

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - July 13, 2009

The Pastor's Pen

As many of you are aware we've just completed a sermon series on the Beatitudes that we titled "The Character of a Christian." I have been asked to put in the Newsletter a synopsis of these sermons on the Beatitudes. That synopsis will form the content of this and next week's columns.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The character trait that results in blessing for the poor in spirit is humility. The blessing the poor in spirit receive is the rule of God in their lives, i.e., "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." That blessing is possible because of the humility that characterizes them. Humility opens them to the things of God. Humility opens the poor in spirit to the rule of God in their lives. And so "blessed are the poor in spirit," for because of their humility the rule of God can enter their lives. "Theirs **is** the kingdom of heaven."

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." The grieving to which Jesus refers in this verse is most likely a grieving over sin, either in one's own life, the life of another, or in the world. This would be the case moreso than a grieving over loss, although I do believe that Christ's comfort comes to those who do in fact grieve over a loss, especially the death of a loved one. However, grief over sin in one's own life, the life of another, or in the world is particularly comforted because in grieving over that sin one finds oneself in alignment with God. I believe that God grieves over sin. The Bible would surely seem to indicate that. And so it is that those who grieve over sin, as well as over loss, are blessed in that they become aligned with God in that grieving, and in becoming aligned with God there is comfort. One knows that one's grief has not gone unnoticed. God cares.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The meek inherit the earth because like the poor in spirit they are incredibly open. They are open to what life can teach them. That is to say that the meek in particular have a teachable spirit. A teachable spirit is a blessing because one can learn much. The earth around us along with life itself yields understanding and even wisdom to those who have a teachable spirit. The obstinate and the arrogant, on the other hand, are a different story. Obstinance and arrogance closes people to what life has to teach. And so it is that the meek are indeed blessed. They are in a position of receiving much that life has to teach them simply because they are able to receive from life. They have a very teachable spirit.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." Have you ever eaten something that is particularly salty, like country ham, and afterward it seems that you just can't get enough to drink? You feel constantly thirsty. One's thirst just can't seem to be satiated. That I think is the way unrighteousness works. People can hunger and thirst for that which is not right nor good, and the problem with that kind of hunger and thirst is that it can never be fully satiated. Substance addictions would be a case in point. When one is addicted to a drug or drugs, it takes more and more of the drug to get the same feeling as before. One is never filled. The appetite is never satiated, and frankly I think that is the case with most

kinds of unrighteousness. One can never get enough. The hunger is never filled. Righteousness on the other hand satisfies. To really seek after righteousness brings a satisfaction to life. It brings peace, and it does that because that which is being sought satisfies. And so those who truly seek after that which is righteous find a life that is satisfying, and to find that life is to be truly blessed. Righteousness satisfies like unrighteousness cannot, and thus those who hunger for righteousness find the blessing of always having their hungers satisfied.

Until next time, *Bro. Jim*

USED BIBLE STORY BOOKS NEEDED FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

During Vacation Bible School, one of the nights our theme will be "Go Tell". We will be cleaning and preparing Bible story books and children Bibles to be given away at our Loaves and Fishes ministry. If you have books to donate for this, please call the Church Office at 762-3696 or bring books to the Church Office before July 19th. In advance, we thank you for your generosity. God bless you all.

TUESDAY LUNCHES

June 30 was the starting date that lunch will be provided to people who participate in the Loaves and Fishes program. **Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., each Tuesday through the month of July. Anyone who is interested in helping cook, serve, clean up, or would like to make a dessert for a particular Tuesday, please call the church office (762-3696) or Carol Beasley (*****) and give the date you are available. We are also accepting donations to help with the cost of the lunch - please label you donation**

"Tuesday lunches." Thanks so much for you help with this new ministry and please remember us with your prayers. "The king will say to those at his right hand, '...I was a stranger and you welcomed me...just as you did it to one of the least of those who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

(Matthew 25:34-35, 40)

FISH FRY

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15TH, FROM 4 UNTIL 7 P.M.

\$10.00 PER MEAL (DRINK INCLUDED)

CLC BUILDING OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

212 WATERLOO STREET

TICKETS PRESOLD AT TASTE OF THE TOWN, CHURCH OFFICE OR

HABITAT BOARD MEMBERS (ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR)

PLEASE SUPPORT LAWRENCE COUTNY HABITAT FOR HUMANTIY

BUILDING HOUSES/BUILDING HOPE

FOR MORE INFO: 762-8185

VBS REGISTRATION

Reminder: You may pick up your Vacation Bible School registration forms in the church office or you may register online. VBS is July 20-24 and that date is fast approaching. You may pick up as many registrations forms as you need if you wish to invite your friends.

PULASKI DISTRICT UNITED METHODIST WOMEN MISSION EDUCATION EVENT

Please mark your calendars. The Pulaski District UMW Mission Education event will be held at Coleman Memorial United Methodist Church on **August 15th**. The church office has registration forms for this event. You must register by August 11. You do not have to be a member of the UMW to attend the study.

WITH ONE ANOTHER

David Robertson

Freddie Mae Jackson

Oscar and Agnes McCarter

Bill Evans

