



VBS | June 23-27

REGISTER NOW!

In person in the Narthex or online at tmumc.org

DO YOU HAVE THE POWER?

We've had such an overwhelming response to help us achieve our goal of 1,000 kids in VBS, but we still need 21 co-guides to make it all possible!

ALL THE DATA

Three Sessions:

Morning (9 a.m. to noon)

Afternoon (1 p.m. to 4 p.m.)

Evening (6 p.m. to 9 p.m.)

Prices

Volunteer Registration — \$15 per child, \$45 family max

Non-Volunteer Registration — \$25 per child, \$60 family max

Optional — Music CD \$5, Adult t-shirt \$7

Some age levels by session are already beginning to fill up, so hurry and register now!

Power Lab Program for children ages 2 to upcoming 5th graders. *Parents of children 4 and under must remain on-site as a volunteer in accordance with Trietsch's children's security policies.*

New 6th graders — Visit tmumc.org for info about Trietsch's Mission Camp

YOUTH TRAINING

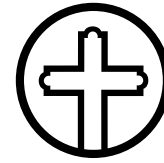
June 22, 1:00 p.m. (After training, youth will work on their picture frame and help set up.)

DONATIONS

Teen Jeans - The VBS Mission Project this year is to collect 1,200 pairs of jeans for CCA Back to School.

If we meet our goal, Kris Melvin will get slimed and have green slime dropping on his head!

“Buy a beaker!” These donations purchase supplies.



TRIETSCH

June 15, 2008

Study Guide & Daily Readings

Front Porch Stories

Gleaning the Truths from the Parables of Jesus

The Big Fish

Luke 18:9-14

The Pharisee and Tax Collector is a parable about religious pride. Instead of having faith in God, the Pharisee has chosen to trust himself. This parable contrasts two men who go the Jerusalem temple to pray. Since they go at the same time, it is probably on one of the two prescribed hours of prayer, at 9:00 am or 3:00 pm.

The Pharisee

The Pharisee was a pious man living an honest and upright life. He more than observed the law by fasting regularly on Mondays and Thursdays, although the law required fasting only once annually on the Day of Atonement. He tithed on all his possessions when the law only required a tithe on his annual income. The ranks of the Pharisee sect did contain some considerate men; unfortunately this Pharisee was not typical.

The Pharisee takes the stance of pride and thanks God that he is not guilty of the sins of others. Openly he points out the tax collector that has come to pray at the same time and thanks God that he is better than this other man.

Jesus frequently points out the folly of self justification. There is no way that we can ever live up to the perfection required by the law. We all fall short of its glory. In *Isaiah 66:2*, the prophet speaks for the Lord, saying, ***“All things my hand has made, and so all these things are mine, but this is the one to whom I will look, to the humble and contrite in spirit, who trembles at my word.”***

In King David's prayer for forgiveness in *Psalms 51:17* he says, ***“The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”***

The opportunity for personal gain through religious practice is common in every generation. Somehow we find comfort in believing we can control our future with God.

The Tax Collector

The tax collector takes the stance of penitence. He stood far off from the Holy Place and did not dare to lift up his eyes; much less his hands, but simply poured out a confession of sinfulness and an appeal for God's mercy. He simply cast himself on the mercy of God and confesses his sinfulness.

In commenting on the story Jesus insists that the tax collector is pronounced righteous and the Pharisee not. The worst sort of sin is self-righteous religious pride. One is justified by trust in God, not in one's own efforts. The final verse which has several parallels in the gospels (*Luke 14:11, Matthew 8:4, 23:12*) refers to the reversal of this situation at the judgment.

Discussion Questions

Please note: These questions are intended to be used in any way that is helpful for you. You may use them as a means of personal reflection. Or you may want to use them as a family to further discuss the issues of humility.

- Explain what it means to be humble and give an example
- Share an experience you've had in humility that was a stepping-stone toward maturity
- Give some reasons it is hard to be humble
- Compare and contrast the attitudes of the Pharisee and the publican. How was each man's attitude reflected in these prayers?
- Name some signs or symptoms of arrogant pride
- Explain why condemning judgments often boomerang or come back to haunt us
- Give some reasons why people make condemning judgments. Rather than judging other, what is a better course of action to take?
- In what way did the Pharisee use the wrong measuring stick?
- Share a time when the grace of God turned a bad situation into something good
- How does it feel when a worst day suddenly becomes a best day?

Next Week's Worship: "Just Wait"

Daily Readings

Please note: As we look at some of the parables of Jesus, here are other passages that address humility.

Monday, June 16 – Read *Micah 6:6-8*. Micah addresses the tendency of trying to earn God's favor with sacrifice or right behavior. Instead, God measures our heart. One can not live a true righteous and virtuous life without the atonement of the heart and spirit. As followers of Jesus, we are dependent on the grace of God that comes through Christ. On this first day of the week, ask God to purify your heart. Make sure that your dealings with others reflect the purity of Christ working in and through you.

Tuesday, June 17 – Read *Luke 18:15-17*. Jesus said, ***"Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."*** Jesus does not say that we should be childlike in our faith. Instead Jesus' concern is over "how" we accept the kingdom of God. A child is free from pride and skepticism. Children can trust with no strings attached. They are willing to follow without question. Where is God leading you in your life? Are you willing or are you full of questions and doubts?

Wednesday, June 18 – Read *Isaiah 66:2*. Some point to this passage as a protest against the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem. Earlier Isaiah has established that the rebuilding of the temple is God's full desire. Instead, Isaiah is pointing to the temptation that we have to build our own monuments. We seek God's favor by doing. There is no question that God calls all of us to some task in God's Kingdom. But what is our motivation? Does our work for God come out of a humble and contrite heart? What is the condition of your heart today? Are you working to serve or be served?

Thursday, June 19 – Read *John 13:1-19*. Here John reports the washing of the disciple's feet. As Christians, our relationships are built on what we do for each other in service and not on what is done for us. We are called to feed others not just to be fed. Jesus said, ***"So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."*** Whose feet do you need to wash today? What can you do for that person to make them feel important?

Friday, June 20 – Read *Romans 12:3-8* and *I Corinthians 12:12-26*. In each of these passages Paul uses the body as a metaphor for the working of the Christian community. Every part of the body is important for the function of the whole. We are called to do all we can to work together. In verse 3 of *Romans 12*, Paul says, ***"do not think of yourself more highly than you ought to think..."*** Further in *I Corinthians 12:24*, ***"God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another."*** Then in verse 26, ***"if one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."*** What can you do this weekend to encourage and support someone else?