



Grains

“The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. –Frederick Douglass

“Be the ancestor our descendants will thank.”

–Winona LaDuke

Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

Field

He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ²On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. ⁴Then Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house.” ⁵And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. ⁶And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. ⁷He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits... Mark 6:1-13

Thoughts

Many of us probably relate to Jesus having an experience of not feeling at home at home. Maybe we made mistakes some people have never forgotten, or we are always limited by whose parents we have. At family gatherings, some cringe at how cousins can render certain parts of one another invisible, even if love wins out in the end. In Jesus' case, he encountered real rejection in his hometown.

Jesus' experience was coupled with the sending out of his disciples to share God's love. On their journey in the broader world, they would experience belonging to God and having a path, but also being rejected. Their encounters would be challenging and mixed.

We are approaching a secular holiday that is complex. For the 4th of July, we embrace various narratives. Separating from England signaled freedom for the new homeland, but it didn't feel like home to everyone. The humanity of some would remain invisible. On July 5, 1852, Frederick Douglass spoke about the 4th of July to a crowd of about 600 from the Ladies Anti-Slavery Society. He said that July 4 was a time of revealing deep disparities in our country. Douglass said that the signers of the Declaration of Independence had good ideals but that we had a long to go to realize them. The audience was also tired of injustice; they saw more than a City on a Hill ordained by God representing their country. Challenging flaws in the City on the Hill image was risky.

There are various sides to the 4th of July. On the 4th, I will celebrate our positive movements forward, the naming of injustice, as Douglass and his audience did, and what is brilliant in our country's founding documents. I'll reflect on what has worked in our history and mourn how we have rejected God in one another in ways that still feed in to our present. How about you? As a public church, let us build upon the love and passion for justice that a diverse group of leaders have shown before us, and lift up hope that emerges from lament. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy