



## Grain

“This wondrous building had been built off the sweat and exploitation of the poor.” The Reverend Dr. Samuel Cruz

## Field

1 As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!" 2 Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down." 3 When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, 4 "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" 5 Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. 6 Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. 7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. 8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs. Mark 13:1-8

## Thoughts

How would you like to go sightseeing with Jesus? You say, “Wow, Jesus look at that building’s architecture. The stones are magnificent.” Jesus grunts, “It won’t last. Do you see all those great buildings over there? Every stone will be thrown down.” You ask, “When?” He doesn’t even answer your question but responds with, “Better watch it. Don’t be led astray.”

What a Debby Downer Jesus was, at least to sightseers or the ones who wielded control within the edifices that would fall. However, the people who were cheated by powerful officials (beware of those in high places who “devour widows’ houses”), heard Jesus’ words differently. Samuel Cruz, says that many of those who constructed the buildings Jesus pointed to did not benefit from what was offered inside them. A change in structure all around – in the buildings and system – was good news.

ELCA Minister Venice Williams of Alice’s Garden and The Table in Milwaukee recently gave an amazing talk about the power of food, the rich history of creativity and culinary skills in the black culture, and the history of that creativity being co-opted. White slave owners nabbed recipes from the black culture without respect for the chefs. Venice talked about magic in the kitchen and about how food is a bridge between diverse groups when it is shared and the cultures are respected and credited.

Co-opting happens when we want an individual’s or a group’s ideas, creativity, and labor but not them. We recognize co-opting on a small scale and also within entire systems that try to erase people and their stories. Don’t be led astray and seduced within those structures, but we are. By grace we return from the seduction of narrow systems to a broader scenery of sharing and hope. Happy Monday!

## Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy