



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 August 22, 2010

Luke 13:10-17

¹⁰Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. ¹²When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." ¹³When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. ¹⁴But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the Sabbath day." ¹⁵But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? ¹⁶And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing."

Centering Quote

"When someone deeply listens to you it is like holding out a dented cup you have had since childhood and watching it fill up with cold fresh

water. When it balances on the top of the rim you are understood. When it overflows and touches your skin you are loved." John Fox

Reflections

What is the Sabbath day for? When we come to worship we bring our lives and all our accumulated experiences of both joy and brokenness, of both fulfillment and bondage, of both freedom and being bent over. Sabbath is the great day of reconnecting with our God who has the power to loosen the grip of whatever holds us and keeps us bound up and bent over.

It is possible to have Sabbath moments everyday to connect to God? One prayer method that does this is the Breath Prayer or Jesus Prayer. This ancient form of prayer is based on the scripture Luke 18:9-14 where a tax collector prays "*Lord be merciful to me a sinner.*" The concept is to say a short prayer to God as you breathe, saying your favorite name for God as you breathe in and saying your petition to God as you breathe out. One example of this is "*Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner*" which is an expansion of the Kyrie Eleison used by a group of Desert Fathers in the fifth century in Egypt.

If you want to connect with God throughout the day this prayer form will help you do it and will guide you to go deeper in your relationship with God so that you can go farther in your service of Christ.

Questions to Ponder

If by some chance Jesus Christ showed up in church this next Sunday and asked you what one thing you would like for him to do for you - - what would it be?

In eight words or less breathe in your favorite name for God and exhale your request to God. This can be your breath prayer that connects you to God any time and any where.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 "*Pray without ceasing*"

Resource Recommendation

I recommend for those who want to read more about this simple prayer form "Breath Prayer a simple way to pray" by Ron DelBene which helps explain and adapt this prayer form for us today.