

**“The Three Rich Men”**  
Luke 18:18-30, 12:16-21, 16:19-31

Introduction: This is the story of three rich men. Could it be possible that all three portions of Scripture refer to the same person, at different stages in his life? If so, this rich man would appear in the Bible as a young man, middle aged man, and a dead man. Three phrases would sum up his life: Too much! Too hard! Too late! (Thoughts from John Phillips)

- I. A Young Man – Too Much Luke 18:18-30
- Mark 10:21- *“Then Jesus beholding him loved him...”*
  - Jesus loves everyone, but it seems like this is a special case.
  - A. He was Respected Luke 18:18- *“And a certain ruler asked him...”*
  - B. He was Religious Luke 18:21- *“And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.”*
  - C. He was Rich Luke 18:23- *“...for he was very rich.”*
  - D. He was Restless Luke 18:18- *“...Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”*
    1. He was aware that something was lacking in his life, and he came to Jesus to find out what it was.
    2. Jesus went to the heart of the matter, and that was his heart. Luke 18:22- *“Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.”*
    3. The price was too high. The Lord was asking too much. The young rich man turned away.
- II. A Middle Aged Man – Too Hard Luke 12:16-21
- A. Later in his life he had a problem. His fields had produced abundantly. What was he to do with all his goods? Luke 12:16-17- *“And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?”*
  - B. Would he use his excess to help the poor? Luke 18:22- *“Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.”*
  - C. Not him! The thought never occurred to him. He was too hard.
  - D. He would build bigger and better barns. Luke 12:18- *“And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.”*
  - E. He would store the grain until the prices went up in the winter or until a drought year. More! More! More!
  - F. He would enjoy himself until then. Luke 12:19- *“And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.”*
  - G. The need of the poor did not interest him. By now he was too hard. He was not mindful of the poor, even the man that lay at his gate begging for bread.

- H. He settled down for the night. He went to sleep. Little did he know what a fool he was. Then, suddenly, out of nowhere, a voice rang out.
- I. Luke 12:20- *“But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?”*

III. A Dead Man – Too Late Luke 16:19-31

- A. At the end of the rich man’s life we find him lost in eternity. Luke 16:19-23
- B. He had allowed a beggar to starve to death at his gate. Now he was dead himself.
- C. He was in hell, and still very much alive. He could see, hear, feel, reason, and remember. Now he was in torments. Now, it was too late!
- D. This rich man wanted to:
  - 1. He tried to pray, but praying time was over. It was too late. Luke 16:24-25
  - 2. He tried to proclaim, but proclaiming time was over. It was too late. Luke 16:27-28
    - a. He wanted to Proclaim the Scriptures Luke 16:29
      - (1) They have the Bible, but they will not read it.
        - (a) Matthew 12:3- *“...Have ye not read what David did...”*
        - (b) Matthew 12:5- *“...have ye not read in the law...”*
        - (c) Matthew 19:4- *“...Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,”*
        - (d) Matthew 22:29- *“...Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures...”*
        - (e) Matthew 22:31- *“But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God...”*
        - (f) Mark 12:10- *“And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected...”*
        - (g) Mark 12:26- *“And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses...”*
      - (2) They have the Bible, but they will not believe it.
        - (a) Luke 22:66-67- *“And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:”*
        - (b) John 5:46-47- *“For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?”*
        - (c) John 8:45- *“And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.”*
        - (d) John 10:25- *“Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.”*
        - (e) John 12:37- *“But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:”*
        - (f) John 18:19-21- *“The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.”*

b. He Wanted to Proclaim the Saviour Luke 16:30-31

- (1) If they will not believe the Bible, they will not believe if one were to be raised from the dead.
- (2) Strangely enough, the next person that Jesus raised from the dead was Lazarus. John 11:43-44- *“And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”*
- (3) So stubborn was the unbelief of the Jewish leaders that they actually tried to put Lazarus back to death. John 12:10- *“But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;”*
- (4) What about Jesus himself. He rose from the dead with hundreds of witnesses, and they still did not believe Him.
- (5) The Lord was right, though one rose from the dead, they still would not believe.

Conclusion: The point being that it was too late. It was too much to ask the rich man to care for the poor and carry his cross. He was too hard to care for the poor and carry his cross. It was too late for him to care for the poor and carry his cross. It was too late! Is it too late for you?