

Lessons From the Sermon of Jesus on the Mountain Part 60

The Letter of Jesus to the Church in Sardis Part 5

“1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. 5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Revelation 3:1-6 KJV)

Jesus in verse 3, told the church ***“Remember”***, ***“3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” (Revelation 3:3 KJV)*** We will continue in this message to study and review the Scripture where we are reminded of what we heard and received, and what God had said unto us in His Word and what He wants us to do for Him.

“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.” (Luke 16:25 KJV) This what Abraham said to the rich man when he was in hell, and this is from the story that Jesus said about the rich man and Lazarus. ***Be careful not to be too late to remember. There is no chance for repentance in hell. Once you are there, there is no hope for you to come back to life.***

Let us read the whole story: ***“19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously (luxuriously, extravagant, lavishly) every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 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; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 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. 25 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. 26 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. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear thee. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 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 KJV)

In this story we can outline important points about life and how we need to live it while we are on earth so we can make it to Heaven. In this story Christ gives clear points about life, suffering, about eternal life, what we heard and received, and the following things that we need to remember.

1. Remember that poverty can be a good thing: “20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.” (Luke 16:20-21 KJV) The poor man in the story, when he persevered in the situation that God had placed him in, it prove to bring him finally to the bosom of Abraham. Poverty can be putting the person in a good atmosphere and prohibit him from sinning against God. ***Poverty or lacking of certain things that God would not allow you to get can be a protective thing in your life if you accustomed yourself to fear God and to walk in His ways.*** Sometimes material blessing can push man to sin against God. ***Poverty is a good thing for you if you are not yet ready to keep your commitment to God when He is blessing you.*** Therefore poverty can be a safe guard for someone not to sin against God. Not certain time, but most of the time people will start to sin after they receive material blessings from God. I usually ask poor people, Do you go to restaurant, do you buy new clothes, do you buy gold? They reply, No. Then I ask them, Why? They answer, We don't have money. Then I ask them if God will give you money will you going to spend it on such things, they will say, Yes. I reply to them, God is doing good when He is withholding His blessings from you. Never put in your mind that poverty is a hindrance for you to live for God, to serve God or to be ineffective in your life.

2. Remember that sickness, physical disability, and rejection are not hindrances for us to serve God, but can help us in our salvation journey to eternity: The sickness and the disability of this poor man worked out for the good for his eternity for he continued to serve God until his death. We know that if he did not serve God, he cannot be reaching the bosom of Abraham. He was full of sores and the dogs were licking his sores. His sickness put him in a constant suffering, but it seemed that he determined to keep his life pure before God, and continue to live on the hope of God's Word promises, His goodness, His mercy and His faithfulness; He was finally got the bosom of Abraham, Heaven, as an eternal home for him. ***Sicknesses and certain physical disabilities are not hindrance for salvation and living for God and serving Him. Perseverance in sickness and suffering and willingness to stay on the narrow way and gate of God is the secure and safe way for us to live to God and inherit eternal life.***

Remember that if you are poor, sick, disabled or rejected are not a reason for you not to serve God and not to live your life for Him.

3. Remember the poor man did not sin against God by trying to change the situation that he was put in: The poor man did not try to steal from the rich man. Notice also, that he did not covet the riches of the rich man. He only desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. His aim was to fill his stomach with food and to satisfy his hunger. Notice also that he did not set his heart to fill his stomach with the delicious food that was on the rich man table. He did not covet his delicious food, the good health of the rich man, nor his dress. Reflect the message now in your life and see

where you are now from the descriptions that the Word of God is outlining to us from this passage of Scriptures? Many people they fell in debts due to their desire to eat nice food, restaurants food, travel, wearing expensive clothes, jewels, accessories, etc. Many they do such because they are jealous and are coveting others. The poor man did not pray and desire God to send him to another man or another place, he adjusted and adopted himself to the atmosphere that he is put in. The poor man was rejected to enter the rich man house but he endured it and kept his place, at the door, where God had put him.

4. Remember the poor man was begging because he was afflicted by sores all over his body, not because he was lazy or he does not want to work: So here we can notice that the poor man was begging not because he was lazy but because he was sick and cannot do the work, or he was not acceptable to work. Many people they are begging because they are lazy, and they are not begging for food, but for other material things. Even those who are begging for food, they are not begging for simple food but for a delicious and costly one. According to what we have read in this story of Jesus, many who beg they have no right to do that, but they have to go and work.

5. Remember that death or Christ's coming is God's mercy on those who set their hearts to walk in His ways: "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." (Luke 16:22 KJV) When we live our lives in obedience to God, and willingly accepting the suffering and the style of life that God had ordained for us, then death or Christ's coming is the way that we are translating to Heaven. Christ died on the cross for our sins to give us eternal life, and in repentance and following Him in our lives then we will be with Him in Heaven when He comes. The death of that beggar was his comfort. We also as we are working out our salvation, and preparing ourselves for the second coming of the Lord, we continue to pray, Come Lord Jesus! Why people are not praying, 'Come Lord Jesus'? Because they are waiting for other things to happen, they are waiting for COVID 19 to disappear so they can do their own, they are waiting to buy new car, new house, to find a new boyfriend, they are waiting to go vacation, they are waiting to celebrate their birthday, etc. That is why they are not focusing to prepare themselves for the second coming of Christ.

6. Remember when you spend lavishly on our food, dress and other luxurious things then you are sinning against the Lord: The rich man described by Jesus that he was dressed very well and that he spent lavishly on himself in every day of his life. "19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." (Luke 16:19 KJV) Sumptuously, is means luxuriously, extravagant, or lavishly. He was not satisfied to buy ordinary things to meet his needs, but he was buying expensive, purple and fine linen, and branded things to furnish his table. Even if we have, that does not mean we have the right to spend it on such things and in such a way. Many people they spend much on their clothes and on the food they are eating. They will pay much for just a taste of the food. They will spend much only just for a brand. Be careful, the money you have is not your money, but it is God's money. Wasting is the sin of the prodigal son who wasted his father's money on the riotous living. The rich man received good things while he was on earth. He used his riches to pamper his body and to boast with his riches in the way he spent. "3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." (Revelation 3:3 KJV) Remember all the good things that you had received and check yourself if you

had been good steward for all these resources. Abraham as we read in the story told him the following: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." (Luke 16:25 KJV) Abraham told him that you had received your good things in life. Now the message for us today is this: If you are working in this direction, just to receive the good things in this life, the good things of food, dress, shoes and other luxurious things, without disciplining yourself and without following the style of life that God wants you to follow, then you are only working to satisfy your pleasure and your flesh, and not in your mind the styles of life that God wants you to live.

7. Remember when you have no concern for the needs and the afflictions of others, then you are not doing the good that you ought to do, and in this way you are sinning: The rich man was having no concern for the poor man who was sick, miserable, and begging to feed himself. There is nothing that we read that the rich man had done something to help and to relief the poor sick man. He was living at the gate of the rich man but he was not relieved by him. Therefore, when God bring poor people near to our gate, we are accountable to help them.

8. Remember God called you to help the poor whom he placed beside you: Notice that God called us to help. God did not call us to support poor people whom we do not see. God will not call us to feed and support people who can feed themselves. The Lord calls us to support the needs of those people who cannot and is impossible for them to meet their needs. For example this poor man was sick and afflicted with a sickness and cannot work and feed himself. God had placed that poor man at the gate of the rich man so that he can help him with the needful things. Let us also be aware that many will come with some stories and asks help, but only few are genuine and fit to be helped because they are in situation like this beggar in the story of Jesus.

9. Remember that death or Christ's second coming is the punishment of the wicked: "the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 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." (Luke 16:22-24 KJV) The rich man was materialistic, self centered, selfish and has concern only to satisfy his own pleasure. He was unmerciful to the poor beggar who was sick and not able to feed himself. Death came unto him as a judgment, a sudden thing and end up his meaningless life of pleasure.

10. Remember that Hell is real, and the torment in hell is real: "23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 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." (Luke 16:23-24 KJV) Heaven and hell are real. Many they say, Please don't tell sinners about hell, but Jesus in the New Testament clearly preached about hell. Therefore sinners need to repent so they will not go there. Therefore, also when we preach the gospel we need to speak clearly about hell and warn sinners, so we will be free from their blood. What is in hell? Flame, torment and a great fixed gulf that those who reached there cannot come back.

11. Remember that after death there is judgment and destiny cannot be changed or reversed: “26 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.” (Luke 16:26 KJV) There is no chance for repentance after death. That is why we need to preach the gospel and warn sinners to repent because after death we cannot pray that their destiny will be changed. Catholic Christians pray for the dead to go to Heaven. This will never happen. Once person die he will face judgment.

12. Remember that the bad example that we live can lead others into wrong direction and lost without salvation: The rich man was pleading to Abraham to sent Lazarus to the house of his father to warn his five brothers, to repent, so they will not go there, “27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.” (Luke 16:27-28 KJV) The bad example that this man was living had misled his five brothers. His sin was enjoying the material things that he had received from God. Even he did not steal; even he did not get his money by cheating, it is still sin because he spent it in a way that displease God, for he was living only to satisfy his ego and pleasure. That non Scriptural style of living will be noticed by others, and they might imitate and follow and they will be lost as they are more concerned of themselves than the things of God. Put in your mind that what you have is for God and you need to live the style that God want you to live and not the style that you like.

The rich man wanted Lazarus to be sent to his family so they will not come to hell. Lazarus was then a good preacher of the Gospel, by his willingness to persevere in suffering and rejection, and keeping the style of life that God wanted him to live. God was preaching the gospel to that rich man through the life of Lazarus. God in the same way is preaching the gospel through the style of your life that you are living for God.

13. Remember that suffering is not an option for Christian life, but it is mandatory: Suffering is not only for the poor or sick or disabled people, but suffering is also ordained to the rich and well to do people. If God had blessed you that does not mean you spend all on yourself and deny yourself nothing. Your money, your treasure and material things you have is not for you but for God and you need to manage it in the way that God wants it to be. Therefore, “3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.” (Revelation 3:3 KJV)

14. Remember that the Scripture is what is ordained for us from God to be taught in God's way: “29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 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 16:29-31 KJV) We need to go through the Scriptures (The Old Testament and the New Testament) and apply them in our lives and in our relationships and communications with the people around us. Jesus died and rose from the death, and by His blood we are saved. Jesus came to fulfill the Scriptures, and who said, “16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. 17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” (Luke 16:16-17 KJV) Therefore let us be persuaded by His Word and instruction, and let us go through God's Word and understand the way of suffering that He ordained for us to live.

Be careful not to be too late to remember. There is no chance for repentance in hell. Once you are there under judgment, there is no hope for you to come back to life.

My dear and beloved: “3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.” (Revelation 3:3 KJV) Let us now repent of our sins, confessing them to God, and let us commit our ways once again to God and be willing to accept suffering, rejection and the style of life that God wants us to live and adjust ourselves on that. Let us accept the task to continue to preach the gospel and to continue to live in the places, with the people and in the circumstances that God had placed us in to continue to serve Him. Remember that as you persevere God is there to help you and to lead you into the right way.

My prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins, who was buried and rose from the dead on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord, thank you for your Word that warned me and reminded me of your judgment and about your coming and that I need to be ready.

Lord forgives me the following sins _____. Lord I commit myself to live the style of life that you wants me to live for you. Lord I commit myself to set a good example to others that through me will know you and see you; the way to Heaven.

Lord, I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who accepted your Word, and repented and are willing to live the scenario that you ordained for them to live on earth until you come; Lord protect them, preserve them and provide all their needs. Lord use their lives to be good example to others, to preach the gospel and to attract others to you.

Lord bless us and sustain us as a church. Lord refill us once again with the Holy Spirit and give us the Holy Spirit that we need to go on and serve you. Lord, we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, ‘Multiplication in Peace with Implementing the Whole Will of God’. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus ' name, Amen.

Lessons from the sermon of Jesus on the mountain Part 60. The Letter of Jesus to the church in Sardis Part 5. Revelation 3:1-6. Luke 16:19-31. Luke 16:16-17.

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