



Grain

“Prophets are, by their nature, inconvenient party-poopers. It is a mistaken notion that prophets can see the future. Rather, they tell us what is true right now.”

–Thomas Cahill **Submitted by Peter Bakken, Madison**

Field

1 Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. 2 He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. 3 In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent.' 4 For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming..." Luke 18:1-5

Thoughts

What's more irritating than someone who points out an inconvenient truth? Someone who just won't be quiet about it. That describes our widow in the Gospel text. As a woman alone she was the very definition of vulnerability in her ancient culture. But she had a voice and a sense of how to use it to advocate for herself to the point of being a real nag and party-pooper at the judge's power party.

The widow tired the judge out and may also have been exposing his unjust ways, but it is interesting that it didn't lead to anyone's transformation. I love conversion stories and believe we can be converted many times in our lives. By grace, how often have we been altered as we let go of our egos, or perceived from a fresh perspective simply by gaining new information. When considering the latter, Wisconsin's former attorney general, Brad Schimel comes to mind. After being part of a statewide Human Trafficking Task Force, he moved from being against a bill that would decriminalize youth under 18 caught in prostitution to at a hearing testifying, "I have had a change of heart." He gave a powerful testimony. However, I'd celebrate the Wisconsin State Assembly finally moving forward on the same bill regardless of how changed the members' hearts may or may not be, because caring for the basic needs of young people via healthy public policy matters just as the widow mattered as a child of God.

We want legislators, U.S. Congress members, and our president to have a change of heart when they seem to cling more to greed or partisan politics than to working for the people and the planet. But I'd be fine if the majority of our elected officials would declare, "We're sick of all these climate activists. Enough already. We'll do what you ask (and follow through with it). Just leave us alone!"

We value building relationships and strategizing when being relentlessly annoying is the right approach. It's so easy to unintentionally agitate and to do so without purpose. However, where there is injustice, God may be nudging us to nag on as party-poopers; every power party needs one, or many. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy