

# GROWTH GROUPS

## LEADER'S QUESTIONS

1. The Pharisees taught the original prosperity gospel - that God, without exception, blessed the righteous and cursed the wicked. Read the following Scriptures and consider how this parable is a condemnation of Israel's (1) despising of the poor (Luke 10:30-32), (2) love of money (Luke 16:13-14), (3) rejection of the Scriptures (Mark 7:6-8), and (4) demand for signs (Mark 8:11-12).
2. Abraham told the rich man, "[Your brothers] have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them" (Luke 16:29). In this sentence, we see Abraham point to the Old Testament as a sufficient means to teach these rich men and convict them to repent. What should these rich men have learned from the Old Testament? Let's see for ourselves! Read Moses' writing, Deuteronomy 15:1-11, and reflect on (1) God's own heart for the poor, (2) the nature of the society God intended to create with Israel, and (3) how our church today and us as individuals can better reflect this heart of God (cf. Acts 2:44-45; 4:32). Write down three ideas!
3. Jesus' parable is a story of extreme reversals - the rich man became poor, and the poor man became rich. (1) Try to find as many reversals in Luke 16:19-31 as you can (who was on the inside/outside, who was begging, etc). (2) How should our Christian worldview be shaped by these reversals? (3) How do they inform the way we address the Problem of Evil? (4) What great reversal do we witness in the life of Jesus (2 Cor, 8:9)? (5) As we follow Jesus, what sort of life should we expect to lead (Luke 9:23-24)?
4. The rich man calls Hades a "place of torment," and begs for a single drop of water to "cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame" (Luke 16:24, 28). This parable teaches some awful truths about hell - that it is a place of conscious, eternal torment. This is horrifying (but necessary!) to think about. (1) Why don't we think about it more often? (2) Hell is very possibly the most neglected subject in the Christian church today. What are the consequences of this neglect? (3) How does a thorough understanding of the 'bad news' help inform our proclamation and celebration of the 'good news'?