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The Two Men: Godly and Ungodly

“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.’ Then he said, ‘I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ Abraham saith unto him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘Nay, father Abraham,

but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.' And he said unto him, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.' " Luke 16:19-31

This Scripture was not spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ to show you the state of two single persons only, as some, through ignorance of the drift of Christ in His parables, dream; but to show you the state of the godly and ungodly to the end of the world. This is clear to him who is of an understanding heart. For He spoke these words to the end that later generations should take notice thereof, and fear, lest they also fall into the same condition. In my discourse upon these words I shall not be tedious; but as briefly as I may, I shall pass through the several verses and lay down some of the various truths contained therein. May the Lord grant that they be profitable, and of great advantage to those who read them or hear them read.

I shall not spend much time upon verses 19-20, but shall only give you three or four short hints, and so pass to the next verses, for they are the words I intend most especially to insist upon. Verses 19-20 run thus: "There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared deliciously [or sumptuously] every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores."

If these verses and no more had been spoken