

**Theme:** Our *circumstances* in life do not determine our eternal habitations and rest; our *choices* do. We choose *now* what we will exalt in this world – and whose honor we will seek. The consequences are *eternal*.

**Background:** 15b “...what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.” Jesus is not letting this go.

**Introduction:** A very unusual parable

## I. The Stage is Set

### A. A rich man (19)

1. Very wealthy:
  - Royally clothed - Purple, fine linen
  - Banqueting, feasting “sumptuously”
2. Totally “anonymous”
  - Not a real person, but a class of people (parable)

### B. A poor man (20,21)

1. A very common name
  - “Lazarus” – Greek for “Eliazar” (El-azar) “God has helped”
2. Poorest of the poor!
  - Laid at the rich man’s gate – last resort.

### C. Neither state is more “spiritual”

1. A “self-made man”? **1 Samuel 2:7; Psalm 75:7**
  - God’s hand in our “place”
  - We make real choices
2. What do we do with what God has given?
  - a. Wealth is not inherently
    - 1) a spiritual blessing
    - 2) nor curse
  - b. Poverty is not inherently
    - 1) a curse
    - 2) nor a more spiritually blessed state

## II. The Choices Are Made

### A. The rich man

- Satiated & self-indulgent
- Ignored the man outside his gate
- Ignored Moses (Law) and Prophets

B. Lazarus

- “Lazarus” looked to God for support
- Silent throughout – no grumbling, no accusations

**III. With Eternal Consequences**

- There is no escaping *death*. Hebrews 9:27
- The options are limited. Westminster Confession of Faith 32-1

A. Lazarus – Heaven (22a)

- Carried by angels!
- He had made friends in heaven

B. Rich man – Hell (22b-24)

1. In Torment!

- Not dogs licking sores – but flames licking flesh

NOTE: Language of hell is fearsome. Matthew 8:12; 13:42,50; 25:30; Jude 7,13;  
2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2 Peter 3:7; Revelation 20:10

2. Now *he* cries for mercy

C. The Great Divide

1. Stating the facts (25, 26)

- Choices made now – have eternal consequences
- They won’t change

2. Send Lazarus to my brothers! (27-29)

- They have Moses (Law) and the Prophets.

3. But someone from the dead....

- Give them a sign!

4. The choice has been made. Matthew 25:41-46

**IV. Choosing Now – Choosing Life**

A. The great danger

- You cannot serve both God and money!

B. The choices are clear

1. Serve yourself –

- It’s what the world tells you is right.
- Don’t think of eternity. Mark 9:48

OR

2. Serve the God of grace, NOW

- For life, forgiveness, joy, strength

C. Jesus came to the poor – To us! 2 Corinthians 8:9; Matthew 20:28

D. See your world as Jesus does. Matthew 25:34-39