Reflection for 25th Sept: The Rich Man and Lazarus. Luke 16: 19-31

Peake’s Commentary of “this parable resumes the attack on the leaders of Judaism for their attitude to outcasts, and by implication, the gentiles. Probably a folk story has been employed for this purpose. The outcast reclines at table with Abraham (this would be an outrage to the Pharisees), being by implication a son of Abraham. The representative of Pharisaism seeks comfort in the hands of an outcast (turning the tables on them). The scriptures, rightly understood, would suggest a different attitude on the part of Pharisaic Judaism. Repentance in this context means primarily the adoption of such an attitude; if the witness of scripture will not persuade, even resurrection will be insufficient. A hint of the consequences of the resurrection of Jesus himself”.

The most shocking element of this story to the Pharisee is an outcast sitting at the bosom of Abraham. How can that be when keeping the whole of the law is required for such a place at the table with Abraham.

There is one thing, and one thing only, that has been cast out by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and that is evil. Utterly cast out, completely defeated. Death is perceived as evil in all cultures. Christ’s resurrection has utterly defeated evil and out of his death is new and risen life.

Jesus didn’t come out and say ‘the problem with you is your attitude mate!’ That would not have got him hearing. He told parables with hidden truth contained within the story, leaving it up to the hearer to apply it to himself. All Jesus did was tell a story to help the listener to pay closer attention to his attitudes to God, to women, outcasts, people with disabilities and children. Anyone who experiences discrimination of any kind, or whom the status quo deemed to be an outsider.

Thankfully, none of this applies to us. We welcome anyone!

We have a rainbow symbol outside welcoming people who are gay.

(Someone is prepped to shout ‘no we don’t and I say but we could have).

We have bathroom facilities that are wheel chair friendly.

(No we don’t! But we could have)

We have wheelchair access to the chancel.

(No we don’t! But we could have)

We have handrails to assist the elderly and people with disability.

(No we don’t! But we could have)

We have someone to sign

Need I go on?

There is always more to do; it really is all about our attitude.

Attitude by Charles Swindoll

The longer I live the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, that failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company…a church… a school…. A home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past…we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with your…we are in charge of our attitudes.