



Red de Mujeres y Justicia de Género de las Iglesias Luteranas de América Latina y el Caribe - FLM

Rede de Mulheres e Justiça de Gênero das Igrejas Luteranas da América Latina e Caribe - FLM

Women and Gender Justice Network of the Lutheran Churches of Latin America and the Caribbean - LWF

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DO NOT FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE

Chapter 23 of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus denounces the way of acting of the teachers of the law and Pharisees, since they were not consistent with their speech and in practice. This speech of Jesus is addressed to the people who followed him and to his disciples. After verse 13 continues with 8 expressions of sadness about Jerusalem, the Gospel of Luke 19:41 says that Jesus arriving near the city and wept for the city, also for all the damage that the people were doing.

Jesus' teaching to the people and his disciples is that they obey the Pharisees and do whatever they are told; but do not follow their example, because they say one thing and do another, v.3; it is said that "the example drags on", but we see that these leaders of the time of Jesus, it was easy for them to say, but not to practice. And to the people if they demanded a lot of them and became oppressors due to the strictness of law enforcement. In this case, Jesus teaches to go against, to be rebellious, if he is not hurting people, do not do it, do not repeat, do not join in bad practices.

Today, we can compare this teaching of Jesus with what political and religious leaders do in each nation. Many sit down to make laws that disregard the vulnerable, disregard the needs of the people. Many of the leaders in our countries demand compliance, they talk too much, they contradict each other in their speeches, then they go out and say other ideas, but they believe that they are the most correct, educated, and adequate to think for the people.

In our days, we can see the dissatisfaction of our peoples with some and some political and religious leaders; They demand, but they do not comply, they put heavy burdens on people, but they are not sensitive to the needs of the people because they are in positions of privilege and they lack nothing. So people get tired, we go out on the streets to protest, complaints are made by the different ways of communication that we have now, for all the pain that communities in each of our countries, women, boys and girls, peasant and peasant women, peace



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makers, people of African origin, ethnic groups and now more poor people due to the pandemic who do not have conditions for study, work, health care and a basic family basket.

We are outraged by these attitudes and words of the rulers and religious leaders, but we must also see ourselves as people. In our family, church, work environment as we are acting, we speak beautifully, we have good convincing speeches, but we do not practice what we say. Be careful, today we can apply these words to each one of us. Do not follow their example of those who make us outraged, let us not repeat the same attitudes, practices, violence, discrimination, hatred, oppression, etc. Because within our churches we also have people who want to be seen, to have the attention, to occupy the best places, to have the respect of the people, but they are not an example of the love of God and love of neighbor. We can remember the saying: "The one who preaches and does not practice what he preaches, hurts the other one." (popular saying in Latinoamerica)

Christ lightens our burden, frees and restores us every day. In the hope of living the Risen one, let us live each other, and give us His grace to transform and build fair and equitable relationships with each other. Jesus shows us with his example of life that He came to serve and not to be served, so everyone who follows the path of the gospel must serve others, support, help, be humble, in solidarity, understand the other and in their life, accompany, listen, speak. Jesus is the best example of service, let us be guided by Him. Because He says and does, we must follow His example. We are called to practice or faith, to do more service, and be more empathic, and to create action against injustice. Accompanying the most vulnerable all the time and strengthening ourselves in the hope of better days.

God bless you.