

## 08-17-25 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“The harsh sayings and indictments resounding in this text remind us that Jesus has not come to validate the social realities and values we have constructed. Such social realities and values have a propensity to seek a harmony that favors those who hold positions of power at the expense of those who are powerless and expendable. Jesus's missional agenda of compassion, mercy, and justice shatters such a status quo.”

*Richard P. Carlson*



Luke 12:49-56

### Questions for Reflection —

- In general, how do you handle conflict? Is it more your tendency to avoid or confront when you see or experience injustice? For what values and priorities would you be willing to risk inciting conflict? What does it look like to navigate conflict and division in a way that aligns with the teachings of Jesus? Do you think it is possible to offer reconciliation and healing in highly conflicted situations? What does it look like to do so? How might we as a congregation help one another grow in the capacity to listen to others when dealing with potentially controversial topics or ideas?
- How or when has your commitment to follow Jesus resulted in tensions in your relationships with others in your home, your workplace or school, your neighborhood? Do you currently face any choices that have the potential to cause such strained relationships or perhaps even result in division? What will help you distinguish between standing up for that which reflects God's compassion, mercy, and justice versus initiating unnecessary conflict? What do you need in order to overcome the temptation to complacency and avoidance when facing potentially conflicted situations?
- In what ways are your faith values in conflict with various governmental, societal, or perhaps even religious institutional values? What realities of life in present society favor the powerful at the expense of those who are marginalized? What might it look like for you to disrupt or confront elements of the status quo that perpetuate such injustices? What will give you the courage and strength to speak out and take practical action to enable God's compassion, mercy, and justice to flourish in our world?

### Daily Household Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit. Hear our prayers and songs of praise. We join voices from ancient times, that placed their trust in you in days of joy or pain. Inspire us in this hour, that we may never surrender to despair. Renew in us enduring faith, ever as we join eternally in song. Amen.