



Grain

“Climate justice now, people gonna rise like water, Turn this system ‘round, in the voice of my great granddaughter” –Owly Dave.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuL6A8CaDAM>

Field

³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.” ⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? ⁴³Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.” ⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him... Mt. 21:33-46

Thoughts

Way to bring diverse groups together, Jesus. The Pharisees and chief priests were generally not of the same class and weren’t united in their interpretations of scripture. Jesus was an equal opportunity offender. An individual or group from any background could be free in God. Anyone could believe they were free but really suffering from a distorted understanding of what freedom meant. Although in the context of this Gospel lesson, Jesus was particularly speaking to religious leaders, as the chief priests and Pharisees realized by the end of Jesus’ parable.

Like the tenants, those in power created the reality that what they stewarded, the word of God, was their own and could attack and reject anyone who challenged their interpretations of God’s word and systems built upon their distortions of it. But God persists. The owner sent servants, more servants, and then his son. The tenants rejected them all. To make a point, Jesus could be extreme, as he was here. The owner sounds harsh, but then it is easy to live as though there will never be consequences to rejecting needed messages that help us to grow in faith and care for others and the earth.

There was once a group of people who went to their political leaders asking for policy changes to steward God’s creation. “Look at the problems caused by our human impact on the climate,” they cried. Others, along with their favored government leaders, said they didn’t believe in climate change. Some actually believed what they were saying, and others knew they were just creating a reality to protect their own immediate seats in power. The latter claimed they cared about God and family. But beyond their own lifetimes, did they actually show concern for their children or grandchildren or anyone else’s in the future? Or did they begin to believe their own lies? How do we respond?

God, grace us with your persistence. Free us from our illusions and help us to care for what you have given us to steward. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,
Pastor Cindy