

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Conservative, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for

August 2, 2026

"But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" – 1John 3:17



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“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Deuteronomy 15:7-11

Leader: *If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart,*

People: **Nor close your hand from your poor brother;**

Leader: *But you shall freely open your hand to him, and shall generously lend him sufficient for his need*

People: **In whatever he lacks.**

Leader: *Beware that there is no base thought in your heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of remission, is near,*

People: **And your eye is hostile toward your poor brother,**

Leader: *And you give him nothing; then he may cry to the LORD against you,*

People: **And it will be a sin in you.**

Leader: *You shall generously give to him,*

People: **And your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him,**

Leader: *Because for this thing the LORD your God will bless you*

People: **In all your work and in all your undertakings**

Leader: *For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command you, saying, You shall freely open your hand to your brother,*

People: **To your needy and poor in your land.**

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Matthew 11:25-30

***Hymn #95** – *“Though Troubles Assail Us”*

Scripture Reading – Luke 6:20-38

Ancient Creedal Proclamation – Nicene Creed (pg#846 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]

[Gifts labeled “Deacon’s Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

***Doxology #731** (red hymnal)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Sung Psalm #51A – “God, Be Merciful to Me”**

Prayers of the Church & Lord’s Prayer (sins) – *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

Reformation Creedal Reading – Heidelberg Catechism, Q55.

Leader:	<i>What do you understand (in the Apostles Creed) by “the communion of saints”?</i>	1John 1:3 1Cor 1:9
People:	First, that all and every one, who believes,	Rom 8:32
Leader:	<i>Being members of Christ, are in common, partakers of Him,</i>	1Cor 12:12,13
People:	And of all His riches and gifts;	1Cor 6:17
Leader:	<i>Secondly, that every one must know it to be his duty,</i>	1Cor 12:21
People:	Readily and cheerfully	1Cor 13:1,5
Leader:	<i>To employ his gifts, for the advantage and salvation</i>	Phil 2:4-8
People:	Of other members.	

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Luke 16:19-31

***Gloria Patri #735** (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – “The Rich Man and Lazarus”

A Sermon Series on Parables

Ministry of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

Invitation & Warning

TRC practices guarded open communion. All who profess faith in Christ, have been baptized, have a basic understanding of this sacrament, and are in good standing with a biblical local church are welcome to the Lord’s Table. If you are uncertain whether you should partake, it is wise to abstain and speak with the pastor afterward.

Prayer

Words of Institution – Matthew 26:26-28 + Luke 22:19-20; 1Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:26

“While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.’ . . . Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.”

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn #460** – “Amazing Grace”

***Benediction**

Everyone is welcome to Coffee Hour Fellowship downstairs after church today

Announcements

- **Trace Robinson** is joining the saints at the Lord's Supper for the first time.
- **August 8th**, Saturday is the rescheduled date for the **Pool Party / Picnic Pot-Luck** which will start at noon at the Gabelmann's. Sandwich platters, beverages and an ice cream bar will be provided. If possible, please bring a pot-luck food item. (We will gather rain or shine.)
- After church, on **August 30th**, Pastor Doug would like to have a **discussion** with those who are interested about: 1) How can the church support Home Schoolers. 2) To see who is interested in children's Sunday School. 3) To see if there is interested in a Wednesday Night Study.
- The elders would like to take a **new photo of the entire church** sometime in September after church when the majority of members will be in attendance. Please email Pastor Doug what Sunday(s) you will NOT be in church in September.
- This church has experienced **cyber-attacks** before. Please be very discerning about any emails you get from the church, Pastor Doug or any church member. We will never ask for money via email or texts. When in doubt *call* Pastor Doug.
- Pastor Doug will be on vacation from August 3rd to 24th.
- **Sunday School** for all ages returns on Sunday, September 13th.
- The next in-person **Elder & Deacon Meeting** will be at Pastor Doug's house on **October 3rd**.
- **October 10th**, Saturday, there will our annual **Oktoberfest** at the Aldrich's. (*Rain Date: October 17th*)
- The **4th Annual Christmas Party** will be on Friday, **December 4th**.
- TRC's **Annual Meeting** is after church, on Sunday, **December 13th**. The snow-day is December 20th.

Regular Studies & Gatherings (for the summer)

- Sunday School, Tuesday Morning Study & Wednesday Study have stopped for July & August.
- **Saturday Morning Prayer Group** at the Gabelmann's. (Please call Sheryl to confirm if the group is meeting that day, 860-309-7250.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

TRC's Webpage: TrinityReformedCT.org
TRC's Facebook Page: facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/
TRC's Youtube Channel: youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT

INTERNET PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer requests for our prayer chain, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: **trcnwprayer@gmail.com**. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

LEADERSHIP

Elders:	Rev. Douglas Aldrich, pastor	860-379-1147	douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net
	Bob Ensminger	860-485-8738	robert.ensminger@arthurgrossell.com
	Rich Gabelmann	860-605-7852	rgabelmann0415@gmail.com
	Rev. Jonathan Haulenbeek	203-709-0784	jhaulenbeek@icloud.com
Deacons:	David Mattson (chair), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell, Mason Goodell, Dean Winters		
Sunday School:	Verna Aldrich	Music Coordinator:	Cindy Rines
Clerk:	Sheryl Gabelmann	Treasurer:	Cindy Rines

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Worship Starts At: 10:30 AM (9:30 AM in the summer)

Sunday Worship At: Winchester Grange (100 Newfield Rd; Winchester Center, CT 06098)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065 – Phone: (860) 238-7399

Webpage: trinityreformedct.org – Email: trinityreformedct@gmail.com

Sermon Notes

Luke 16:19-31
"The Rich Man and Lazarus"
A Sermon Series on Parables
August 2, 2026

Luke 16:19 – The Rich Man – Putting the Parable in Context

- 1) There was a rich man who loved being rich.
 - a) *"He habitually dressed in purple and fine linen"* – Luke 16:19b
 - b) Purple was the color of the rich and powerful, associated with kings and the highest social class. Dan 5:7,16,29; Mark 15:17,20
Acts 16:14; Rev 17:14; 18:12,16
- 2) Being rich, and wearing the right clothing at the right time, is not contrary to the faith.
 - a) The Bible teaches that wealth is a blessing from God. Gen 13:2; Deut 8:18; 1Kgs 3:13; 1Chr 29:12
Prov 10:22; 22:4; Eccl 5:19; 6:2; 1Tim 6:17
 - i) Proverbs 22:4 – *"The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, honor and life."*
 - ii) Because all created things are created good, including wealth. Gen 1:31; Ps 24:1; Eccl 5:19
1Tim 4:4; 6:17; James 1:17
 - b) There are many godly rich people in the Bible.¹
 - i) Including father Abraham in the Old Covenant. Gen 13:2; 15:6
 - ii) And Lydia the seller of purple in the New. Acts 16:14-15,40
 - c) Scripture teaches wearing the correct clothing, in the appropriate situation, is godly.²
- 3) The problem with this rich man is that *"he habitually dressed in purple . . ."*. He loves wealth.
- 4) The context of what came before this parable shows how wicked this man is.
 - a) Luke 15:11-32 (Parable of the Prodigal Son): God will graciously receive repentant sinners while warning about any self-righteous resentment of those who refuse to rejoice in that mercy. Which is a dig at the unforgiving Pharisees.
 - b) Luke 16:1-12 (Parable of the Unrighteous Steward): Teaches that believers must use temporary earthly wealth wisely and faithfully for eternal purposes.
 - c) Again, notice our Lord's commentary: *"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."* – Luke 16:13
 - d) Then note the Pharisees' reaction: *"Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him."* – Luke 16:14
- 5) Then Christ declares to the Pharisees: *"And He said to them, 'You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.'" – Luke 16:15*

Luke 16:19 – The Rich Man – Putting the Parable in Context

- 1) In contrast, there is *"a poor man named Lazarus."* – Luke 16:20b
 - a) This is unique, because characters in parables usually are not given names.³

¹ Both in the Old Testament: Job (1:1-3; 42:10-12); Boaz (Ruth 2:1,4,11-12; 4:9-10); Hezekiah (2Kgs 18:3-7; 2Chr 32:27-30) And the disciples of Christ in the NT: Joseph of Arimathea (Matt 27:57-60); Philemon (Philem 1-2,4-7,22).

² Think of the Parable of the Wedding Feast (Matt 22:12) or the costly garments required of the OT priests (Ex 28:2-4,40).

³ There has been much debate throughout the history of the church whether The Rich Man and Lazarus is a parable, not a parable, or parable-lite. The main arguments that it is *not* a parable are: Lazarus is named; Never directly called a parable; It includes a historical reference to Abraham; Lazarus and the rich man are directly shown to be in the afterlife. (Continues on next page.)

- b) Remember, there are two different men named “Lazarus” in the Bible.⁴
- 2) “Lazarus” means “God has helped”.
- a) This is symbolic because this poor man has no one to help him.
 - b) But God has a special love for the poor and will defend them. Ex 22:22-24; 23:6; Deut 10:17-18; Ps 12:5; 35:10
Ps 68:5; 140:12; Prov 22:22-23; James 2:5-6
 - c) This might be the reason he is given a name, to show that Lazarus is beloved by God and the unnamed wicked rich man, is not.
- 3) Lazarus is “*laid*” at the rich man’s gate, the entrance to his estate. Luke 16:20-21
- a) This means that he was too sick or disabled to support himself.
 - b) Lazarus is “*covered with sores*”; these are open ulcerated wounds, or skin lesions, showing how severely sick and helpless he is.
 - c) As we will soon read, he is near death.
 - d) He is also desperately hungry, “*longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table*”. – Luke 16:21b
 - e) He is in such a pitiful state that his only relief is that unclean (by OT ceremonial law standards) dogs lick his wounds, showing his utter misery and abandonment. Lev 11:27; Deut 14:8
1Kgs 14:11; 21:23-24
Ps 22:16; Rev 22:15
- 4) So, Lazarus is not a charlatan or a con-artist.
- a) He is a poor, wretched soul, near death, whom no one cares for.
 - b) In the ancient world it was common to place the disabled or destitute near busy entrances to seek alms. 2Sam 4:4; Mark 10:46
Luke 16:20; John 9:1,8
Acts 3:2-3,10; 14:8
 - c) **Almsgiving** is the voluntary giving of money, food, clothing, or other material aid to the poor as an act of mercy.
 - i) **Almsgiving** was one of the three common practices of Old Testament piety, along with **prayer & fasting**. Deut 15:7-11; Ezra 8:21-23
Neh 1:4; Is 58:5-10; Dan 9:3
Acts 10:2,4,30-31
 - ii) As the Lord Jesus commented on, in His Sermon on the Mount. Matt 6:1-24

Luke 16:22-23 – Heaven & Hell

- 1) Both men die.
- 2) The rich man is buried, as per the commands and traditions of Scripture. Gen 23:4,19; 35:19-20; 50:13; Deut 34:5-6
John 19:40-42; Acts 2:29; 8:2; 1Cor 15:4
- a) Probably the poor man is buried in a common grave, since, again, burial is commanded in Scripture. Deut 21:22-23
Acts 5:6,10
- b) But what happens after that is a complete role reversal.

The main arguments that it *is* a parable are: It is surrounded by other parables in Luke 15:1-16:13; It’s opening sounds like Luke 16:1 which is a parable; Numerous famous parables do not literally have the word “parable” introducing them; It sounds like a parable with the typical parabolic moral contrast or extremes followed by a final reversal; There is no location or historical setting given; It’s logistics of heaven and hell (each place and see each other, those in hell can talk to those in heaven, etc.) seem to go against the more clear systematic teaching of heaven and hell (Matt 25:31-46; Luke 16:26; John 5:28-29; 2Thes 1:6-10; Rev 20:11-15; 21:27).

Pastor Doug thinks this is a parable. Calvin argued against it being a parable but wisely stated, “Some look upon it as a simple parable; but, as the name Lazarus occurs in it, I rather consider it to be the narrative of an actual fact. But that is of little consequence, provided that the reader comprehends the doctrine which it contains.”

⁴ There is: 1) This Lazarus in this parable. (Luke 16:20) 2) The historical man from Bethany, the brother of Martha and Mary, who died and whom Christ brought back from the dead. (John 11:1ff; John 12:1ff)

- 3) Lazarus goes to heaven, carried by the angels themselves.
- a) This is not just parabolic language; throughout the, Ps 34:7; 91:11-12; 103:20-21
Bible angels are shown as active in this creation, Dan 6:22; Matt 18:1; Gal 3:19
doing God's will and protecting the saints. Heb 1:5-14; 2:2; 12:22; 13:2
 - b) It shows how much God cares for and honors the poorest of saints.
 - c) And it highlights the complete change of fortunes between the two.
- 4) The rich man goes to hell.
- a) The Bible is clear: There is a literal heaven and a literal hell.
 - b) At death, the righteous, those who are in Christ, go to heaven.
 - c) The wicked, those outside of Christ, go to hell.
- 5) Heaven is described as Abraham's Bosom in this parable. Why?
- a) Some incorrectly teach that Abraham's bosom is some special place different from heaven.⁵
 - b) This is simply heaven; the language is used for poetic reasons. (4Macc 13:17)
 - c) Remember the original audience: The Pharisees.⁶ Luke 16:14
 - i) They prided themselves on being the most devout Jews and thought themselves to be the true children of Abraham. Matt 3:7-9; 5:20; 23:5-7,23-28
Luke 18:9-12; John 8:33,39-44
Gal 3:6-9,26-29; Phil 3:4-6
 - ii) Again, remember: Abraham, the first patriarch, is considered the father of Israel. Gen 17:4-5; Is 51:2; 63:16; Matt 8:11
Rom 4:11-12,16; Gal 3:7,29
 - iii) But the Pharisees are hypocrites, lovers of wealth, and followers of man-made traditions. Matt 15:1-9; 23:13-15,23-28
Luke 11:39-44; 16:14-15; 20:46-47
Mark 7:6-13; Rom 2:17-23; 10:2-3
 - d) So, having Lazarus go to be with Abraham in heaven, while Abraham is going to explain the matter to the wicked rich man is a savage dig at the Pharisees.
 - i) This poor, ignored man, by the world's standards, is going to spend eternity reclining beside father Abraham, in fellowship, honor, and comfort, at Abraham's table.
 - ii) While the Pharisees think they are righteous but, in reality, are nameless, godless hypocrites, heading to hell.
 - iii) And father Abraham himself is going to tell them why.
- 6) The rich man, in hell, in torment, looks up and sees Lazarus, far away, in Abraham's bosom.
- a) So, the idea that in heaven and hell we can talk to each other is, in my opinion, parabolic language (i.e. not literal), because the Bible teaches there is a great separation between the righteous and the wicked in the end. Ps 1:5-6; Dan 12:2-3; Mal 4:1-3
Matt 13:40-43,49-50; 25:31-46
John 3:18-21,36; 5:28-29
Rev 20:11-15; 21:1-8,27; 22:14-15
 - b) However, that hell is a real place, and there is conscious eternal torment, is not parabolic. Is 66:24; Matt 25:41,46
It is literal, as the Bible clearly teaches. Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:23-26
2Thes 1:8-9; Rev 14:10-11
 - c) The purpose of this parabolic language is to savage the Pharisees.

⁵ Dispensationalism incorrectly teaches that "Abraham's Bosom" is a distinct "paradise" section of Hades where Old Testament saints waited until Christ's resurrection, after which they were taken to heaven.

⁶ Matt 3:7-9; 5:20; 6:2,5,16; 23:5,23,25-28; Luke 3:7-8; 11:39-44; 18:9-12; John 8:33,39-44; Rom 2:28-29; 9:6-8; Gal 3:7; Phil 3:4-6.

Luke 16:24-31 – A View From Hell

- 1) The rich man cries out, *“Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.”* – Luke 16:24
- 2) Abraham then explains, *“Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.”*
 - a) Note, Abraham calls him “child” because the rich man is externally in the covenant, i.e., in the visible church, like a false Christian who has been baptized.
 - b) In this life, the rich man had received many “good things” (which is a blessing); however, he loved these good things and did not faithfully use them; thus, he is damned.
 - c) While Lazarus received many “bad things” but was faithful and is now blessed.
 - d) Then Abraham explains that divide between heaven and hell is permanent. There are no second chances. There is no hope for those in hell.
- 3) The rich man then begs Father Abraham that he send Lazarus to the rich man’s father’s house to warn his five brothers, so they could avoid hell. Luke 16:27-28
- 4) Abraham’s response is brutal and direct. Luke 16:29-31
 - a) Abraham simply says “no.”
 - b) Because *“they have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.”* – Luke 16:29b
 - i) This is a common way of saying the Scriptures, the Bible.
 - ii) In this context, the Old Testament.
 - iii) They want to avoid hell? Believe in Whom it proclaims and then follow Him.
 - c) The Pharisees have not only rejected father Abraham; they have rejected the Law given by Moses (the thing they claim to love the most) and even the Prophets (the rest of the Bible, which the Pharisees claim over the error of the Sadducees, who affirm only the Law).
 - i) Once again, the Lord Jesus affirms the doctrine of *sola scriptura*.
 - ii) That the Bible alone is the final authority. Is 8:20; Matt 15:3-9; **22:31**; Acts 17:11; Rom 9:25
1Cor 4:6; 14:37; 2Tim 3:16-17; 2Pet 1:19-21; Rev 22:18-19
 - d) Then the desperate rich man rejects Abraham’s teaching and Scripture!
 - i) The rich man says, *“No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!”* – Luke 16:30b
 - ii) How many atheists and secularists claim that if they could just see a miracle they would believe.
 - This is delusional, because the problem is not a lack of evidence (which is all around them) but a wicked heart that is dead to God’s Word. Ps 19:1-4; Luke 16:27-31
John 6:26,36,44; 12:37-40
Rom 1:18-21; 3:9ff; 8:7-8
 - God set Israel free from Egypt, parted the Red Sea, and yet within 100 days they were worshipping the Golden Calf. Ex 12:17; 19:1; 24:18
Ex 32:1-8; Num 33:3
 - iii) Only God’s grace alone, in Christ, can regenerate a fallen human heart. Ezek 36:26-27; John 1:12-13; 3:3-8
Eph 2:4-5; Titus 3:4-7; 1Pet 1:3
 - e) This sets up the most beautiful conclusion.
 - i) The Lord Jesus, as He always does, makes the story about Himself, because it is. Luke 24:25-27,44-47; 2Cor 1:20
John 5:39-40,46; 8:56-58; Rev 19:10
 - ii) Abraham replies, *“If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.”* - Luke 16:31b

Application

- 1) This parable does not teach theological liberalism, the social gospel, social justice, equity, distributive justice, class-warfare, intersectionality, socialism, or communism, all of which are contrary to Scripture.
- 2) However, let us always look to the plank in our eye before removing the splinter in another's. Matt 7:1-6
- 3) We are saved by faith alone, but saving faith will always produce fruit.
 - a) One of the important fruits produced is charity to the poor.
 - b) So, such "right-wing" doctrines as Social Darwinism, (Ayn) Randian Objectivism, and extreme laissez-faire individualism/libertarianism, are contrary to Scripture too.
- 4) So, let's talk about almsgiving.

Almsgiving

- 1) Almsgiving is *not*:
 - a) Tithing: The giving to maintain the public worship of the Lord.
 - i) Which is given directly to the church.
 - ii) And is commanded Ex 25:1-9; 30:11-16; 35:4-29; Lev 27:30-33; Num 18:2-24
in both OT & NT. Deut 12:5-7; 14:22-29; 1Cor 9:13-14; 16:1-2; 2Cor 9:6-7; Gal 6:6
 - iii) The OT standard was 10%. Lev 27:30-32; Num 18:21,24,26; 2Chr 31:4-6
 - b) Merely not just mistreating the poor.
 - i) The Bible is very clear: God hates it when the poor are taken advantage of. Ex 22:22-24; Deut 24:14-15; Ps 12:5
Prov 14:31; 22:22-23; Amos 2:6-7
 - ii) Almsgiving is a positive action, not merely not doing something.
 - c) Helping one's family.
 - i) That one would take care of one's family is assumed and commanded. Ex 20:12; Prov 23:22; Mark 7:9-13
2Cor 12:14; 1Tim 5:4,8,16; Eph 6:1-4
 - ii) 1Timothy 5:8 – *"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."*
 - d) Paying your taxes, which is commanded, because God has ordained the magistrate, whoever it might be, to be over us. Matt 6:1-4; 22:17-21
Luke 3:12-13; 19:8
Rom 13:6-7; 2Cor 9:7
- 2) Again, **almsgiving** is the voluntary giving of material goods (money, food, clothing, etc.) to relieve the genuine poverty or distress of those in need, without expectation of repayment.
 - a) This is commanded throughout the Bible.⁷
 - i) Deuteronomy 15:7-8 – *"If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him, and shall generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks."*
 - ii) 1John 3:17 – *"But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?"*

⁷ Ex 22:25-27; Lev 19:9-10; 23:22; 25:35-38; Deut 14:28-29; 15:7-11; 24:19-22; Ruth 2:2-3,15-16; Job 29:12-16; 31:16-20; Ps 37:21,26; 41:1; 112:5,9; Prov 3:27-28; 11:24-25; 14:21,31; 19:17; 21:13; 22:9; 28:27; 31:20; Eccl 11:1-2; Is 58:6-7,10; Ezek 18:7,16; Dan 4:27; Matt 5:42; 6:1-4; 19:21; 25:35-40; Mark 10:21; Luke 3:10-11; 6:30,34-35,38; 11:41; 12:33; 14:12-14; 18:22; 19:8; Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35; 9:36; 10:2,4; 11:29-30; 20:35; Rom 12:8,13; 15:25-27; 1Cor 16:1-2; 2Cor 8:1-15; 9:5-15; Gal 2:10; 6:9-10; Eph 4:28; 1Tim 5:3-16; 6:17-19; Heb 13:16; James 1:27; 2:14-17; 1John 3:16-18.

- b) When the Lord Jesus uses parables about hell to teach the importance of a subject (e.g. forgiving, helping the poor, etc.), we probably should listen.
- 3) The focus of almsgiving is from individual believers and not so much on church committees.
 - a) There is no clear New Testament example of the organized church distributing its funds specifically to unbelieving poor people, though it is not forbidden.
 - b) There is mention of special collections for the needy in other churches.

Acts 11:27-30; Rom 15:25-27; 1Cor 16:1-4
 2Cor 8:1-4; 9:1-5; Gal 2:10
- 4) For the church, we must always remember our first love:
To love the Triune God.

Ex 20:3-17; Matt 22:37-40; 28:18-20
 Acts 2:42-47; 1Cor 5:1-13; 11:23-26; 14:26,40
 1Tim 3:14-15; 2Tim 4:1-5

 - a) The church's focus must be, in order of importance:
 - i) First and foremost, the correct worship of the Lord, especially through the correct administration of His Word.
 - ii) Second, church discipline (e.g. training, encouraging, correcting).
 - iii) Finally, outreach to this fallen world.
 - b) One of the great sins of Theological Liberalism, and modern Evangelicalism, is to confuse, invert, or ignore this order.
- 5) Why give alms?
 - a) Again, it is commanded by God.
 - b) Your neighbor needs it, and we are commanded to love our neighbor.

Lev 19:18; Deut 15:7-11; Prov 3:27-28
 Matt 22:39; Luke 10:30-37; 1John 3:16-18
 - c) It is a fruit and evidence of a merciful heart regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and God uses such obedience to train us in generosity and love and to strengthen our faith.

Deut 15:7-11; Prov 11:24-25
 Matt 5:7; Luke 6:35-36
 2Cor 9:6-11; Gal 5:6,22-23
 1John 3:16-18; 4:7-12
- 6) We give alms first to those in this local body.
 - a) We should also have a concern for other Christians outside this body.
 - b) We should be generous to those whom God has put before us:
Remember the Parable of the Good Samaritan.
 - c) If you feel called to engage in charity work (local, national, global), you have freedom, and it is always a wise thing to use your freedom for godliness.
 - d) You can, and should be, discerning to those to whom you give to, remember your other obligations (to the church, family, the state, safety, etc.), while watching out for charlatans.
Praise God that we have elders to help in this discernment.
- 7) The rich man's sin was not that he possessed wealth, but that wealth possessed him.
 - a) He loved his riches, ignored Lazarus at his gate, and refused to hear the Word of God.
 - b) His merciless life revealed an unbelieving and unregenerate heart.
- 8) Lazarus was not saved because he was poor.
 - a) He was saved by the same grace by which Abraham was saved: By faith alone.
 - b) His earthly suffering ended, and he was received into eternal comfort.
- 9) Let us be thankful for all what God has given us, including material blessings.
 - a) Praise God that, I think, none of us have known true poverty.
 - b) Let remember those blessings belong to the Almighty.
 - c) In the end, however, there will be no rich or poor, just the righteous and the condemned.
- 10) So, as poor souls, let us go to His table and taste His grace, and go then and love our neighbor.