

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

In the first 2 weeks of our "Wait What" series, Jesus has talked about money and divorce but focused mostly on the condition of the heart. In the final section of Luke 16, we find out why: Jesus wants us to focus on our hearts because He knows that when we do, we'll begin to recover the eternal reality that was placed there. Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells us that God has placed eternity in the hearts of men and so the more we guard our hearts against the stuff of earth, the more we'll find ourselves living for the glory of heaven. In a parable about a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus, Jesus teaches us 3 ways that having an eternal perspective can help us live on earth.

1. **Having an eternal perspective can keep us from being shortsighted.** If all we're living for is this life, then the reality is that we will miss seeing people that have been placed in our path. The rich man saw the poor man every time he passed through his gate and even knew his name, but he never really saw him. He lived a shortsighted life because he never saw used his life to make an eternal impact.
2. **Having an eternal perspective can keep us from eternal punishment.** If Jesus had stopped the story after verse 22, we could all agree to live life to the fullest because someday we'll die. But the story didn't stop there! It continued on into eternity, and it was there that the rich man finally gained an eternal perspective. Unfortunately, that was too late. Had he gained that perspective in this life, it could have kept him from punishment in the afterlife (or in his case, the after death). We will ALL die and face eternity, and what we do now determines where we'll be then.
3. **Having an eternal perspective can help us do now what we can't do then.** Obviously, the rich man ran out of time concerning his eternity, but he also began to realize that the people he loved would be running out of time, too. But he didn't want to give them more time. Instead, he wanted to give them more perspective: he wanted them to realize that **eternity starts here and now, not there and then.**

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- As a group, come up with a definition of perspective that would make sense to a 5 year old. Why do you think perspective is so important? What dangers do we face if we have an incorrect perspective?
- The story found in Luke 16:19-31 offers quite a few contrasts between the rich man and Lazarus. Read the parable together as a group and then see how many contrasts you can find. What insights can we gain from these observations?
- What (or who) could we miss if we live shortsighted lives? What opportunities are "at your gate" right now that you may be missing?
- The name Lazarus means "the one God has helped." How does knowing this and then reading about how poorly he lived life on earth cause a "wait, what" moment for us? How does this story challenge our understanding of comfort? Of suffering?
- As we close, pretend you're the rich man in eternity. Who would you want to send a messenger to in order to offer them an eternal perspective? Close the group by receiving the promise of Acts 1:8 and then go be that messenger!