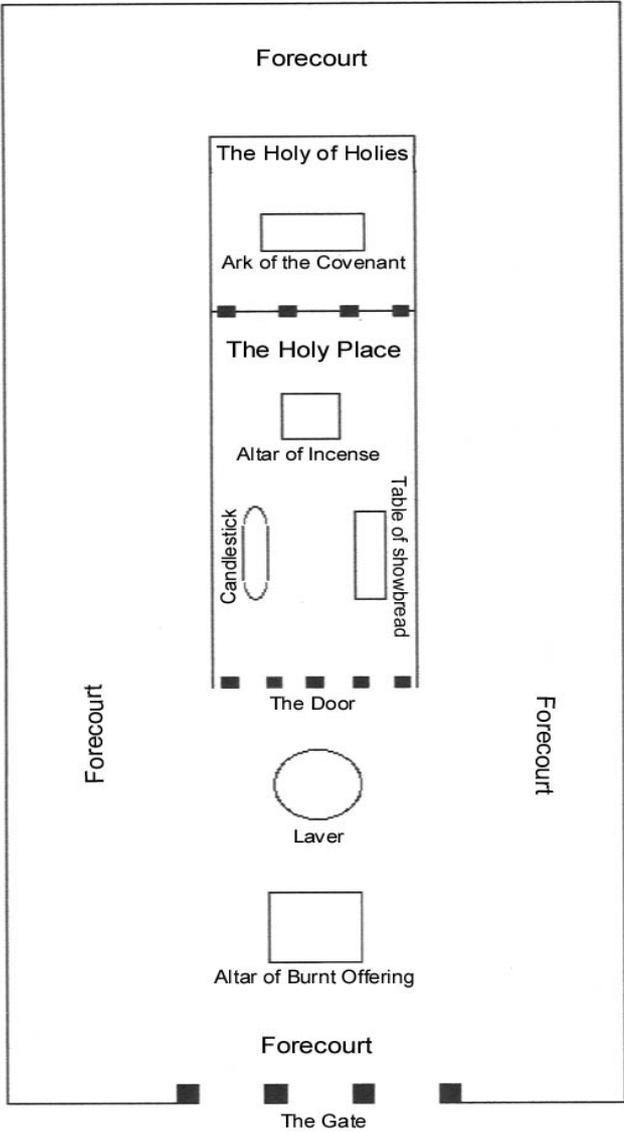


Luke (Chapter 16)

The Book of the NEW MAN in Christ

"Verse by verse" the deeper meaning of this Bible-book, explained in the light of the Israeli Tabernacle.

Plan of the Israeli Tabernacle



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Part II

The life in the holy place of the resurrection person

Chapter 16

The purification of the holy place in order to come to “the end of all flesh”.

(Part 5)



In and by Christ, we must be willing to be delivered from all unholy desires for earthly things (such as: money, unholy sex, fame).

This chapter, too, we are to see in the light of the veil (i.e. the curtain that separated the Holy Place and the Holy of holies) of the Israeli Tabernacle: hereby is meant the breaking off of all (powers of) sin in our flesh – by the union with His body that was broken for us, and His blood that was shed for us – in the strength of the Holy Spirit.

We will now have a closer look at those sins, which will always reveal the (sinful) flesh by the unholy desire for (much) money and property; for unholy and unrestrained sexual experience and for receiving fame and honor (thus applause) from people.

In and by Christ, we must be willing to be cleansed of all Mammonish idolatry.

The Scriptures start with the greatest and most committed sin: namely the desire for (much) money, riches and possessions. It is the dance around the gold calf, the worship of the mammon, which is done in many ways and in all intensity in this world... The Scriptures warn us emphatically for this: "For the love of money is the root of all evil..." (1 Timothy 6:10).

16 verse 1-8: *"And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his*

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lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

The Lord here pictures the way of life of a dishonest steward. He was a man who had no difficulty using his lord's money for himself. But these dark practices of his were discovered, and his lord dismissed him and asked him to account for his stewardship. But, being self-centered and unjust, he looked for a way to still be able to provide for himself, after his dismissal, if in a dishonest way... He even made his lord's debtors accessories to his dishonest practices, that he might blackmail them later, when he would be pressed for money, with the papers they themselves signed in hand. He did this for the purpose that these debtors might not deny him the necessary money as part of the loot, for fear to be accused by him of being accessories to the deceit. And that lord praised the well thought-out action of that dismissed steward, whereby he insured the future for himself.

The Scriptures then make a comparison and compare the action of the children of this world regarding their future, with that of the children of God. And the Scriptures conclude that worldly people insure themselves more carefully of a "good" (earthly) future than the children of God do regarding their eternal future. Children of God should manage their finances as carefully and honestly as possible, yet with a "loose hand" as well; that hereby neither the "100 measures of oil", namely the 100% ministry in the Spirit they owe their heavenly Father nor the "100 measures of wheat", namely the 100% ministry of the Word, are influenced unfavorably. The child of God should rather spend his money on the labor of the Lord. And those who receive this money will thank God for the (generous) gift and pray for the mercy and blessing of the Lord for the (generous) giver. This last thing is said in different words in the following verse:

16 verse 9: "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

According to the Lord the being of the mammon (as it is the god of the money) is unrighteous and in practice we also notice this to be so. Often "trade" in essence is swindle; one often competes with one another in a dishonest manner, and one recommends things as being "fantastic", while one would not want to buy them oneself. The stain of unrighteousness clings to money... Therefore the Lord advises us to rather make friends with this "unrighteous mammon". Whereby is meant that we had rather, by means of gifts from a loving heart, act in such a way with our money that, if we should be in need (this is: when we, spiritually seen, are lacking towards the Kingdom of God), God will be gracious towards us to call us (again) to repentance and to His mercy. It goes without saying that such a child of God could still be lost if he does not want to respond to God's gracious call to repentance.

16 verse 10-13: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

God here compares two things with each other, namely the earthly possessions and the heavenly (and thus divine). Money and goods on the one hand, and the divine, heavenly gifts on the other. He then calls the gold (or money), thus everything that is meant by the unrighteous mammon, "least" in the life of a child of God! And so it has to be! God, His Word **and** His labor, working in and through us by the Spirit, must be for us "much" (namely the most important) in our life, and finances "least" (namely the least important). If, however, we are unrighteous (thus dishonest) in finances, then we are clearly (still) bound to mammon, and the Lord then cannot (and will not) let us share His spiritual gifts and riches. The Lord has also made us stewards over all the money he entrusts us with. The money belongs to this world, because it is necessary for buying and selling; it is not something special which belongs to the Kingdom of God. Therefore the Word says that money is "that which is another man's"; that we, who subjected our heart and life to Him and His Kingdom, must spend well. If we are dishonest in money matters, then He will not give us the portion in Him, He already gave to us in His Word. For if He would entrust those heavenly and divine matters to us, then we – because we have not yet been delivered from this mammon, from the unholy desire for (more) money and possessions – would use these (divine) powers for ourselves, and not for the good of His Kingdom. If we still have such a wrong (namely self-centered) condition of the heart, then another (in this case satan) will be ready to give us his spiritual powers and anti-anointings. Let us therefore heed this warning! Therefore it is very necessary that we, as children of God, show our preference, strongly and keenly, with regard to our God Who blesses all, with regard to our Savior; while we must use "the filthy lucre" with a loose hand. We cannot serve God and mammon.

16 verse 14-15: "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

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"Love of money", as we already saw, is "a root of **all** evil!" For it is an all-controlling longing for (more) money... With the Pharisees this dark desire was firmly rooted in their heart, because of which they were a bad example as religious people and leaders of the Jews of that time. But God is not to be linked up to the gold (with the love of money in a human heart), because the darkness has not a single part of the Light (2 Corinthians 6:14).

Woe that servant of God who falls by the stealing-in of the mammon. For, when one has received special gifts of the Spirit, such as that of healing, then great amounts might be paid in collections. And instead of spending these collections, with a wise heart, on the building up of the Kingdom of God, such "laborers of God" build themselves villas (with all the frills), and also see to it that they have large bank accounts... They began in the Spirit, but they clearly end (up) in the flesh... Let us not follow them. Let us watch ourselves that we do not long for (more) money, for this is an idolatrous and magical power. Only when we are sincere and steadfast in the Lord, the mammon (i.e. the [idol] god of money and possessions) cannot get us in his power.

When a religious leader (clearly) is guilty of an idolatrous form of love of money, and is accused thereof, then his reaction may often be like that of the Pharisees in Jesus' days: "They derided (scoffed at) Jesus!" in answer to His accusation, in an attempt to justify themselves (verse 14). And "self-justification" is a form of pride..., which was the reason the Lord said: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

In and by Christ, we must be willing to be cleansed of all unholy and unrestrained sex-experience.

16 verse 16-17: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle (dot on the i) of the law to fail."

In above verses the Scriptures teach us, that: "the law and the prophets were until John"; but also that "Christ is the end of the law" (Romans 10:4): and that "(Jesus) blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14); and that "we are delivered from the law" (Romans 7:6a). Unfortunately some believers interpret this that we, in this time of grace, could live from hand to mouth, because God is sure to grant us grace when we pray for it... But we do not read the bible properly! For we – in and by Christ – will only be delivered from this law, if we have died to the desires which are forbidden in this law (read Romans 7:6); and from thence walk in the NEW LIFE out of Him, in the spirit of the resurrection. However, if we again give in to the desires of the (sinful) flesh, then **the full weight of the law will be in force again** (Matthew 5:17-18). In the NEW LIFE God's law (i.e. the law of His justice, holiness and love) must be engraved unto the hearts of His children (Jeremiah 31:33); whereby – **in** and **by** Him – we might (want to) act and live by it. Then we also will obey the law (i.e. God's commandments) as a matter of course, and not consider it a prohibition anymore, a "Thou shalt not...!" This is what life is meant to be in the Kingdom of God: one obeys God as a matter of course!

The Lord also said that "every man presses into (the laws of) the Kingdom of God", and He warns, that "not tittle of the law will fail". Unfortunately every believer of the New Covenant (to a lesser or greater degree) offends against the laws of the Kingdom of God by acting contrary to these laws (the commandments and prohibitions); by sinning against them, because one lulls oneself asleep with the thought that we live in God's time of grace, and all was finished on the cross by the Lord (Colossians 2:14). It is a complaint of the Lord, Who wants nothing else but that man, by His grace, learns to live in the absolute purity and holiness of His Being.

In those days after John, the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ formed the Kingdom of God, because the Church then still had to be "born". The Lord here foretells His death on the cross by the crime committed by the Sanhedrin (i.e. the Supreme Council; the Jewish court of justice in the days of Jesus) and the Jews.

Unfortunately it often happens that among the children of God (the laws of) the Kingdom of God is abused, especially with regard to the marriage and faithfulness in marriage; and against the pure sex-experience (something that can only take place within the bonds of marriage) in general. Therefore this chapter continues with:

16 verse 18: "Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

In Hebrews 13:4 it is written also: "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled"; then the verse continues: "but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." In this single text of Luke 16 (verse 18) all the unholy desires for living property (for an other man or woman), and the unrestrained sex-experience (even with children!) is touched on (briefly); and at the same time also the most appalling tragedies in marriage which are in the world, and, unfortunately also the premature ending of the marriage of many Christians (which was contracted before God's countenance).

In God's law, which Moses was to pass on, are the commandments: "thou shalt not commit adultery" and "thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife" (Exodus 20:14 and 17). In God's eyes a marriage is for life. In Matthew 19:4-6 we read: "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not

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man put asunder". "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only **in the Lord**" (1 Corinthians 7:39).

Should marriage partners who both are in Christ, get a divorce, then both sin against this commandment of the Lord. Matthew does make an exception here, namely if it is a question of "fornication" (i.e. adultery) (see Matthew 5:32). If this is **not** the case, then neither party may remarry, because they otherwise sin against that which is written in Luke 16:18. And this applies until one of the two dies.

Paul makes an exception in the case that one of the two parties is unbelieving (and this "unbelieving" is to be taken in the true sense of the word). "But to the rest speak I (Paul), not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace" (1 Corinthians 7:12-15). In the last case, however, the divorce must be sued by the unbelieving party, therefore not by the believing party. This then is the case when one of the partners, being already married, has come to the faith, not when a believer marries an unbeliever, for then the believer chose that bond himself, against the will of the Lord (see 2 Corinthians 6:14).

Strife in the marriages of children of God should therefore not end in divorce, but are to be straitened out in the spirit of reconciliation. "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27).

In and by Christ, we must be willing to be delivered of all desire for honor, fame and the applause of men.

This sin is not immediately to be detected in the following verses, but when God's Spirit has opened our eyes for it, we will understand. Was the desire for money and possessions a matter of the **soul**, the desire for an other woman (or man) is a **physical** matter, while the desire for honor and/or fame is a matter of the human spirit.

16 verse 19-31: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine line, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

At first sight one here sees a description of a man, who, humanly spoken was very well dressed. For he wore garments of purple (a reddish purple [die] material) and fine linen. Purple is a **royal** color. Garments in those colors were worn by kings, princes and other people in "high", often leading, positions. This rich man also wore clothes of fine linen. In the Tabernacle of Israel fine (**white** twined [woven with double yarn]) linen was the symbol of **justice**. Here, too, it seems to create the impression of justice. But it also says that he lived happily every day, in luxury and abundance, for he was very wealthy. Here, of course, it is a parable, for that it is not the literal situation is clear, for it is absurd to even think for a moment that every rich man in this world will go to hell, simply because he had such a good life on earth. Just as it is absurd to think that every poor man in this world goes to heaven, simply because he had such a terrible time on this earth. The rich man and Lazarus therefore depict (two) types of believers. In this light we will look deeper into this parable.

Spiritually seen, the rich man shows an abundance of good deeds, whereby are meant "the labor of the Lord", namely his works of goodness and piety. In the eyes of people he is a happy and marvelous Christian, and he likes to give that impression to his fellow believers. But God looks at him differently; it shows in verse 23 and on... The Lord had to throw him in hell. What thought comes up here? That all of his religious life was a farce. He did not know a (sincere) subjection and confession of guilt. After all every natural person is a sinner. He also did not know humility and true servitude with regard to God, whereby the grace, mercy and strength of the Lord, in order to be able to do **His** work, could not enter this human heart. No, this religious life did not come forth from a heart that was abundantly blessed by **God**, but it was a fruit of "holy" (better said: hypocritical) flesh, that with a lot of outward show sought after the honor and the applause of his fellow believers. It concerns here the third sin (namely "the pride of life" – see 1 John 2:16); this is the (sinful) desire to receive

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honor from people. It is a monster out of the darkness, a satanic power, which delights in putting up a blockade between the believer and his God, and thus making the way to God **impossible**. For, the grace of God, all being well, makes us grateful and humble. Pride and the desire for honor and/or fame make it impossible for God to be gracious to us. That is why this "rich" man, after his earthly life, opened his eyes in hell!

Lazarus, however, is the opposite symbol of this rich man. His name means: "servant of God", a "help to God". Lazarus was covered with sores; which symbolically is to say, that he was conscious of his sins and shortcomings. "And the dogs licked his sores!" This means that his fellow sinners comforted him. This man lay in the gate of the rich man's house, and longed to be satisfied with the crumbs that fell off the rich man's table.

When above parable is clear to us, then we see the rich man as a distributor of the bread of heaven; namely as a scribe, a (bible) teacher or an evangelist. His gate then gets the meaning of Jesus Christ, the only Gate to ETERNAL LIFE. Lazarus wished to satisfy himself with the crumbs of the spiritual food he could and was allowed to eat.

Thus Lazarus forms the picture here of a broken and downcast spirit, that seeks grace in Jesus Christ and that longs to serve Him in all his weakness. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:17). Is it any wonder that he was found in heaven after his death, "lying in the bosom of Abraham"? Hereby is meant that he entered into the **eternal** rest of God!

This "rich" man saw Lazarus lying in Abraham's bosom, in spite of the great chasm that separated them. This sight would have been most tormenting to him, and would have caused a continual sorrow and remorse. But, it is not written that Lazarus also saw the rich man. In my opinion no one who will be allowed to enter into the heavenly glory, will be able to see the condemned (these are the ones who have been condemned to the hellish punishment). Abraham, here the type of our Father-God, however, did see him.

This condemned (man) called him: **Father** Abraham. For he **was** a child of God, but unfortunately a tempted and lost child. In fact he asked the Father-God to send Lazarus to, in his torment, cool his tongue with the water he saw. This water in heaven is the water of life. In fact he was **too late** asking for grace, because of which it could not be granted him anymore. The chasm, literally and figuratively, was unbridgeable! "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but **after** this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). After death grace no longer is possible, but only a terrible judgment, if we refuse or forfeit the grace of God during our earthly life.

When the "rich" man realized the impossibility of his own salvation, he thought of his five brothers (real brothers or brothers in the faith), whom the same fate was awaiting should they not ask God for mercy during their earthly life, and therefore not receive it. The five brothers and himself were six. And 6 in the number symbolism is the number of (sinful) man. This condemned (man) asked Abraham (here the type for God the Father) to raise Lazarus from the dead to thus warn his brothers, that they not continue in their carnal way of life, the end of which would be this place of torment. But God pointed out to him that they had the Word of God (in those days the books of Moses and the prophets), and that they would not believe anyway, even if someone, raised from the dead, would tell them.

Let us be warned by this parable, and not live and act like this "rich" man, but let us (be willing to) live humbly, in full subjection to God, in order to expect from Him His rich gifts of grace.

The end of Chapter 16 (from Part 2)

By E. van den Worm
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P.S.:

For Chapter 1 till 15, see our Blog at 2009-11-10, 12-10 and 2010-1-10, 2-10, 3-10, 4-10, 5-10, 6-10, 8-10, 9-10, 10-10, 11-10, 12-10, and 2011-1-10 and 2-10.