

## Monday Quotes



### Grain

“There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.” –Elie Wiesel

Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

### Field

<sup>31</sup> Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup> He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup> But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” <sup>34</sup> He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me...” Mark 8:31-34

### Thoughts

When things go wrong, it’s easy to wonder if one is right with God. We don’t know if Peter thought in exactly those terms, but he did want to remain on the mountain after the transfiguration. And in the Gospel lesson above, he denied the loneliness, suffering, and scandalous way Jesus talked about what “the Son of Man” would undergo. Peter’s reaction to Jesus’ words meant it was time for some challenging truth telling. Jesus’ path to freedom, popular among some and already opposed by others, would lead to a moment of powerful leaders influencing the mass rejection of and violence against Jesus.

When this text from Mark comes up, I usually remember the words of one of my seminary professors, Dr. Carolyn Osiek, whom I’ve quoted before: “Jesus didn’t die because he wanted to die. He died because he wanted to live.” Jesus didn’t make a religion out of suffering. But our following the Spirit doesn’t always lead to mountaintop experiences, or being affirmed by a majority of people around us. Sometimes there is the cross. And isn’t there good news in that truth, when we are trying our best and things still go wrong, God is still loving us on a path of freedom. Some reading this may have contracted COVID or have experienced loss in ways they didn’t imagine before the pandemic, or have been rebuked for speaking simple truths within their families or more publicly even when trying to create dialogue out of love.

We just entered Lent within our tradition. It also happens to be the season when the Governor presents his biennial budget, which is then scrutinized and edited by the joint finance committee with feedback from the public. The revised budget is sent to the legislature, and then to the Governor’s desk. “A budget is a moral document.” I’m not sure who first said that, but a budget reflects our values. Discernment about what we can afford and motivations for why line items exist or do not is needed. It’s easy to write off what is possible for justice and equity. It is a time for seeking out public truths.

Where else is truth telling and grace needed on our journeys? Happy Monday!

### Share

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy