



Wednesday Prayer

17th Sunday after Pentecost – Changing Minds

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:1-2, 5

It's not easy to change your mind, to change the way you think and your perspective on the world. It's even more difficult to change the minds of others. Much of what I do as a therapist is to help people with depression, anxiety, or trauma history to think differently about unhealthy core beliefs that have developed over years of living so they can adapt to healthier ways of seeing the world. Billions of dollars are spent every year in advertising trying to get us to change our minds about everything from political candidates to toothpaste. It takes time and repetition and concerted effort to change your mind.

In the first century, Paul was encouraging the followers in Philippi to change their minds. First century people lived in a culture that taught them to take care of their own family, but no one else. There were no hospitals, food pantries or organized ways of showing compassion to those who were marginalized. Jesus' thinking and teaching was so radical in that world because he turned that mindset upside down by showing compassion and love to others beyond his family, in his community and in the world. Paul called the Philippians into the mindset of Jesus instead of that of the pervasive culture. He had a tough crowd, but he knew a thing or two about changing minds. He was one of Jesus' persecutors before he changed his mind and became his most zealous disciple, traveling all over the region starting churches and changing people's minds. He still has a tough crowd today in 21st century America. He calls us out of our comfort zones to change our minds, to live out the heart and mind of Jesus.

When we take on the mindset of Christ, our task as disciples is to work steadily and deliberately to change minds. Through Cherish All Children, we especially want people to be of the same mind as Christ in the way they think about children and youth who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking. We educate others about the imminent risks so they will be of the same mind and join us in keeping children safe. We demonstrate Christ's compassion and love by offering ourselves in friendship through loving, caring, healthy relationships with the young people in our lives. *Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.*

Come Holy Spirit. Enter our hearts and change our minds to be like Christ's in all that we say and do, and especially in showing compassion and love to those who are vulnerable to exploitation. Amen.

Written by Kay Kinkel, MSW, LICSW, a Behavioral Health Professional contracted with LSS of MN, a member of the Cherish All Children Advisory Board, and a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Shakopee, MN.