

THE SEE-SAW OF LIFE

Luke 16:19-31

Introduction: There are many kinds of entertainment equipment in parks for children such as swings, merry-go-rounds, sliding tubes, climbing ropes and see-saws. Life is much like a see-saw, there are ups and downs and sometimes the ups are not as long or often as the downs. Jesus told a parable about two men, one was rich and the other was poor. Jesus' parable reveals a lot about life, there are those who seem to be always at the top and then there are those who seem to always be at the bottom. There is, however, something which every person whether rich or poor experiences and this event makes everyone even for once.

I. THE PARABLE DESCRIBES THREE SCENES

1. Two men are described by Jesus in His parable.
 - A rich man who wore robes of purple and linen very expensive clothing at the value of some 8 to 11 thousand dollars for every day normal wear.
 - He gave one feast after another and the halls of his home were filled with happy people as they dined on the fine foods.
 - His home was a mansion with walls around it and a beautiful gate through which his friends came and went.
 - The rich man was at the top of the see-saw of life.
 - There was another man named Lazarus who was a beggar, sick, full of sores and in constant pain who lay at the rich man's gate about all the time, begging.
 - The beggar had no food to eat other than that which he got begging from the rich man.
 - He had no family, no friends, only the dogs that came by and licked the sores on his sick body.
 - This beggar, Lazarus, was at the bottom of the see-saw of life.
2. The two men are placed on the same level when death claims both of them.
 - Death comes for the beggar, Lazarus, first.
 - Angels come for Lazarus to usher him into the bosom of Abraham, where God was.
 - The rich man also died, leaving all his wealth, riches and friends.
 - What a funeral he had as all his wealthy friends came by to pay their respects.
3. The positions of these two men had been reversed.
 - The rich man opened his eyes and realized he was in a strange place, he had died.
 - He saw a dim figure way off in the distance and recognized the beggar that had laid at his gate every day.
 - He saw another figure beside Lazarus and recognized father Abraham and cried out for him to have mercy and let Lazarus give him some water to drink.
 - The see-saw of life had changed.
 - The rich man was no longer on top, death made him even with Lazarus and now he was at the bottom and Lazarus was on top.
 - The rich man remembered, he recognized, he felt pain, he saw, he mourned.

II. WHAT HAD CHANGED THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO MEN?

1. The rich man was not an evil man yet he went to hell.
 - It was not his riches that caused him to go to hell.
 - He was not stingy or a miser for he gave daily parties, sparing no expense.
 - He was well liked by everyone as he always had a mansion full of friends.
 - He never had Lazarus, the beggar removed from his gate nor was ever deliberately cruel to him.
 - Everyone spoke well of this rich man.

2. What caused this rich man to be condemned to hell?
 - He never looked beyond doing what he wanted to do every day.
 - Every day he walked past Lazarus, the beggar, lying at his gate and never offered to help this beggar in any way.
 - He ignored God! Nowhere did he ever prepare to meet God. It was not what this man did that sent him to hell, it was what he did not do. He put God off. He was not a Godly man.

3. What caused the beggar, Lazarus to be taken to the bosom of Abraham?
 - He had nothing, only the rags on his body and nothing to eat or a house to live in.
 - He had no family, no friends and was sick with a body of sores.
 - Somewhere in his life, this beggar, Lazarus, made his peace with God
 - This beggar, Lazarus, knew God and God knew him.

CONCLUSION:

1. All of us are on the "see-saw" of life.
 - Each of us is either up or down, depending on our circumstances in life.
 - During our lifetime, whether it be up or down, we have the opportunity to make our peace with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

2. One day we will die and death makes everyone even, regardless of one's position in life, whether up, as the rich man, or down as the beggar, everyone will be alike and even.

3. What one does with the Lord Jesus Christ during his/her life time will determine whether eternity will be spent up with the Lord in heaven or down in hell with all those who never made their peace with God.

4. So, who are you like today? The rich man who lived for the day and had everything but God or Lazarus, the beggar, who had the most important thing to have during life, and that was peace with God?

5. Remember, once death levels things, things cannot be changed afterwards.

Note: This sermon is not original with me.