



Stepping Stones

Luke 16:19-23 New Revised Standard Version

¹⁹ "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰ And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹ who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²² The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was being tormented, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side.

Notes: _____



"If you live your life as if everything is about you, you will be left with just that. Just you." -Unknown

He was so hungry; he would have eaten the crumbs. I don't know about you, but I'm pretty sure I've never been so hungry as to desire what was on our kitchen floor. Our cats, on the other hand, might tell you a different story. However, in this parable, Jesus was not speaking of animals. He was speaking of a human being. It is the only time in Jesus' parables that a character is given a proper name. Often, the terms servants, Levite, virgins, etc. are sufficient to the story's telling. But, here, the name is Lazarus a variation of Eleazar which means "God is my help."

One thing which is clear from the parable is the rich man was no help to Lazarus. He lived in the lap of luxury, wearing the finest garments and dining sumptuously on the best available fare. That was the case until something happened: both men died. Much to the surprise of the religious leaders, the two men's destinies were quite different with one going to paradise and the other to a place of torment. The surprise came from who ended up where.

It wasn't the man's affluence which led to his torment; it was his self-absorbed lifestyle. As I have heard many times before, "There is nothing wrong with having things." Unfortunately, the problem comes from those things "having us." This creates blindness to the needs, hurts, and challenges faced by others, and hinders us from being generous with that with which we have been blessed.

- 1. Selfishness creates a hardness of heart.**
- 2. Selfishness creates a blinding of vision.**
- 3. Selfishness creates a separation from God.**

Prayer Pebble: Lord, take what is mine and let it be all for you. Free me from that which creates selfishness. Amen.