

Small Group Discussion Guide

The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31)

Series: Stories With Intent – The Parables of Jesus

Main Point: Devotion to Jesus is evidenced by compassion to the needy.

1. Warm Up (10 minutes)

- 1 Think about a time when someone showed you unexpected generosity. What made that moment memorable?
- 2 Why do conversations about money, wealth, or generosity sometimes make people uncomfortable?
- 3 What assumptions do people often make about successful or poor people?
- 4 Do you think people generally believe wealth equals blessing or success? Why or why not?

2. Understanding the Text (Inductive Study – 25 minutes)

Read Luke 16:19–31 together.

Observation Questions

- 1 How is the rich man described? What details stand out?
- 2 How is Lazarus described? What details help you picture his condition?
- 3 Where is Lazarus located in relation to the rich man?
- 4 What happens to each man after death?
- 5 What contrasts appear in the story (luxury vs suffering, gate vs chasm, feasting vs hunger)?
- 6 Who is the only person named in the parable? Why might that matter?

Interpretation Questions

- 1 What opportunity did the rich man have during his lifetime that he no longer has after death?
- 2 What does the 'great chasm' in verse 26 reveal about the finality of judgment?
- 3 Why does the rich man ask Abraham to warn his brothers?
- 4 What does Abraham mean when he says they have 'Moses and the Prophets'?
- 5 Why is Abraham's statement about not believing even if someone rises from the dead powerful in light of Jesus' resurrection?

3. Connecting the Passage to Life (Application – 20 minutes)

- 1 What do you think was the rich man's greatest failure in this story?
- 2 Did the rich man harm Lazarus, or simply ignore him? What does that teach us?
- 3 Why can comfort and wealth sometimes dull our compassion?
- 4 What opportunities do we have now to show compassion that may not always be available?
- 5 Who are the 'Lazarus' figures people might overlook today?
- 6 Why is it sometimes easier to talk about compassion than to practice it?
- 7 What practical ways can believers show compassion today?
- 8 What is one step of compassion God might be prompting you to take this week?

4. Gospel Reminder

This parable does not teach salvation by works. We do not care for the needy to earn God's favor. Instead, because we have received God's mercy through Jesus, our hearts begin to reflect His compassion. The evidence of devotion to Christ is a growing love for the people He loves—especially the vulnerable and overlooked.

5. Closing Reflection & Prayer (5 minutes)

Reflect quietly: Is there one person God may be placing on your heart who needs compassion right now? Pray that God would open our eyes to the needs around us, guard our hearts from loving money, and shape us to reflect the compassion of Christ.