

A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS
EEEE. Adopting God's View Of Loving Money
(Luke 16:14-31)

I. Introduction

- A. The Pharisees viewed possessing much money as a sign of God's blessing, so loving money was completely compatible with also loving God!
- B. Accordingly, when Jesus taught His disciples that one could not serve God and money in Luke 16:13c, the Pharisees ridiculed Jesus for teaching what they thought was a preposterous idea (Luke 16:14 ESV, NIV; J. Dwight Pentecost, The Words and Works of Jesus Christ, 1991, p. 339)!
- C. Jesus then explained why one needed to draw a clear line between loving God and loving money, and we view that teaching in Luke 16:14-31 for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

II. Adopting God's View Of Loving Money, Luke 16:14-31.

- A. Christ responded to the derision of the Pharisees by claiming that they justified themselves before men where God knew their hearts that were full of sin, for what was exalted among sinful men was an abomination in God's viewpoint, Luke 16:15. Jesus added that since the days of John the Baptist who proclaimed the Good News of the kingdom of God, everyone was cramming, trying to get into the kingdom by force, but that it was easier for the universe to pass away than for one small letter of God's Word to become void, Luke 16:16-17.
- B. To explain how the Pharisees were so wrong on equating the love of money with the love of God, Jesus critiqued the sin of covetousness or greed that was behind the Pharisees' love of money. To do so, He taught that one who divorced his wife and married another woman whom he coveted committed adultery, and he who married a woman who was divorced from her husband also committed adultery in covetousness, Luke 16:18.
- C. Then, to illustrate just how disastrous equating the love of money with the love of God in covetousness truly was, Jesus taught the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-30:
 - 1. The rich man lived a luxurious, happy life, Luke 16:19; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Luke 16:19.
 - 2. A beggar named Lazarus who was full of sores was laid at the rich man's gate, and he desired to be fed with the mere crumbs that fell from the rich man's table while the dogs licked his sores, Luke 16:20-21.
 - 3. In time, the beggar Lazarus died and was carried by God's angels into "Abraham's bosom," a figurative reference "for paradise, or the presence of God (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4)," Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to Luke 16:22.
 - 4. The rich man also died and was buried, and his soul ended up in Hades, the abode of the unsaved dead, Luke 16:22-23a; Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to Luke 16:23. These destinies for these men contrasted sharply with the Pharisees' view that financial wealth indicated righteousness where poverty indicated sin!
 - 5. In Hades in torment, the rich man saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus by Abraham's side in blessing, and the rich man cried, saying, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame," Luke 16:23-24.
 - 6. However, Abraham replied, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou are tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence," Luke 16:25-26. Abraham explained that the tables were turned in death for the rich man and Lazarus, and there was no relief for the rich man!
 - 7. The rich man then asked Abraham to send word to his father's house to warn his five brothers to repent lest they end up in torment with him (Luke 16:27-28), but Abraham replied that the rich man's brothers had Moses and the prophets to heed to avoid his eternal torment, Luke 16:29.
 - 8. The rich man said that if one went unto his brothers from the dead, they would repent, but Abraham replied that if his brothers would not hear Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead and warned them to repent, Luke 16:30-31.
 - 9. Thus, Jesus exposed the terrible plight the Pharisees faced in their love of money in greed as in the case of this rich man in eternal torment!

Lesson: *Jesus taught that the love of money contrasts sharply with a love for God, that though God might materially bless the righteous, He would never do so to condone a love for wealth itself.*

Application: *May we avoid falling in love with money and rather love God, that we thus USE our money to fulfill God's will in our lives as one day we will leave money behind as we enter eternity like Lazarus and the rich man!*