



Monday Quotes

Grain

“For Jesus, there are no countries to be conquered, no ideologies to be imposed, no people to be dominated. There are only children, women and men to be loved.” –Henri Nouwen

Field

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” ³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. ⁸ “Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” Luke 15:1-10

Thoughts

Next Sunday will mark the 21st anniversary of the 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks. As time passes, fewer people will be able to answer the question, “Where were you on 9/11?” However, those who are too young to remember the day or were not even born yet are impacted. There are young family members of those murdered who still have an empty space in their lives because of a loved one they never knew. There are Muslims who grew up needing to learn how to articulate the vastness of Islam and the ways in which their faith did not represent the conflation of terror and religion. There are people still displaced from the reactionary war we launched in Iraq to look for weapons of mass destruction never found. There are groups that seduce people who have been rendered faceless into treating others in the same way and ones that used the terrorist attacks as an excuse to harass anyone who looked Arab with misplaced blame. In what ways are we breaking or perpetuating cycles? The core of love in our major religions, of course, calls us to break cycles of treating one another as dispensable.

Jesus in this Gospel lesson radically resists viewing anyone as expendable. In response to the criticism Jesus received for the way he welcomed those labeled as particularly sinful, he talked about the lengths one would go through to find a lost sheep or lost coin, and the restorative power in recovering what was missing.

In the aftermath of 9/11/2001, firefighters and other first responders took great care to search for each person who might have survived the attack and turned over rubble to identify everyone who had not. Americans from both political parties honored each person who had died, and uniformly condemned the actions of the terrorists, who had treated children of God as disposable. About 20 years later, we couldn’t quite get our act together to grieve and call out injustice in a similar way over the January 6, 2021 insurrection; naming terror and threats to other American lives became partisan. What cycles have been created and are perpetuated? In this day and age, be watchful and ask for the grace to resist viewing others as expendable. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy