

“Practice Resurrection”

Did you put the Easter baskets up? Have you already moved into the next thing? Has your attention moved to taxes? Remember that Easter is not a day but a season. It's the Great Fifty Days when the Risen Lord shows up all over the place. He's on the road to Emmaus; he's on the beach with the disciples; he's in the Upper Room. Indeed, he is in your daily life today.

There is something about us that can't quite open all the way up to resurrection, perhaps because it breaks all our notions of a stable universe. Christ being raised from the dead violates all our assumptions. Dead is dead. As a result, there have been countless ways of explaining away the miracle of resurrection. Here are a few:

- Jesus' followers stole his body out of the tomb.
- Jesus wasn't completely dead on the cross.
- Jesus was given a drug that made him seem dead.
- Jesus had a twin brother who pops up after the crucifixion and claims to be Jesus. (This one gets a prize for originality.)
- His followers just had visions or simply remembered him.
- In the Upper Room he hypnotized the disciples to believe they saw him after he was dead.

Perhaps the motive for these explanations is that the resurrection turns the world right side up. Resurrection defies all our laws. It is a fundamental reorientation. It's a different way of seeing not just life after death, but this life in which we live. God is truly God and, therefore, anything is possible. There is another life beyond death. The gifts the Risen Christ gives us are peace, forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit, and those gifts create a new world. Christ is risen; we are risen.

In the Great Fifty Days of Easter, we are invited to rediscover another way of seeing; another way of being; another way of relating. The old laws are transcended and it's a new world. In Luke's gospel, one of the Risen Christ's last deeds is to “open their minds.”

In his poem, *The Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front*, the poet Wendell Berry writes: “So, friends, every day do something that won't compute. Love the Lord. Love the world..... Be like the fox who makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction. Practice resurrection.”

Christ is risen. We are risen. In this Eastertide, let us proclaim the Good News by word and deed. We have been given a new way of seeing and a new way of being. The old ways of mapping the world are dissolved. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. To practice resurrection is to let go of our labels of others and of ourselves. Like the disciples we are sent out to proclaim this news that we all can start over and see ourselves and others with new eyes. Our old ways of defining and separating and labelling the world have vanished. It's a new creation.

What if we let go of our labels and categorization of others and saw them as souls seeking to find their way? What if we reached out to the very persons we least want to be with? What if at the end of every political declaration we add the words, “but I could be wrong”? Remember that at the cross, Jesus forms a new family. He says to his mother that the disciple John is now her son and to John that Mary is now is mother. Because at the cross everyone there belongs to the scar clan, and, therefore, has let go of the divisive ways of defining the world. We want to be made new and when we are, the gratitude for God’s grace dissolves our old ways of labeling the world.

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