



Grain

“Human beings were given a secret and that secret was not how to begin, but how to begin again.” Elie Wiesel

Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

Field

2 Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" 3 He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" 4 They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." 5 But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you... 11 He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; 12 and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." Mark 10:2-5 & 11-12

Thoughts

What kind of filter do you have reading Jesus' message about divorce? When absorbing the Gospel lesson in its context, we recognize Jesus is talking about protecting the vulnerable in an ancient culture that made it almost effortless for husbands, who had all the economic power, to end their marriages. Wives could be left struggling to survive. Before learning that, I missed the part about Jesus responding to human hardness of heart. I thought Jesus pronounced judgment against all divorces in every situation. My filter to understanding was shaped by my church in another synod and the impression I got when I learned that my mother was refused communion after she divorced.

As people of faith, we try to honor one another as children of God, forgive, work at commitment, and to not confuse servanthood with quietly enduring every type of behavior. We struggle with murkiness mixed with the wonder in relationships. None of us are free of sin. However, the aspect of divorce Jesus addresses in Mark is clear - we need to protect those impacted by an imbalance of power. If the religious leaders wanted to access a law in a way that only benefited themselves, how else would they use their filter of privilege to interpret other laws?

The question we're left with is how do we in our hearts and via advocacy protect the vulnerable, which can include ourselves and people we have hurt? In understanding intentional and unintentional harm, where do we need new filters or new policies? Prayers for all who have been treated as less than a child of God than you most certainly are. May God heal us in our brokenness and help us to begin anew again. Happy Monday!

Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy