



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
214 East Jefferson Street, Iowa City 52240. (At the corner of Dubuque & Jefferson Streets)
Phone 319.337.2857. *Lead Pastor, Rev. Dr. Barrie M. Tritle*

Many Gifts, One Spirit

Sunday morning worship services at 8, 9:15, and 10:30 / Sunday School at 9:15

Growing Deeper and Going Farther by Pastor Barrie M. Tritle

Scripture for the Week of November 7, 2010

LUKE 6:20-31

Then he looked up at his disciples and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. "But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. "Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. "Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. "Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

"But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Centering Quote

"Every Saint has a past and every Sinner has a future."
Jan Karon in Light from Heaven

Reflections: Blessed

What does it mean to say one is "Blessed"? According to a couple of dictionaries it means to be divinely or supremely favored; fortunate; blissfully happy or contented; or bringing happiness, pleasure, or contentment.

When Jesus preaches the Beatitudes and says, "Blessed," what does he mean?

Jesus says, "Blessed you who are," and then lists the realities of life with the promise of a reversal of these realities because God looks on them with favor. Jesus then challenges us as followers to live out the values of his kingdom in a radical way even in the face of conflict and oppression. For Jesus to love one's enemies, pray for one's abusers, and give to one's detractors, is living out the kingdom of God in the midst of the world's broken system.

We have all seen persons who have been able to do this and often we wonder if we too can't be more faithful in living out the values of Jesus in our hurting and broken world. Could we become a beacon of hope for those who have none? When we do this, we realize the truth of Jesus' words: we are Blessed.

Questions to Ponder

- 1) How has God blessed you?
- 2) Who has been a blessing to you?
- 3) Think of someone who has been a blessing to you and say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for them and if they are still living send them a note of thanksgiving for how they have blessed your life.
- 4) How have you become a blessing to others?
- 5) How is God calling you to become a blessing?

