

First United Methodist Church

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“Are you the one, or should we expect another?” These words came to my mind the other day. Those words were spoken by John the Baptist, through his messenger, to Jesus. John, who was in prison at this time, had heard about the miracles and such that Jesus was doing. Realizing that his life was probably soon ending, John was likely concerned about the men and women who were following him. Who should they go to for spiritual advice and direction. Who should they follow to get closer to God? So, he sent a messenger to Jesus asking the question. “Are you the one?” Are you the real deal...are you an imposter...are you just a scammer?

What brought this Bible story from Matthew and Luke to mind is that this past week we’ve had to deal with a couple of “scam” bills that have come to the church office. The bills look real, but I’ve found myself asking, “Are you the real deal...or should we expect something else?” And upon digging deeper, sure enough, the bills we received weren’t bills for services rendered...they were wanting our money...our resources for ministry.

I admit, one of the things that makes me really sad about our culture today is the amount of energy, time, creativity, and the resources that are wasted every year, even every day, by people trying to “scam” other people. I’ve often said, “If only that creativity and energy could be used for good in our world.”

Really though, it isn’t just the telemarketers calling, the bogus bills, or the “free vacation time-share just for you” messages that we receive on a regular basis. There are so many things in our world today that are vying for our attention and promising incredible rewards, opportunities, results in our lives if we just use this, buy that, follow them, “like” us, invest here, etc., etc.

One of the reasons why I believe Jesus is the “real deal” is because he doesn’t promise that everything will be wonderful in life once we follow him. There’s no, “Follow me and you’ll lose 30 pounds, life will suddenly be organized, relationships will be healed, problems will all be solved, and everything in life will be hunky dory.” No, Jesus says there will be struggles, there will be difficulties, there will still be problems to deal with in life. Jesus said, “Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He promises us rest, he promises to be with us at all times, he promises the Spirit to guide and strengthen us. He doesn’t promise that everything will be magically fixed. He doesn’t promise an easy life. He promises to be with us...always!

Today as I go through my day, I am seeking to lean on, rely upon, and follow Jesus. I know there are scammers trying to lead me down a different path. I’m sure there are times I’ll be tempted to follow. Sometimes I might even take a step or two in that direction. But my hope and my prayer is that I will always look for and be drawn to the “light of the world,” Jesus. Yes, Jesus, the one who loves me and calls me to love others, is the real deal. Today, and every day, I seek to recommit my life to follow Jesus, the one I believe truly is the light of the world! How about you?? Let’s journey together the path of faithful living!

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

This Sunday is Mother’s Day...YAY MOM’S!! This Sunday is also **Graduate Recognition Sunday**. Join us as we honor our High School Graduates and pray God’s blessing upon them and their next chapter of life and faith.