

Monday Quotes



Grain

²¹I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. ²²Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. ²³Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. ²⁴But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream. Amos 5:21-24

Field

“It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.” –Archbishop Oscar Romero. Submitted by Rev. Kim Beckman, Chicago

Thoughts

Could Amos have envisioned his words resonating through time to influence people in lands he didn't even know existed? Was it possible for him to imagine that a leader such as the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would emerge centuries later and quote Amos' language to call upon a people to examine their spiritual and moral contradictions and denounce the evil of racism? Amos had faith and recognized how in his day, that justice could roll down like water. But the Biblical prophets were prophets of a near and distant future they did not fully understand.

Amos reminded the people that genuine worship of God was intertwined with right actions. Worshipping idols and practicing unjust behavior were the two top sins that the prophets raised their voices against. Don't trample over people just because you can take advantage of their disenfranchised place in society. Get your worship and actions in alignment as a people of God. But when with the help of God's grace our prayer and voices for justice are in sync, we may grow weary as advocates.

We recall how overwhelmed Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was shot and killed while celebrating mass, must have been hearing the cries of oppressed Salvadorans. He referred not only to the Biblical prophets but to all of us as “prophets of a future not our own.” Whether we are witnesses to the change we seek or are part of a groundswell for justice that will be more fully realized later, may God nurture your souls in prayer and worship and bless your prophetic voices in the present. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy