



**Date:** 5/19/2024

**Title:** Now and Then

**Scripture:** Luke 16:19-31

### **Introduction to Analog**

The word, Analog, means “something that is similar or comparable to something else.” Analog is designed to be a tangible way to take another deeper, look into each week’s Sunday morning message. Individuals, friends, small groups, and families can use Analog for further discussion and exploration of the Sunday teaching. May this tool help you explore the expansive heart of God and practice love in the ways of Jesus.

### **Teaching Season**

There are several stories that cause one to wonder exactly who Jesus is. While we may be quick to offer an answer, Luke does no such thing. Rather he tells several stories of parables, interactions and miracles all leading up to Jesus asking the question himself: “Who do you say I am?” And we are invited to respond.

### **Teaching**

Luke has spent the last couple chapters of his book recounting primarily parables that deal with a specific subject matter from a number of angles. We see the hypocrisy of selective compassion under the guise of Sabbath law (14.1-6); a parable about choosing exaltation or humility (14.7-11); another parable about a banquet that the rich miss out on because of the distraction of their lives, but which happens anyway (14.16-24); a collection of brief parables about knowing the cost of one’s actions and choices or the exercising of wisdom (14.24-35); then an entire chapter dedicated to the extravagant celebration of lost being found and the distant being brought near (15); followed by a parable asking us to identify which master we really serve (16.1-14); and finally a parable where we see a man who demonstrates what has been amiss in all these other examples...there is something described as a “chasm set in place” that keeps him from entering plenty, beauty and peace (16.26).

Jesus gives us picture after picture of this very thing. Whether related to money or status or acceptance, it seems that some are in a place to take hold of this Kingdom of Heaven while, for others, this Kingdom seems wholly beyond their grasp. They won’t grasp the Kingdom, but it seems as if they all are grasping for something...and their lack of wisdom means they can’t seem to see that while they pursue, serve and death grip this other thing they have no room to take hold of the life they really seek (Phil 2 – Jesus didn’t grasp).

Richard Rohr says that most people will not ever give themselves over to the kind of death of discipleship that Jesus talks about because we simply cannot die to two things: our sense of separateness and our sense of superiority. Here, a rich man, even in death cannot let go, refuses to die, and insists on the very separation that he is condemned to. There is a chasm, but is it one God

has set in place or us? Is it possible that, like CS Lewis suggests, God condemns people only insofar as he gives us what we want. If a Kingdom is truly for everyone then those who cannot stand to include all and share freely will find themselves excluded by their own sense of separation and superiority. There is no room for superiority in compassion.

Listen to the teaching [online](#) or on the DCC App

**Opening Question for the Group:** Start your group discussion with the question below.

1. What are you most looking forward to this summer?

### **Questions for Discussion or Reflection**

Here are some questions for discussion or reflection. Don't feel like you have to cover them all, and you may have questions of your own to ask. The Spiritual Practice for this week could be very meaningful for you or your group, so plan on 10 minutes or so for this exercise. If you are using this in a group context, read through these questions and the Spiritual Practice before your group meets to familiarize yourself with this material. You may want to send this out to the group before you meet.

1. What is your first response when reading this parable?
2. How does it strike you to consider Jesus being comedic in this parable?
3. Interact with this statement from Ken Keyes, "You add suffering to the world just as much when you take offense as when you give offense."
4. In what ways and in what things do you place your trust outside of reliance upon God?

### **Spiritual Practice:**

This week for our formation practice, I invite you to spend time together in silence. Breathe in sacred space and. Pay attention to what is happening in your body and create space for the Holy Spirit to bring to mind anything She wants to talk about this with you.