



The Rich Man and Lazarus

(based on Luke 16:19–31)

One day, Jesus told his disciples this story to help them understand what it means to live in God's way.

Once there was a rich man. He had heaps of money and was very important. He had plenty of food, stacks of clothes, and loads of servants. The rich man had everything he ever needed and lots more besides.

The rich man lived in a huge house with plenty of servants who waited on him hand and foot. The house had high walls around it and big gates to keep people out.

In the same town, there was a man named Lazarus. Lazarus was so poor that he had no food, and his clothing was all torn and ragged. The poor man was also very sick. His body was covered with sores.

Every day, Lazarus sat outside the gates of the rich man's house, but no one tried to help him.

The rich man didn't even notice that Lazarus was at his door. He walked right past Lazarus and didn't even see him there.

Eventually, both Lazarus and the rich man died. The angels of God came and carried Lazarus up to a special place in heaven next to Abraham.

But the rich man was sent to a place far away from God. The rich man looked up and saw Abraham and Lazarus.

"Send Lazarus to bring me something to drink," he begged Abraham. But it was too late. The rich man had not shared anything with Lazarus even though he had plenty to spare. Now there was a huge gap between them that could not be crossed.

"I should have looked after Lazarus," the rich man said sadly. "It's too late for me now. If Lazarus were to return from the dead and warn my relatives, they would change the way they live."

"I can't send Lazarus back to warn them," replied Abraham. "If your family reads the Scriptures, they will know how to behave."

"That is not enough," the rich man said. "They need someone who was dead to go to them. Then they will listen."

"If they won't listen to the Scriptures," replied Abraham, "then they won't listen to someone who comes back from the dead."



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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Ask your children if they think God loves rich people more than poor people. What does today's story say about that?
- Wonder how it can be that some people have so much, while others have so little.



Responding to God's Grace

- Wonder how the rich man could ignore the needs of someone right in front of his house. What would God have us do for people who need our help?
- The rich man didn't decide to take care of Lazarus until it was too late. Talk with your children about times it can be too late. Burning dinner, missing a bus, saying something that can't be unsaid are small and big reminders that we need to make good decisions when we have the opportunity.
- In some cases, it's easy to know which is the best decision. Sometimes we don't know for a long time if we've made the best choice. Wonder with your children how to recognize a good decision.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- A rich man wanted his family to learn about God from Lazarus. Ask your children how and where we learn about God. Does your family learn at home, at church, at camp? Where else? Celebrate learning together.
- Enjoy singing "Father Abraham," with the motions.
- Pray:

God, we want to share your love. Show us people who seem to be invisible, who could use our care today, while there is still time to do something. Amen.