



### **Grain**

Using the word Devil helps us to take the complexity of evil seriously.

Paraphrase of Father Richard Rohr at the Festival of Homiletics

### **Field**

“20 and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. 21 When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." 22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." 23 And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? 28 "Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— 30 for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit." 31 Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. 32 A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." 33 And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" Mark 3:20-23 and 28-33

### **Thoughts**

Is there a sin that can't be forgiven? If so, what is it? I've heard people struggle with whether or not they have hit upon that particular sin. We can all wonder, “Am I really forgiven?” “Am I missing certain things in my life as a punishment from God?”

At the Festival of Homiletics that I recently attended, one of our presenters discussed how preachers, but all people, are supposed to have something missing in our lives. He went on to say that there are individuals who destroy themselves reaching for what isn't given to them. What's missing isn't a sign of being punished, but something to get a handle on and to take as an opportunity to know grace.

Jesus talked about the sin against the Holy Spirit in the midst of teachers who knew the truth about how God worked and still denied someone who embodied the Holy. Very educated, aware religious leaders tried to alter the crowd's perception of Jesus. Still, was Jesus just trying to wake them up with his response or making an actual determination, the kind I am unable to form about anyone?

As we name evil with titles such as Satan or the Devil to take the mystery of evil seriously, we need to be careful about judging ourselves and demonizing others. Remember that we are gifted with a life of simple repentance and forgiveness, be alert to how structural evil lures us in, and name systems that increase what is missing in people's lives to the level of injustice. Jesus was extreme about protecting God's truth. To his intervening family he went far: “Who are my mother and my brothers?” His words were sharp but filled with an extravagant invitation to people who had holes in their lives and from whom he was ready to cast out demons. Happy Monday!

### **Prayer**

Highly Recommended

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy