Preschool–Grade 6

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Listen to God's Word now. God's Word tells us everything we need to turn to Him.
Bible passage: Luke 16:19–31. Read it before class.
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)*
You need: a Bible, 6 paper strips, a marker, a table, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at Luke 16:20 and Luke 16:31.

1. Opening game: Listen the First Time (5 minutes)

Say: "Listen closely. I will say it only one time!" Then give a three-part job, like "Touch your nose, hop two times, and sit down." Everyone who did all three parts gets a cheer. Make each job a little longer: "Clap three times, turn around, touch your toes, and wave." Ask: *What helped you get it right?* (Listening!) Say: "Today Jesus tells us about a man who wished someone would warn his brothers. We will find out that God has already told us what we need to know. We just need to listen."

2. Bible story: The Rich Man and Lazarus (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Luke 16, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Say: "Jesus Himself told this. Listen to what He said." Tell it in your own words:

There was a **rich man**. He was **clothed in purple and fine linen**, the most costly clothes there were, and he **fared sumptuously** every day (Luke 16:19). Say: "That means he had a big, fancy feast every single day."

There was also a **beggar** named **Lazarus** (16:20). Say: "A beggar is a very poor man who asks people for food or money. This is not the same Lazarus who was Mary and Martha's brother. Two men in the Bible had that name." Lazarus was **laid at the rich man's gate**, and he was full of **sores** (16:20). He wished he could be fed with the **crumbs** that fell from the rich man's table. And the dogs came and licked his sores (16:21).

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The story continues: One day the beggar died. The **angels** carried him to **Abraham's bosom** (16:22). Say: "That means a place close beside Abraham, where Lazarus was **comforted**, made happy and safe (16:25)." The rich man died too, and he was buried. But he was in **torment**, a place of terrible hurt (16:23). Far away he saw Abraham, and Lazarus with him (16:23).

Abraham said there was a **great gulf fixed** between them (16:26). Say: "A gulf is a huge, deep gap. Nobody could cross it, either way."

Then the rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his father's house, because he had **five brethren**, five brothers. He wanted Lazarus to warn them, so they would not come to that place of torment too (16:27–28). Abraham said, "They have **Moses and the prophets**; let them hear them" (16:29). Say: "Moses and the prophets wrote God's Word. The brothers already had God's Word! They just needed to listen to it."

The rich man said, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will **repent**" (16:30). Say: "Repent means to be sorry for doing wrong and turn back to God."

Read Luke 16:31 from your Bible: "And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Say: "**Persuaded** means made to believe. If people won't listen to God's Word, even someone coming back from the dead won't change their minds. So let's listen to God's Word now!"

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What did the rich man wear? *(Purple and fine linen, Luke 16:19)*
2. Where was Lazarus laid? *(At the rich man's gate, 16:20)*
3. What did Lazarus wish he could eat? *(The crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, 16:21)*
4. Who carried Lazarus to Abraham? *(The angels, 16:22)*
5. What did Abraham say the five brothers had? *(Moses and the prophets, God's Word, 16:29)*

4. Memory verse: Pick Up the Crumbs (5 minutes)

Write the verse on the 6 strips: *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.* Scatter the strips on the floor under a table, like crumbs that fell. Explain the old words: **hear not** means don't listen, **persuaded** means made to believe, and **rose from the dead** means came back to life. Kids pick up the "crumbs," put them in order on the table and read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read again. Keep taking one strip away until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The rich man's brothers had God's Word, and so do we! God's Word tells us the most important news of all. We have all done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. But God loves you very much. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: '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) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (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.
This week: listen to God's Word every day. Ask someone at home to read you a Bible story. And look for someone who needs help, like Lazarus at the gate, and be kind to them.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **rich man and Lazarus word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/lazarus-and-the-rich-man-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/lazarus-and-the-rich-man-craft), or **Who Needs Help?** Read each one out loud, and the kids stand up and show what they could do to help: 1) A friend drops all her crayons. 2) A new boy sits by himself at lunch. 3) Someone forgot his snack. 4) Your little brother can't reach his coat. 5) A child at church is crying. Say: "Lazarus was right at the gate. Let's look for the people God puts near us."

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for Your Word, the Bible. Help us listen to it and obey it every day. Help us see people who need help and be kind to them. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: Jesus said the rich man was in torment, and Abraham said there was a great gulf (Luke 16:23–26). Say it calmly, as Jesus did. This lesson leaves out the flame and the water on the tongue (16:24). The Bible does not say Lazarus went to Abraham because he was poor, or the rich man to torment because he was rich: Abraham was very rich (Genesis 13:2). Keep the focus on hearing God's Word and turning to Him.

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