

## 07-10-19 Wednesday Musing

Along with growing a small garden... tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and bell peppers I have several fruit trees and vines that are on our property. I enjoy watching things grow and reaping the bounty... if I can beat the squirrels and other wildlife to them. I recently discovered that one of my favorite apple trees... my Stafford Apple... had been stripped bare of all of its fruit... This apple tree is one that is a family heirloom... from my Maternal Grandmother's family... the Staffords. This tree, which can be found in a book by Creighton Lee Calhoun, Jr. entitled "Old Southern Apples," has been in my family for years... Each July I enjoy picking the beautiful yellow/red apples and storing them in various ways to be used throughout the cold winter months. This year however... I found one tiny apple left on the trees that stand in my yard... ☹️ I certainly hope that whatever animals got them enjoyed them as much as I do.

Another of my favorite fruits in my yard are the blueberries... which are now ripening. Then will come the concord grapes followed in the fall by the muscadine and scuppernong grapes. The wonderful flavors that explode in your mouth when you pop one in are heaven sent! As I was checking on my vines over the weekend, I found that a recent storm had bent one of the fragile new shoots and it hung limp... the leaves withered... It had been cut off from the life flowing sap that nourishes and hydrates the plant... It reminded me of the Scripture from John 15... Verses 1-2 tell us "1 **I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.**" Jesus makes a clear distinction between the vine and the branches... He is the vine; we are the branches. The two are joined but not one. The common denominator in nature is the sap... the sap is the life of the vine and the branches. Cut off the flow of sap to the branch and it withers and dies, just as my little branch did. And just as the branch draws its life from the vine... so do we draw our life from Christ... He is made freely available to us if we accept His life blood... the Holy Spirit... which He freely gave and offers to us today. Verse 5 **"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."** confirms that we must remain a part of the vine to receive the life-sap offered to us... otherwise our life will amount to nothing... the only fruit we will receive will be the earthly things we acquire which while here on earth... we will receive nothing of eternal importance such as riches in heaven that are Jesus. Verse 6 **"If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned."** In this I see WARNING! ... Don't let your branch bend... do not let it be cut from the life flowing sap that Jesus desires to fill you with... If you remain in the Word... the fruit will be bountiful! John 5: 7-8 **"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."** The secret... Remain devoted to living in and for Jesus... this takes your whole heart... not just the slices you give on Sunday when you attend church... this is a 24/7 process...

Looking ahead at what's happening around the church... be sure to mark your calendars for July 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>. The Summer Symposium will take place in the Bray Fellowship Hall from 6:30

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pm - 7:30 pm. This year's speakers... speaking on various topics will be Peggy Johnson, Carol Fonville and Mack Painter.

This Sunday the Official Board will meet in the conference room at 9am. There is no Sunday School in the month of July.

The Board of Christian Education will meet in the library at 11:45 am immediately after the worship service.

The Board of Finance meets next Tuesday at 2pm in the church conference room.

This week's prayer concerns are: Nancy Thomas, Anna Gerow, Norma Simons, Family of Jeanne Williams, Family of Mary Jane Pettigrew, Family of Pat Sellars, Faye Strickland, Frances Morgan, Harvey Sharpe, Donna Freeman, Dotti Davis, Also remember friends: Pete Pate & Jane Pate—Family of Jamie Fonville, Family of Curtis Pass, Marilyn Parsonson—Aunt of Mark Garrison, Daniel Contino—Friend of Joan Paschal, Nancy Toney, Connie Papadis, Jeanette Hudson—mother of Connie Collins, Family of Reggie Jeffries. Please remember the families as well as the person listed.

This weeks Scripture will be taken from: Mark 2: 13-17 and 1 Timothy 1: 8-17. The Sermon title is "Never Forget".

Peace and grace...

Joan 😊

