

**BIBLE STUDY**  
**September 23, 2019**

**The Twenty Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Amos 6: 1a, 4-7**

**Luke 16: 19-31**

**1 Timothy 6: 11-16**

**1. Amos 6: 1a, 4-7**

- Amos is one of the twelve Minor Prophets. Amos is known as the “prophet of social justice.” He denounces the external show of so-called religious people. True faith and religion is shown in service and care of the poor and needy.
- 6:1-woe to those who are **complacent= showing smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements.**
- 6: 4-6a paints a picture of the complacent. Those who pamper themselves and engage in every kind of extravagance for their own pleasure
- 6: 6b-but are not made ill by the collapse of Joseph. They are not disturbed or upset by what is happening to Israel. They are so preoccupied with their own needs and luxury that they fail to see the plight of those around them.
- 6: 7-they will be the first to go into exile. Their carousing will end.

**2. Luke 16: 19-31**

- Like the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son, this parable is unique to Luke. It is also unique in that one of the characters is named, “Lazarus,” and a major Biblical figure, Abraham, plays a significant role.
- A major theme of the parable is “the Great Reversal” that will take place at the end of time. It has been already alluded to in Mary’s Magnificat (Luke 1: 52-53: *He has thrown down the rules from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent empty away.*) It is developed in the Beatitudes (Luke 6: 20-26). Also see the Parable of the Rich Fool in Luke 12: 16-21; The Parable of the Narrow Door in Luke 14: 22-30.
- 16: 19-21The first half of the parable develops the situation of the rich man and compares it to Lazarus, the beggar. The rich man is inside; Lazarus is outside. The rich man feasts sumptuously every day; Lazarus who would gladly eat a scrap from the table. The rich man is comfortable; Lazarus is in torment.
- 16: 22-23- they both die. Lazarus is carried by the angels to heaven; the rich man is buried and goes to the underworld. Now begins the Reversal.
- 16: 24-25-Lazarus is inside in the bosom of Abraham; the rich man is outside in Hades. Lazarus is comforted; the rich man is in torment. Abraham delivers the sentence: the rich man had good things in his life and now is tormented. Lazarus was tormented in life and is now comforted.
- There is a great divide between the rich man and Lazarus in life and in eternity. The rich man never considered Lazarus in his lifetime. Lazarus is

unable to help him in eternity. The rich man had his chance to change, to be converted. He lost his chance. Notice how he still considers himself privileged and sees Lazarus as his servant—bring him a drop of water.

- A second theme of the parable is failed conversion. The rich man has failed to be moved by Lazarus' torment in his lifetime. Maybe he never even saw him. Lazarus was invisible to him. Maybe he stepped over him as he came and went from his house. The rich man is not described as being a bad person—he simply does not see Lazarus' need because he is so preoccupied with himself. His problem is not that he is rich but that he is blind to the needs of those around him.
- Lazarus is not described as being a good person. He is simply in need. God has a preferential option for the poor. The parable reminds us about the sins of commission and the sins of omission. It is not only the bad that we do but also the good we leave undone.
- If Abraham cannot help the rich man, he asks him to send Lazarus (again Lazarus is his servant!) to his brothers and warn them. Abraham responds that they have the Scriptures that make it clear our obligation to help the poor and those in need. Since the rich man did not heed these warnings, he knows that his brothers need more. If there were a messenger from the dead, they would repent. Abraham responds that if they do not listen to Moses and the prophets they will not be persuaded even if someone were to rise from the dead. Although the parable would say that it is Lazarus who would rise from the dead to warn his brothers, ironically, Jesus did rise from the dead and that has failed to persuade many people. The parable is not only addressed to the Jews of Jesus' time but to Christians of all ages.
- The parable challenges us to examine ourselves to see if there are "invisible" people in our lives.

### **3. 1 Timothy 6: 11-16**

- As the letter draws to a close, Paul exhorts Timothy to be true to his calling and as he has said in 6: 3-10 avoid the dissensions and divisions of some. Do not seek after wealth but be content with what he has. Instead of greed and pride, pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. Lay hold of eternal life by remaining true to his profession of faith when he was ordained just as Jesus made his profession of faith before Pilate. He needs to keep the commandments perfectly until Jesus Christ appears in glory making known the unseen God who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see.