

Message for Sunday, September 28, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16: 19-31

Title: Invisibility

Welcome

Announcements

Giving Options...special offering for September Jerome food bank, October will be world communion Sunday. Help wanted for the Angels Attic Sale-set up, clean up, baked goods, cashier, baggers, etc. sign up in the foyer. Bible Study, Wednesdays at 5PM. Charge Conference Coming-Sunday October 12th at 12PM. Come meet the new DS.

Fellowship of Love

Song

Call to Worship

L: God is our refuge and our fortress.

P: In God, we place our trust.

L: When we are weary,

P: God lifts us up on wings like eagles.

L: Come before the Lord with joy and longing.

P: God is our hope and our salvation.

Message for Sunday, September 28, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16: 19-31

Title: Invisibility

Unison Prayer

Generous Spirit, you call us to share our riches with the poor and the disadvantaged, lest we follow self-interest to our ruin and destruction.

--

Teach us to bestow your blessings on those in need, lest we be trapped by selfish desire.

--

Set our hearts on the riches of good works, rather than the allure of earthly treasures.

--

Help us take hold of the life that really is life.

Amen.

Offering Lead In

L: As we come to this time of offering, let us remember that giving is an opportunity to respond to God's generosity with our own.

Offering/Song

Message for Sunday, September 28, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16: 19-31

Title: Invisibility

Scripture: Luke 16:19-31 NRSVue

¹⁹ “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.

--

²⁰ And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,

--

²¹ who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores.

--

²² The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried.

--

²³ In Hades, where he was being tormented, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side.’

--

²⁴ He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.’

--

²⁵ But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus in like manner evil things, but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony.

--

²⁶ Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.'

--

²⁷ He said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—

--

²⁸ for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.'

--

²⁹ Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.'

--

³⁰ He said, 'No, Father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

--

³¹ He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

Message: Invisibility

Most of us have either had children or we have played with small children. Now when I say children what I mean here is infants to toddlers. At that age one of the very special things, you get to play with them is peek-a-boo which then develops into hide and go seek. Babies get so excited with peek-a-boo because of a concept called object permanence. Children at that age do not understand that just because they do not see it does not mean it isn't there. Let's be honest, there are some adults who have this issue too.

Hide and go seek was always one of my favorites as well. I know I've shared the story in the past of Sophia and Olivia being younger and hiding behind the curtains of our sliding glass door. You could clearly hear them and see their feet, but they felt it was the best hiding place in the world and that you would never be able to find them. The only reason this game ever worked was because as the adult you had to make the choice not to find them and not to hear them.

Peek-a-boo and hide and go seek are both positive examples of ignoring the kids to have a good time. There are, however, negative times this happens. There are times where we put on blinders to not see. Either because we do not want to see or because we are naive. An example I can give of that naivety was when I was growing up. I lived

Message for Sunday, September 28, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16: 19-31

Title: Invisibility

in an area that had a significant number of migrant workers working in the mushroom houses. Most of these individuals were illegal and I remember being in conversation with someone and they asked me if I knew anyone who was illegal. I said no and I don't think that's a problem where I live. That person kindly corrected me and said, yes you do and yes it is a problem and you are just choosing not to see it. They were correct.

Our parable today is in part about the blinders that we put on and in another part about the wealth that we have and what we choose to do with it. Some immediate context, Jesus has just been teaching on money as we read last week, the verses in between verse 13 and 19 deal with the Pharisees reaction. Their reaction was to if we translate the words literally, "turn up their noses." The Pharisees hated what Jesus had to say about how they should be treating others and their wealth.

In response to this "nose turning" Jesus tells another story however this story is far more blunt and painful for the Pharisees. The story of the rich man and Lazarus is one you may not have heard preached on in church. It is difficult and uncomfortable but that is the way most parables are supposed to be. Let's dive into it a bit and try to understand what is going on here. First it has to be stated that this is the only parable in the New Testament where Jesus names one of the people in the parable. We have the rich man, who is described quite...richly, then we have Lazarus, a name that

Message for Sunday, September 28, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16: 19-31

Title: Invisibility

means “one who God helps.” It is partly ironic because God does not help him, but also because the rich man is supposed to help him.

Lazurus is placed before the gates of the rich man and while the rich man feasts, Lazarus is licked by the dogs. Now I always understood that text to be speaking about how unclean dogs are. Religiously speaking that is just a further sign of the disparity between Lazurus and the rich man however the idea being presented is more to the effect that the only ones who took pity on Lazarus were the dogs who share the same lowly social status. Eventually they both die and here is where things start to get interesting.

I want you to notice that the afterlife is not as we know it. We have this concept of heaven and hell in our minds and that is not how the ancient writers saw it. The rich man is in the place of the dead and Lazurus is with Abraham. This is not the same type of afterlife we tend to speak of. And again, it gets more interesting, the rich man recognizes Lazurus and even speaks of him by name. He doesn't speak to Lazurus only to Abraham. Basically, even in death the rich man doesn't stoop low enough to “need” Lazarus. Instead, he asks Abraham to boss Lazurus around.

The story wraps up with Abraham denying the rich man, and denying the request to warn his brothers. The reason? Because they have already been warned. On one hand I could talk about how this parable is about wealth and how we all should be

Message for Sunday, September 28, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16: 19-31

Title: Invisibility

lifting up others with our wealth. This is true but it is not the point. The point is that the rich man ignored his responsibilities in life, we do not get to have that luxury. We have received this warning; how we treat those around us matters.

We have our own blinders on. We see situations around us, and we choose to ignore them, even though we know that we have a physical and spiritual responsibility in the situation. This story is a warning to us to take our blinders off. In this story the rich man and Lazurus are both children of Abraham. How many people do you write off just because? How many do we ignore by accident because we are so caught up in things we think are important like wealth.

One of the ideas I came across this week regarding this was that Abraham doesn't send other signs because he knows they will be ignored. You see it's not a lack of signs of God at work, is a lack of focus by us on what is most important. I invite you this week to see what is important. Who do you treat as less than a person just because? Who do you ignore, by accident or intentionally? These are the people we are called to treat as children of God, because just like us, they are children of God. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer/The Lord's Prayer

Song

Message for Sunday, September 28, 2025

Scripture: Luke 16: 19-31

Title: Invisibility

Benediction

Song