



Grain

“Without justice and love, peace will always be a great illusion.”

–Dom Helder Câmara

Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

Field

15 "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. 16 But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Matthew 18:15-20

Thoughts

Does the Gospel give us a solid formula for dealing with conflict or a lesson about the spirit of Christian dialogue that takes different forms, or both depending upon the situation? Jesus' words here can also be misused in a robotic process lacking compassion or one that simply takes people through the motions of reconciliation and discipline.

Where is the spirit of Matthew 18 as we hear of yet one more police shooting of an unarmed black man? As so many who watched the chilling video of Jacob Blake, I wondered when will this stop? Will we just go through the motions of remedying the problem? Perhaps Kenosha is genuinely trying as local leaders make plans to hold deeper dialogue about the racism so entrenched in our institutions.

Where is the spirit of Matthew 18 when looking at our worship and work communities? I know what it's like to be part of a workplace that practices good communication, as in my current call, and ones that don't. When rumors fly even without anyone trying to do harm, or when just one individual launches campaigns intended to create discord, a community hurts. Work is on my mind because next Monday is Labor Day. We'll remember individuals and movements that have helped to make labor more humane and manageable. Labor unions and government leaders such as Secretary of Labor Francis Perkins helped to create shorter than 16-hour workdays, paid leave, and other benefits. We also recall workplace abuses that are still legal and those left out of benefits.

Where is the spirit of Matthew 18 in our own situations? Keep the words of the Gospel close. Let us draw from the goodness within our cities, worshipping communities, and ourselves. May the grace of God continue to help us return to Jesus' words when we fall short or others fail us. And may we continue on the difficult and beautiful path of seeking justice for the long run. Happy Monday!

Prayer

Highly recommended.

Share

Send any quotes you'd like to share with our network to cindyc@loppw.org

All Monday Quotes found under the Resources & Advocacy Tools tab at www.loppw.org

Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy