


TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Discussion & Reflection

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- **Karma**, the belief that *"the sum of a person's actions in this life decides their fate in the next life"*, is a thoroughly pagan idea which contradicts the biblical teaching that *"it is by **grace** that we are saved through faith, **not** as the result of our works"* (Ephesians 2:8-9). Read Luke 16:19–31.
Read Luke 16:19–31. In your own words, describe how Jesus' parable dismantles the idea of karma.

Give some examples of how we see karmic ideas creeping into our own views of life and justice.

- 1 John 4:8c states that God is love. **How** could a loving God send **anyone** to eternal torment in hell?
Isaiah 6:1-7 states that God is holy, holy, holy. **How** could a holy God allow **anyone** into his presence?
- Explain this statement: "Love and wrath not only are compatible, love actually **necessitates** wrath."
- Read Acts 3:1-10 & 4:1-3, 16-18. Fact is, people who are not convinced by Scripture will not be convinced by a miracle. Miracles don't melt stony hearts. **Why** do we think that they will?

What **does** have the power to convert? (Read Hebrews 4:12 & Romans 1:16 & 10:17.)

What does your unsaved loved-one need more? to see a miracle to hear the gospel
What should you do to help that happen?

As a group, read through and discuss the simple presentation found at: **TwoWaysToLive.com** .

Application-Challenge

How could you share this with your unsaved loved-one?

- Assure your own eternal destiny by placing your trust in Christ.
- Reach out to your unchurched friends by continuing to build redemptive relationships.
- Demonstrate Christian love by sharing out of your abundance with those in need.

Sermon Summary (Key Text: Luke 16:19–31)

People are fascinated with the concept of life after death, but the only reliable source of information comes from Jesus, who, by his resurrection from the dead, proved his authority to speak with certainty on this subject. Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus pulls aside the curtain on what awaits those who reject his offer of eternal life (Luke 16:19–31).

Jesus opens this parable by contrasting two people whose lives couldn't have been more different—one rich, one poor. One filled, one hungry. One clothed in splendor, one in rags. Two men at opposite poles of affluence and misery. Both men were Jews, but the rich man ignored God's command to care for his poverty-stricken fellow Jew, named Lazarus. But there is a deeper contrast between these two men. It is not visible to the human eye, and is revealed only after death. It has nothing to do with economic status, but centers around their contrasting destinies (vv. 22-23).

Conventional Jewish wisdom suggested that misery on earth was due to divine disapproval in heaven. On those terms, Lazarus would obviously qualify as a man under God's punishment. Instead, we read that the angels carried him to bliss at Abraham's side. The unnamed rich man also dies, but he finds himself in the torment of hell. Such a turn of events would have been shocking to prevailing Jewish sensibilities. Lazarus in heaven, and the rich man in hell? Shouldn't it be the other way around? Not so, indicates Jesus. Yet even in his humbled state, the rich man still sees Lazarus as a servant to meet his needs, whether to quench his thirst or to serve as an errand boy to warn his family (v. 24, 27-28).

This parable tells us several key truths. **[1] Each of us face one of two possible destinies at death: heaven or hell—and it all depends upon our response to Jesus Christ.** God doesn't send anyone to hell—they choose it. If you reject God's remedy for sin (the person of Christ), and choose to live independently of God in this life, God validates that choice for all eternity. We make the choice, God honors it. God not only is loving, he's also holy and just. If we refuse to accept his provision for our sin, then divine justice demands that we endure the penalty which our sin justly deserves. Friends, hell is a real place, and you don't want to go there. Revelation 20 calls it "The Lake of Fire". The rich man is in "conscious torment and agony" (v. 23-28). He recognizes that he deserves what he is receiving, for he doesn't ask Abraham for release from torment but rather for relief within it. Hell is final and irreversible. There is no early release program.

[2] God has revealed himself sufficiently through the Bible so that we have no excuse for unbelief. The rich man was in hell because he failed to respond in faith to the God whom his Old Testament Scriptures revealed (v. 27-31). God's word is clear, powerful, and sufficient. The rich man wanted his brothers to receive a message from the grave, but people who are not changed by Scripture will not be changed by a miracle. Miracles don't melt stony hearts. Jesus was the greatest miracle worker who ever lived, and they killed him! He even returned from the dead, and yet most people remain in unbelief.

[3] Share Christ with your friends and family members while you still have the opportunity. After they'd left this world, neither Lazarus nor the rich man had the opportunity to warn others of the awesomeness of heaven or the awfulness of hell. We need to share Christ with our friends and neighbors while we still have the opportunity. The truth is, most of us die unexpectedly. At death, be it yours or theirs, your opportunity to share Christ with them is lost. This is urgent; we should be looking for opportunities to influence our friends and neighbors spiritually. Each of our friends and family members will die one day. At death, one of two destinies awaits them.

[4] We must not neglect those in need when it is within our ability to help. The rich man failed in his obligation to reach out to his poor countryman (Deuteronomy 15:7-8; Ephesians 4:28). Be generous with the resources God has entrusted to us—we are not meant to be storehouses, but conduits of God's grace.

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) *is a simple way to study any passage. We can use it to study the realities of heaven and hell.*

Monday—Read Matthew 5:29–30. **How aggressively** does Jesus urge us to avoid hell?

Tuesday—Read Matthew 10:28. **Who** is "he who can destroy both soul and body in hell"?

Wednesday—Read John 6:35-40. Have **you** been given to the Son (see v. 37)?

Thursday—Read Luke 10:17–20. **What** makes you happiest? **Should it?**

Friday—Read Luke 23:39–43. **What sort of person** can be assured of heaven?

Saturday—***In preparation for worshipping the risen Lord with your church family,***
study **Luke 18:9-14.**

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]

