought to ask him to give up his career. Christ asked great things from men. He demanded all they had, and they responded. In places of riches, family life and a career, He offered them poverty, loneliness and martyrdom, and they followed Him without a word."

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KNITTED COATS SMART-STYLED PLEASE HER WEE LADYSHIP



FOR her of kindergarten age, what could be prettier than a knitted coat, such as the little girls in the picture are wearing? In no class of apparel has that intangible something which we please to term "style" so asserted itself as in knitted outerwear.

The style element has especially entered into childrens' knitted outer garments. Those versed in childhood's ways agree that tiny tots are astonishingly sensitive to the niceties of attractive color and clever detail in the clothes they wear. In the charming knitted coats brought out this season little girls' ideals of all that is loveliest in winter wraps are realized.

It is safe to say that mother or big sister experience no more rapturous thrills over their luxurious seal or chinchilla fur coats than does little Miss Two-to-Seven (perhaps older, perhaps younger) over her knitted coat, especially when it has brushed wool collar and cuffs such as are shown on the coat to the right in the picture.

The attractiveness of the garment is greatly enhanced by contrasting a close even stitch in the waist and sleeves, with a fancy wide welt stitch for the skirt, plaited in broad border. Of course the buttons with knitted loops are exactly the right finishing touch.

It is the fashion to wear hats to match the knitted coat. A brushed wool snug cap tops the cuffs and collar of same, on the taller girl.

The fact that the knitted coat is an all-year-around garment should also be taken into consideration. Wraps as herewith portrayed serve admirably in midseason, and they are ever ready when cool summer breezes stir or autumn's chill comes on.

Julia Bottomley

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TAILORED DRESSES RIVAL THE TWO-PIECE SUIT



THE time-honored two-piece tailored suit has strong rivals—or allies—in the wardrobe of the busy woman who spends much of her time in street clothes. The three-piece suit and the all-day dress (including the coat dress) prove a welcome change from the blouse and skirt combination, especially to business women. We appear to be gliding into a tailored mode for spring, and a tailored mode with a number of interesting innovations, as predicted by Paris.

Innovations are in evidence in the coat frock at the left of the two all-day dresses illustrated, appearing in the increased fullness of the skirt, the heightened waistline and fuller side panels. The skirt is short enough for convenience and the lengthened panels are made an outstanding style feature by their shape and trimming of silk braid. This is an adaptation of the straight-line dress that will prove becoming to slender figures. Designers appear to be so engrossed with making slenderizing clothes for stout women that her thin sisters are considerably neglected.

The straight-line frock at the right is flattering to full figures and is trimmed with narrow braid used lavishly and in a strong contrasting color. This color contrast is another innovation that is appearing in bands of printed silk or embroidery in Persian, Bulgarian and cashmere colorings on dark-colored dresses.

Serge, broadcloth and wool jersey are returning favorites that are featured in street dress. They will do their capable part toward promoting a vogue for tailored clothes.

The three-piece suit, that is a suit with blouse and skirt joined together and worn under a coat, cape or jacket, is the center of interest in tailored clothes for spring.

Julia Bottomley

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