Preschool–Grade 6

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: God's Word is enough. Hear it now, turn to God now, and care for the people at your gate.
Bible passage: Luke 16:19–31. Students read it out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "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 16:31 (KJV)* and "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." *2 Timothy 3:15 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read Luke 16:13–31 and 2 Timothy 3:15. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses.

1. Opening game: What Would It Take? (5–10 minutes)

Read each statement and let students vote with a thumb up (I'd believe it), a thumb down (I wouldn't) or sideways (not sure): 1) A friend says a new phone game is great. 2) A sign at the beach says "Strong current, no swimming." 3) A video online says something amazing happened. 4) Your doctor says you need to rest your broken ankle. After each, ask: *What makes you trust a message? When do people ignore a warning, even a good one?* Say: "Today we read what Jesus said about a man who wanted a miracle to warn his brothers, and what Abraham said they already had."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Luke 16:19–31. Students take turns, a verse or two each. Jesus is speaking (16:15). Old words in this passage:

- **purple and fine linen** (16:19): the most costly clothes; **fared sumptuously**: feasted in rich style
- **beggar** (16:20): a very poor man who asked for food or money; **full of sores**: covered with open sores
- **Abraham's bosom** (16:22): close beside Abraham, a place where Lazarus was comforted (16:25)
- **in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments** (16:23): he looked up while in great pain
- **receivedst thy good things** (16:25): you got your good things during your life
- **a great gulf fixed** (16:26): a huge gap set in place that no one can cross
- **brethren** (16:28): brothers; **testify unto them**: tell them the truth as a witness
- **Moses and the prophets** (16:29): the Scriptures, God's Word, that they already had
- **persuaded** (16:31): convinced, made to believe

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

Look closer. Point out these details with the class:

- **Who Jesus told it to.** The Pharisees, "who were covetous" (they loved money), heard Jesus and **derided** Him, mocking Him (Luke 16:14). Jesus said, "God knoweth your hearts" (16:15).
- **Riches were not the whole story.** Lazarus was carried to Abraham, and Abraham himself "was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (Genesis 13:2). The rich man's request in 16:30 shows what his brothers needed: to **repent**.
- **God's Word is enough.** The rich man thought a miracle would work better than Scripture (16:30). Abraham said no (16:31). Later Jesus, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets," showed His disciples the things about Himself in all the Scriptures (Luke 24:27).
- **Someone did come back.** A different Lazarus, of Bethany, was raised from the dead (John 11). Even then the chief priests wanted to put Lazarus to death too (John 12:10–11). And Jesus Himself rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:4).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Lazarus lay at the rich man's gate every day (16:20–21). Who is "at your gate," near you, needing help that you could easily walk past?
2. Abraham was rich too (Genesis 13:2). What does that tell you about what really mattered in this story?
3. Why do people want a sign or a miracle instead of just reading God's Word (16:30–31)?
4. Jesus did rise from the dead. Why do you think some people still don't believe?
5. The rich man thought of his brothers too late (16:27–28). Who do you know who needs to hear God's Word, and how could you share it kindly?
6. What helps you hear God's Word, not just read it?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **hear not** means do not listen to; **persuaded** means convinced; **rose from the dead** means came back to life. In 2 Timothy 3:15, **from a child** means since you were young, **the holy scriptures** means God's Word, and **wise unto salvation** means wise enough to be saved.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Luke 16:31 this week; keep working on 2 Timothy 3:15 next week too.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "The brothers had God's Word, and so do we. Here is what it says. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). One did rise from the dead! We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, 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: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. When have I wanted a sign from God instead of doing what His Word already says?
2. Who is one person "at my gate" I could help this week, and how?
3. Write a short prayer asking God to help you hear His Word and obey it now.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: read Luke 16:19–31 again at home, and read a chapter of the Bible each day. Do the one kind thing you wrote in question 2.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for Your Word, which is able to make us wise unto salvation. Help us hear it and obey it now, and give us eyes to see the people at our gate. Thank You that Jesus rose from the dead. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: read the passage calmly, as Jesus told it, including the torment and the gulf. Luke does not call this a parable; teach it as Jesus' own words and don't add details He did not give. If a student is worried about someone who has died, answer gently and point them to God's love and to their parents and pastor.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post