



Monday Quotes

Grain

“I think we should be working for contentment...an inner sense of fulfillment that’s relatively independent of external circumstances.” Andrew Weil
Submitted by Deb Martin, Oshkosh, WI

Field

“1 For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard... 6 And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" 7 They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." 8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." 10 Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. 11 And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner... 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous? 16 So the last will be first, and the first will be last." Matthew 20:1, 6-8, 10-16

Thoughts

We will always be comparing ourselves to one another, wondering if we have enough in relationship to what others possess. With self-observation, we can notice when we really are experiencing a form of injustice and when we are beginning to get lost in seeing ourselves through a lens of scarcity and need to readjust our vision. With grace we realize we don't know all the suffering of others we compare ourselves to and are content with our own abundance.

What about the scarcity that permeates the lives of people living in poverty? Those of us employed may rightfully feel as though we work hard for what we receive and pay a lot in taxes. But then we might ask why people who aren't working receive support. The image of people in poverty that has emerged in our country can leave out the reality of individuals working full-time and still living in homeless shelters and those who cannot find employment or are unable to work because of a disability or their age. The generous landlord in Matthew 20 represents justice in the face of laborers who don't have all the facts. In today's world, most people who receive help from safety net programs are off benefits within three years. The majority of fraud related to FoodShare has been revealed to involve store owners or managers. A high percentage of Americans will at some time use at least one form of public benefits, especially when we include unemployment insurance. Paying attention to facts and to gaps in opportunities and privileges help us discern how to advocate for others and for ourselves.

The generous landlord offers a scenery of the Kingdom of God, a lens through which we can get a fuller view of our neighbor and how we lift our voices to move our society toward compassion.

Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy