Preschool–Grade 6

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: I listen to God's Word.
Bible passage: Luke 16:19–31. Read it yourself before class.
Memory verse: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." *Luke 16:29 (KJV).* It is part of Abraham's answer, and older classes learn Luke 16:31. The old words mean: **Moses and the prophets** are the men who wrote God's Word, and **hear them** means listen to God's Word.
You need: a Bible, a small blanket, a few things that make quiet sounds (a bell, keys, a paper bag), crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at Luke 16. Hide the sound things under the blanket.

1. Opening game: Listening Ears (5 minutes)

Sit in a circle. Reach under the blanket and make one quiet sound at a time: ring the bell, jingle the keys, crinkle the bag. The kids listen hard and guess what it is. Then show them. Say: "God gave us ears to listen! Today we will hear a true story that Jesus told, and it tells us to listen to God's Word."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Luke 16. Say: "Jesus told this. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

There was a rich man (Luke 16:19). *(Stand up tall.)*
He had purple clothes, the finest clothes (16:19). *(Smooth your shirt.)*
He had a big feast every day (16:19). *(Pretend to eat: yum!)*
A poor man named Lazarus lay at his gate (16:20). *(Lie down or rest your head on your hands.)*
Lazarus was hungry. He wanted the crumbs from the table (16:21). *(Rub your tummy.)*
Lazarus died. Angels carried him to a happy place, close to Abraham (16:22). *(Arms out gently, like carrying.)*
The rich man died too. He was in a sad, hurting place, far away (16:22–23). *(Sad face.)*
He asked Abraham to send Lazarus to tell his five brothers (16:27–28). *(Hold up five fingers.)*
Abraham said they had God's Word, and they should hear it (16:29). *(Cup your hand by your ear.)*
Say it with me: "I will listen to God's Word!"

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3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Who lay at the rich man's gate? *(Lazarus, Luke 16:20)*
2. Who carried Lazarus to a happy place? *(The angels, 16:22)*
3. What did Abraham say the brothers should listen to? *(God's Word, Moses and the prophets, 16:29)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' That means, 'They have God's Word. They should listen to it!'" Teach the motion: hold your hands open like a book on "Moses and the prophets," then cup your hand by your ear on "hear them." Say the verse with the motions three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "Luke 16:29" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God's Word tells us good news! God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: At the Gate (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw a big gate and Lazarus lying beside it. While they color, ask: "Who was hungry at the gate? Who gave us God's Word to listen to?" Kids who finish early can take turns making a sound under the blanket for the others to guess.

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, God, for the Bible.
Help me listen to Your Word. Help me be kind to people who need help. In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the story moving and calm. Say the sad part softly and quickly, and spend more time on "let them hear them." If a child asks about dying, say gently that God loves us and Jesus rose again, and that they can talk with their parents and pastor too. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

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