I have said, “I have all the time in the world – now that I’m retired.” If you are young you might say, “I’m young, I can always get to that tomorrow.” Or if you’re busy, in the ascent of your professional life or in raising a family, you might say, “I don’t have time right now, I can get to it later, when I have more time.” If we find ourselves saying these kinds of things, we might be deceiving ourselves and procrastinating the important things in our life. The truth of the matter is that our life and the time we have on this Earth are finite. If we don’t make time for something today, what makes us believe tomorrow will be different? Believing there is plenty of time is a delusion at best and, at worst, a recipe for failure.

The rich man in today’s parable (Luke 16: 19-31) found that time had passed him by and all was lost. He knew only too late that there was a need for a change of heart. Perhaps he had a nagging suspicion as he passed Lazarus each day that he could help him. Maybe he told himself that some day he would stop and offer his assistance. … But the rich man was a busy man, and why didn’t Lazarus do something to help himself. We are all busy and the demands on our time are greater then the time available. What this means for me is that I must make choices, because there isn’t time to do it all. There is only time to do the most important things. I must also guard against the time wasters like the Internet social media and TV. (I’m preaching to myself on these issues.)

The choice on how to best use my time begins with deciding what is most important in my life. I like to think that my faith is of greatest importance and if this is true I will
choose to live by the Golden Rule. “Do unto others, as I would have them do unto me.” After loving God, the greatest commandment is to love others. (Matthew 22: 34-40) If I choose to live my life by faith, then I must begin to put the welfare of others at the top of my list and how I spend the limited time I have on this earth. An accurate indication of what is important to me is to look at where I spend my time and resources. As I discover that my life has not always held the care of others in the highest place, then it is time to make a change.

The necessary change begins with making different choices when deciding how I spend my time. If I don’t want to end up in the unenviable position of the rich man in the parable, then now is the time to make a change. Later may be too late… The first step in making a change is in admitting that what has gone before has not worked and I am in need of God’s mercy. Out of God’s forgiveness will come the grace to make the necessary changes in my life. Am I ready to ask for God’s mercy by admitting my failure to love? Am I ready to accept this life-changing mercy in my life? Do I have the courage to try something different? Remember, what has not worked in the past will not work in the future. Recall that one definition of insanity is trying the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. The time is now to take a different path. It may be time to get off of our comfortable couches and trust God’s grace.

So if, when you heard the indictments in today scripture passage from Amos (Amos 6:1a, 4-7) and parable from Luke’s Gospel, your conscience may be trying to tell you something. If you are ready to make a change (or not) you may want to reflect on Paul's words from his First letter to Timothy (1Timothy 6:11-16). He is imploring us to “pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.” St. Paul explains that it is in pursuit of these virtues that we will lay hold of eternal life, the life Lazarus experiences in the bosom of Abraham. As children of Abraham it is the destiny that God desires for us. Remember – “Tempus Fugit, Memento Mori.”