

The Twenty Second Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 16:19-31

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, 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. (KJV)

Believers are blessed to have the Gospel proclaimed. The Gospel offers nourishment for the body, mind and soul. The Gospel contains instructions and enrichment for daily life.

Attentive believers experience unity with the Lord through the Gospel. God is always with us. Through the senses, believers experience the presence of God in daily life. Believers communicate with God by prayer and thought.

Bodily actions enable the believer to experience God in daily life. Purposeful daily work and activity of a person keeps the believer's heart, mind and soul united with God.

Daily relationships involve God as each person is created in the image and likeness of God. (Gen. 1:27) The Lord Jesus Christ was clear in saying the nature of relationships affect eternal life. (Mt.25: 31-46)

The present Gospel is a firm reminder for believers to be extremely sensitive to their present surroundings. People in need are very near each one of us. The present Gospel behooves us to reach out and help the needy nearby.

The rich man in the present Gospel neglected to help poor Lazarus. The rich man suffered due to his neglect and failure to help. In his eventual suffering, the rich man wanted to prevent his family from suffering.

The rich man was told his brethren should heed and learn from Moses and the prophets. For centuries believers have had the opportunity to learn from Moses and the prophets in addition to learning directly from the Crucified and Risen Christ.

God's Holy Church offers life-saving teachings developed over the centuries to guide and nourish believers. God's Holy Church provides instructions for life from conception to life eternal. The Church's teachings are freely offered.

Each person chooses whether to heed and learn from the wisdom and teachings proclaimed in the Church. Each believer determines the extent Christ's teachings and way to the Kingdom will be followed.

God cared for blessed Lazarus in the present Gospel. God cares for each person suffering and being neglected. God loves each person. Believers baptized into Christ have the responsibility to help the needy in their midst.

Believers put their souls in peril if they neglect the teachings of Moses and the prophets. The soul is in peril if the love of the Crucified and Risen Jesus does not govern daily life.

The Church offers the Gospel for believers to be nourished and to learn. The Church offers the Holy Mysteries for believers to unite and remain united with Jesus Christ.

The opportunity to grow and mature in Christ always exists while the mind functions and the heart beats. The believer has the responsibility to live the life in Christ and to grow in Christ.

The commitment to live in Christ and grow in Christ continues from Holy Baptism until departure from this life. The Lord is ever-present to help, nourish and guide the believer in the journey to the Kingdom and eternal life.

The present Gospel makes clear what happens when a person is not sensitive to needy persons nearby. The rich man focused only on himself. He had no regard for the suffering Lazarus.

The rich man could have made a lasting difference in his life and in Lazarus's life.. Sensitive believers heeding the present Gospel will learn a beneficial lesson. Attentive believers will seek to heed Moses, the prophets and the Risen Christ.

Effort is necessary throughout the Christian life to grow and mature in Christ. Growing and maturing in Christ is always possible. God's Kingdom is within reach of each person choosing to learn and to heed the Gospel.

The Twenty Second Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Apostle James, First Bishop of Jerusalem. October 23/November 5, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic