



Grain

“Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted.”

–William Bruce Cameron

Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

Field

1 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2 He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." 3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jn. 3:1-4

Thoughts

As a college student, I heard about a retreat center where the priest was known for being an astute spiritual advisor. Traveling to the retreat center for the first time, I thought about all the books on religion I had read and expected that people would recognize how enlightened I already was. That didn't happen. Have you had experiences of feeling like you already knew, but actually didn't?

What was inside of Nicodemus' mind as he ventured out to see Jesus that night? Was he moved in his heart without expectations? Did he wonder if Jesus would add to his skills, something quantifiable, as a respected Pharisee? Did he hope for more of a collegial discussion with Jesus and leave having had his knowledge affirmed? Whatever he anticipated, it wasn't, "You must be born from above." Those weren't even the standard words Jesus spoke in his encounters. Why did Nicodemus get that line?

Nicodemus wasn't a student, but well established. Some say going to Jesus at night was about Nicodemus being secretive or represented his lack faith. Later, he was with Joseph of Arimathea, known as a secret disciple. Nicodemus' trust seemed ambiguous. With so much tied up in his position in a seat of power, a conversion in how he was in relationship with God and neighbor (not from one religion to another), might have left him with contradictions. Living in reality was freeing but hard.

Truth is no easier today. There are billions of dollars funneled in to disinformation campaigns via technology. Being civically involved and working at getting the facts matter in a world in which lies often don't.

In our personal and public lives, we sometimes travel at night curious about how God is leading us. But we're unsure of what we need to learn or how we've lost perspective on what counts. Jesus continues to call us to another opening and conversion in love. We can trust that. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy Crane