



Focus Text: Luke 16:19-31

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores.

Pastoral Reflection by Rev. J. George Reed, Executive Director, NC Council of Churches

We were on our tour bus, about to leave the dorm where we had been staying, when a few of us saw her. She looked about sixty years old, and she looked like she could have been my grandmother. She came quietly around the corner of the building, went straight to the big trashcan, and started digging out our thrown-away lunches. She put what she could find in a bag, and she was gone.

Sheltered life that I had led, I had never before seen someone using a trashcan as a food source.

Personal Vignette by Jason R. Jenkins, *A Living Wage for North Carolina: An Introduction*

In January 1998, the City of Durham passed a living wage ordinance requiring all service contractors doing business with the city to pay workers "enough money to support a family of four above the poverty level." In 2001, the City Council folded city employees into the living wage mandate and set the rate at \$9.15 per hour.

Key Fact

The Federal minimum wage increased to \$7.25 on July 24, 2009 which provides an annual salary of \$15,080 per year. However, according to the NC Justice Center's Living Income Standard calculation, the typical North Carolina family with children must earn \$41,184 per year to afford basic expenses. That amount requires adults in the average family to earn a total of \$19.80 per hour, more than triple the amount of the current minimum wage.

Photo courtesy Photos8.com