



## Grain

“I do not understand the mystery of grace—only that it meets us where we are and does not leave us where it found us.”

—Anne Lamott

## Field

<sup>29</sup> As soon as they<sup>[a]</sup> left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup> Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup> He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. Mark 1:29-31

## Thoughts

Simon’s mother-in-law did not save herself by her service. God had already loved her and worked through Jesus’ presence. In response to God’s unexpected and unearned love, she served. An important order of events for understanding grace; an order we continually need to be reminded of.

Many years ago, at my internship parish, one of the university student members shared his story about leaving a religious tradition that obsessed with “converting” people. Everything in his former tradition was focused on increasing the number of converts. He was directly taught that the more people he brought into his church, the closer his relationship would be to God. One day, in an area where he was proselytizing, he decided to attend a Lutheran worship service. To his surprise, the powerful message he heard about God’s grace made him want to learn more. He paused from teaching what he thought he understood about God’s love and began questioning other aspects of his religion that, in retrospect, were filled with propaganda about anyone outside of his religion. He became Lutheran.

I recalled that college student when reading a NYT’s [article](#) about Lenka Perron’s journey into and out of QAnon, a cult-like group that spreads unsubstantiated conspiracy theories. Disenchanted with mainline politics and the dwindling middle class, Perron read political critiques that were perhaps partially true. She then became obsessed with more complicated and fantastical theories. Q, whoever that is, promised people a way to rid the U.S. of evil. Perron became part of a new promise, a movement more important than anything else in her life. She “was spending hours every day after work online, poring over fevered theories about shadowy people in power. She had mostly stopped cooking, and no longer took her daily walk.” But she started questioning QAnon, especially as the group’s promises didn’t come to fruition. She gradually admitted that her pursuit was an addiction and beliefs were based on lies.

You don’t have to belong to an unhealthy movement to be overly obsessed with a notion, a person, or promise that is fleeting, flimsy, or just false. As members of any tradition, we can easily forget that God is our God, who loves us already. As we ask important questions about the veracity of what we’re reading and the sources of our information, there are a couple of other questions to consider: Do I remember that we are saved by the unexpected, unearned love of God? What is my response to that in terms of self-care and care for others? Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy