



Grain

“My goal in life is to be endlessly altered.” Holly Near

Field

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." 26 They were greatly astounded and said to one another, "Then who can be saved?" 27 Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible." Mark 10:23-27

Thoughts

When was the last time you were converted, when you finally understood from another person's point of view and could love, or gained an insight in a way that changed your perspective? I have had many conversions in my life, and the most difficult ones have involved at first, not recognizing some of my own advantages that another individual or group couldn't claim.

Jesus was always redirecting people to the kingdom of God, and he named wealth as a barrier to the kingdom. We can't judge what is in another's heart, but know when wealth is being abused to control rather than love. Jesus' words feel close when the wealthy lobby political leaders to grant themselves subsidies and bailouts to entrench their wealth and do harm to others. We search our own hearts and admit how hard it can be to imagine outside of our own privilege, and yet that envisioning beyond ourselves is part of glimpsing the kingdom of God.

In the documentary *Inequality for All*, Nick Hanauer, a wealthy venture capitalist, says the majority of the millions of dollars he makes each year goes into funds of other funds invested globally. "Most of the return isn't creating any kind of social utility." He said for years he bought into the belief that money from the wealthiest trickled down into jobs. Now, he accuses the richest who call themselves "job creators," as simply "making a claim on status, privileges and power."

We expect some inequality of wealth and certain tax breaks and other incentives for business owners, but when is inequality so vast that it damages everyone else and God's creation? I would say now. Hanauer didn't describe how he changed, but we need more perspective-transformations.

Our path for getting perspective-tuneups is via our faith. May we all be graced with the conversions we need within our struggles and muddles, disappointments and joy. Happy Monday!

Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy