



Grain

"We must make ourselves and our relationships with each other anew. This is the beginning of the new world. Only when we are no longer slaves, but also no longer desire to be masters and to make our former masters into slaves, can we lay the foundation for the world to come." –Dr. Rosemary Radford Ruether

Field

¹²So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— ¹³for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. Romans 8:12-17

Thoughts

It was common for unwanted children to be used as slaves in the ancient world. Simultaneously, there were childless couples who were eager to adopt children and give them all of the rights, including to inherit, that their biological children would have received. The language of adoption in the Epistle to the Romans was powerful in Paul's society and can be in today's context as well. God offers to all of us, not a spirit of slavery, but adoption.

Thank God slavery is illegal in most of the world today, and yet it still rears its ugly head legally and illegally. Even right here in the Midwest, there are children from a wide range of backgrounds and ethnicities who are forced into labor and into commercial sex industries. Anyone can be targeted, but we know that young people experiencing poverty, bias, and separation from their families, are at greater risk of danger.

Most of the time, although not always, there is bipartisan support to create public policies that address the problems of human trafficking. However, we also hear contradictory messages. Some of our law makers who have voted for good laws specifically related to trafficking also support legislation that threatens food security and the general safety for young people.

In the next several months, many of us will attend candidate forums and town hall meetings. Let us remember to ask questions about where candidates and current law makers stand on policies related to hunger, climate and water, immigration, and juvenile justice that move children toward thriving rather than experiencing physical and unhealthy psychological vulnerability.

I am an heir with Christ. Try repeating that. To the children let us proclaim, “You are joint heirs with Christ,” as a statement of faith and our resistance. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy