



Grain

“Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5

Field

“¹² He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. ¹³ But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." Luke:12-14

Thoughts

“So many of my relationships are transactional,” a former colleague shared. Her faith was one of the places she could return to remember deeper connections. In that conversation, the above words from Hebrews and St. Luke might have been grace to her.

There is nothing wrong with networking to build circles of relationships that lead to making beneficial negotiations or successful business deals. However, engaging with the beauty that surrounds us in people is not determined by whether or not we get everything we want from them. Jesus engaged individuals and communities beyond their label levels and we are asked to do the same for one another (and ourselves). How interesting that the passage from Hebrews about the love of money doesn't end with a judgment but a promise that we will not be forsaken. The fear of having little can be the fear of losing love.

Whatever the political leanings of people in a congregation, freedom in Christ is where we return. But what if it's not? There are brands of Christianity that mark God's blessings by what people own, that do not repent of how we've damaged the planet but give a nod to trading glaciers and the Amazon rainforest for the love of money, promote racial subjugation that incites violence, and limit who is worthy to sit at the table. Making mistakes with power is what we return to Christ from, not a model out of which we shape a religion. Discerning the difference is vital in today's world.

As imperfect beings, we return from stumbling around with power or simply from lives that seem overly packed with quid pro quo interactions, to freedom in Christ. All are invited. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy Crane