



Grain

“One must always be aware, to notice – even though the cost of noticing is to become responsible.” –Thylias Moss
Submitted by Peter Bakken, Madison.

Field

31 So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 "Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; 33 but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. 34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; 36 and one's foes will be members of one's own household. 37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; 38 and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. Mt. 10:31-39

Thoughts

In Matthew's lesson, the disciples are frightened. More than once in this chapter, Jesus tells them not to fear. He also says, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace, but a sword." The latter isn't exactly comforting, unless Jesus is naming the anxiety his followers are already experiencing in the face of incongruities. Perhaps Jesus brings a clarity that helps them to focus and breathe, the way pinpointing the source of stress can do.

Jesus and his disciples are living in a land ruled by the Roman empire. But many of their own religious leaders easily fall into cahoots with the oppressive political system. Maybe some of their own loved ones have been sold on a type of power that casually excludes many who matter. Jesus seems to be telling the disciples: Continue on this path of real love and you will experience division between yourselves and tired ways of thinking. The injustice you always knew was there and took for granted will agitate you into non-cooperation with harmful systems. There will be backlash, but you are valued far beyond what anyone says about who you are or are not. You will die again and again to your very flawed self, and again be graced back into love. Do not be afraid. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy