

PREPARING AT HOME

September 23-29, 2019

Focus reading: Luke 16:19–31 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=434698151>)

Other lectionary readings: Jeremiah 32:1–3a, 6–15; Psalm 91:1–6, 14–16; 1 Timothy 6:6–19

Theme: Keeping Focus

Wealth and success are blessings from God, bestowed on those with whom God is pleased. The poor have no one but themselves to blame. Sound familiar? This misguided theology was accepted in Jesus' day and is not unfamiliar to us today. But Jesus tells a story that condemns such theology. It is the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The rich man feels no connection to or responsibility for Lazarus, who is poor. And why should he? His wealth is seen as evidence of his righteousness, and Lazarus' poverty is clearly a sign of God's displeasure. Each has what he deserves. But reversals and judgments against the wealthy are common in the Gospel of Luke, and this is no exception. The rich man ends up in Hades where he finds that the tables have been turned. He is now suffering, while Lazarus (whose name means "God helps") enjoys the company of Abraham. Now it is the rich man who is begging! Jesus uses a story to share the truth that God is on the side of the poor. God does help those whom the wealthy ignore, but the story also raises the question, "Will we help?" We, who have heard the calls of Moses and the prophets and the Risen Christ, will we help?

SHARING

What is it that your child can share with others? What can your family share with others? What do you have that others do not? Encourage your child to draw pictures of ways in which they can practice sharing. Look for ways to share in the coming week.

SEEING THOSE IN NEED

Children are often moved to help those in need and are capable of amazing things. Children sell lemonade to help other kids with cancer. Children are saying "no" to birthday gifts in order to give to others. The place to start is to recognize those who have a need. Who is it in your neighborhood who might be suffering in some way? What do they need? How can we as individuals and as a faith community help?

PRAYER

Loving God,
Forgive us when we are so
comfortable with what we have
that we fail to see
what others need.
May we notice
the needs of people around us
and share what we have with generosity and love.
Amen.

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