



You Need the Rich and the Poor

August 1, 2021

Acts 16:13-15; Luke 6:20; Luke 16:19-31

Connect:

- It is interesting how we all define “rich” and “poor” in different ways; often via comparison to others. What is your definition of *rich* and *poor*? Why?
- In what ways do you consider yourself rich? In what ways do you consider yourself poor? Describe your consideration of each.

Engage

- Read *Acts 16:13-15; Luke 6:20; Luke 16:19-31*. Scripture is full of people from all walks of life. Pick out the characters in each passage (*as applicable*) and discuss their situation as best you can understand it. To which character(s) do you most relate? Why?
- Rev. John King said, “*Serve the poor and the rich will come.*” What does this mean to you?
- Lydia dealt in purple cloth – something the wealthy eagerly bought. When she came to find her *Center* in Jesus, she longed to use her resources to build the ministry. Does this gift have more to do with finance or heart? Support your answer.
- When Jesus said, “*Blessed are the poor,*” he used the word *ptochoi*. *Ptochoi* doesn’t mean “poverty” as we know poverty. It means people who are utterly and completely dependent on God, people who have no alternative security other than God. Scripture suggests that the rich are spiritually more vulnerable than the poor. Do you agree?
- Len Sweet offers in his book that inspired this series: “*Tell me what you get angry at, and I’ll tell you who you are.*” What are you angry at?
- How does Dives (*latin for “rich man”*) differ from Lydia.
- How does the story of the rich man and Lazarus challenge you? Why?

Next Steps:

- Len Sweet offers the following practice. “*If you’re like me, the following reminder is often needed in one of three times: when what I think I’ve done in the past hasn’t mattered, when what I’m doing presently isn’t significant, or when I think I’m too busy or “big” to get involved. Print this out and put in a place where your eyes can always catch its message: ‘Your care for others is the measure of your greatness.’*” – Luke 9:48 TLB

Pray:

- “*God of us all – rich and poor in every possible way – you love us all and long for us to know each other, help each other, and grow together in your Spirit. Make us mindful of our poverty and our riches that we might keep everything centered in your heart for us. Amen.*”