

# **Do You See Lazarus?**

**by Pastor Gene Wickman**

**“There was a rich man... And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus... who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table...” Luke 16:19-21**

There are times when I just wish that faith were a simple matter just between God and me! God and me – that’s a lot simpler to deal with than God, me, and all the people we encounter each day. There are a lot of “needy people” out there. Sometimes we perceive them as mere annoyances. Often we live in a state of denial and ignore them. We all have more than one Lazarus to deal with but Lent challenges us to recognize Lazarus in those we meet, live and work with on a daily basis.

Even if they do not hunger for food, they hunger for respect, recognition, affirmation, and love. The sin of the rich man in this story was not being rich. His sin was ignoring the needs of Lazarus: his hunger, his sickness, and his poverty. The repentance Lent calls for includes turning away from our inclination to isolate ourselves from the needs of others, including their need for simple human affection.

My sense of this congregation is that we are all busy. We have more than enough on our plates. But you and I are called to recognize that there lies Lazarus at our door – hungry, sick, empty-hearted, rejected, and tired but craving the crumbs of our love.

Let’s be sure we ask God to help us see what is often too easy to ignore – the Lazarus at our doors!

***Lord Jesus, help us to recognize the needs of Lazarus within and without our family and help us respond with love and generosity. We pray this in Your name, AMEN.***