

## Preacher's Pen points

# Too Late!



I was driving down the highway toward work Thursday morning when I encountered this electronic display above the Interstate: “Air quality alert. Consider carpooling”. I could not suppress a chuckle. Perhaps the advice was great; however the timing was a little too late when you’re already in your vehicle alone headed down the Interstate. I could “consider carpooling” another day; but for this day there was nothing I could do. Unfortunately there is a spiritual parallel.

### A Picture of Callous Injustice

Jesus in Luke 16 tells about an impious rich man and a righteous poor man named Lazarus. Note the dramatic contrast: *“Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores.”* (Lk. 16:19-21). It is hard to imagine the callous and hard-hearted attitude of the rich man toward Lazarus. It was not as if he did not have opportunity to help; the poor man was laid “at his gate”. There could not have been any rationalizations that the poor man ought to get a job; he obviously could not walk. It was not like the poor man wanted all the rich man’s wealth; just leftovers would have been fine. And it is not like this case could not evoke sympathy. The man was full of sores from laying on the hard ground day by day and his suf-

ferings were increased by mangy dogs who did not come out of sympathy to lick the sores but who themselves added to his affliction with their rough and unclean tongues. It was truly a pitiful sight and the rich man did nothing about it.

### What the Rich Man Learned Too late

In his death the rich man was to learn things that he should have learned in life, but now would do him no good to learn. He learned too late that the time of death of unpredictable. He learned too late that God’s judgment was real and just. He learned that earthly comforts do not predict eternal blessing. He learned too late how terrible Hades is! He learned too late that there is no second chance after death. He learned too late of the importance of helping the needy. Of course in the rich man’s case, the information had been available before he learned it too late; he just hadn’t been paying attention.

### Don’t You Wait Until It Is Too Late!

Today as we gather we have the opportunity to hear what God is saying about what it takes to go to heaven. We are blessed by the opportunity to have God’s word available to us and the opportunity to study it together. And we are blessed to have the opportunity to do something about it and to have others encourage us to do it. Let us all appreciate the opportunities we have. And for those who have not yet obeyed God’s word, it is not too late to learn and do God’s will. But one day it will be “too late”! —Johnny Felker ([www.truthchasers.com](http://www.truthchasers.com))