A CRY FOR MERCY TOO LATE
Luke 16: 24 - 26
Sermon by Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION:
1. In this context we have the story of two men -- one rich and one poor.
2. The story begins in TIME, and is carried into the future state of the soul.
3. Lazarus, the poor man, was in POVERTY
   (1) He was a beggar -- Luke 16:20
   (2) He was anxious for the crumbs from the rich man's table -- Luke 16: 21
   (3) He was miserably afflicted, "full of sores" -- Luke 16: 20
   (3) He did God's bidding, and when he died he went into "Abraham's bosom" -- Luke 16:22
4. The Rich man lived in affluence and enjoyments
   (1) His clothing was the most costly -- "Purple and fine linen" -- Luke 16: 19
   (2) His lifestyle -- "Fared sumptuously every day" -- Luke 16:19
   (3) He died and was buried.
   (4) He had not done the will of God while he lived, and he went into TORMENTS -- Luke 16: 23
5. He, being tormented in FLAME, cried for MERCY -- Luke 16:24
   (1) He just wanted Lazarus to come and dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue -- Luke 16:24
   (2) But, the time had passed for MERCY.
   (3) His cry was too LATE -- Luke 16: 25 - 26
6. Let us study a CRY FOR MERCY TOO LATE -- a cry that millions make.

I. HE CRIED FOR MERCY -- Luke 16:24
   1. Man's need for God's mercy is UNIVERSAL
      (1) DAVID cried for God's mercy after he had sinned with Bathsheba -- Psa. 51:1
      (2) The PUBLICAN asked for God's mercy -- Luke 18:13
      (3) TWO BLIND MEN cried for mercy when Jesus passed by -- Matt. 20: 30 - 34
      (4) TEN LEPERS cried for mercy -- Luke 17: 11 - 19
      (5) WE TODAY must have God's mercy.
         1. He saves us by His mercy when we obey His will -- Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2: 4 - 8
         2. When we sin and confess sin, He extends His mercy -- I John 1:9
   2. God's MERCY is CONDITIONAL
      (1) Isa. 55:7
      (2) Eph. 2:8
3. God's mercy is OBTAINED IN THIS LIFE
   (1) This was true in the Old Testament -- Luke 16:29
   (2) This is true TODAY -- II Cor. 6:2

4. The rich man, while he lived, had left God out of his life
   (1) He had lived well in this life -- Luke 16:19
   (2) He did nothing for his fellowman -- Luke 16: 20 - 21; Matt. 25: 41 - 46
   (3) He was told to REMEMBER HOW HE HAD LIVED -- Luke 16: 25
   (4) He had LEFT GOD OUT OF HIS LIFE.
   (5) He was WITHOUT EXCUSE -- he had Moses and the Prophets -- Luke 16: 29

II. GOD'S ANSWER TO HIS CRY FOR MERCY THROUGH ABRAHAM
   1. "remember that thou in thy lifetime receivdest thy good things"-- Luke 16:25
      (1) He had accepted a material value system at the expense of the spiritual -- Luke 16:24
      (2) He had enjoyed to the fullest not only the necessities of life, but the rich abundance of LUXERIES -- Luke 16: 19
      (3) This had all been at the expense of his soul -- Luke 16: 26
      (4) The rich farmer of Luke 12:16 - 21 had the same value system.
      (5) The rich young ruler of Mark 10: 17-22 had the same value system.
      (6) Millions today have the same value system.
   2. He then said it is too late NOW -- Luke 16: 26
      (1) There is a "great gulf fixed" -- Luke 16:26
      (2) It was "fixed" -- could not be changed.
      (3) He had not perished for any lack in God's mercy while he lived -- Luke 16: 29
      (4) He had despised and rejected God's Mercy while he lived.
      (5) Divine Mercy is obtained by OBEDIENCE while we live -- II Cor. 6:2; Acts 10: 34 - 35; Heb. 5:8; Acts 2:40
      (6) God's mercy is NOT extended to man beyond the GRAVE.
      (7) This is the time of mercy and grace -- Tit. 2: 11 - 12; Eph. 2:8

III. OTHERS WHO HAVE CRIED FOR MERCY TOO LATE:
   1. Esau had sold his birthright and the bargain stood -- Heb. 12: 16 - 17
   2. Saul sinned and caused God to reject him from being king -- there was no changing the matter -- I Sam. 15: 24 - 29
   3. Religious people at the Judgment -- Matt. 7: 22 - 23
CONCLUSION:

1. Let us learn that earthly prosperity and magnificence are no proofs of God’s favor -- I Tim. 6:5

2. Let us learn that whatever be our condition in this world, we are traveling towards another place.

3. Let us learn that death is inevitable to all stations and ranks -- Heb. 9:27

4. Let us learn how awful it is to die in a carnal unregenerate state.

5. Let us learn the sufficiency of the means God has appointed for man’s salvation -- Luke 16:29

   (1) TODAY we have the gospel -- Rom. 1:16; Mark 16: 15 - 16

6. Friend, are you ready for death?

   (River Bend 1994; Hebron 1992)