

*“Resist and Begin Again...A Blessed
New Normal”*

“Again!”

Prayer of Apostle Paul, Matthew 24: 1-9
April 12, 2020 - Easter Sunday

*Many of the prompting’s insights taken from
Biblical Scholars Borg and Crosson in their
book, “The Last Week.”*

*And, poems and essays written by Sarah
Are, Catherine Monkman, Dorothee Soelle.*

“Begin again” life whispered in my ear;
for some days are beginning days.
Some days are designed to be the day we try
again.

And on those days...the sun rises...for you.
On those days, God is cheering for you.
That's just the way God and beginnings
work.

For when your heart is broken and your life
is in pieces,
or when the addiction or the depression have
found their way

back into your bones,
or when you lose sight of the person that
you were called to be...
then...exactly then...that wildness, that
loss, that truth beneath the turbulence
of your life...will sing to you:

“Begin again.”

“Begin again” with the person you want to
be.

“Begin again” with the person you want to
love.

“Begin again” with the knowledge of your
faith.

“Begin again.”

The Sun is rising for you.

Somehow, just mustering up enough energy
to begin, to simply begin again—right here
and now—can derail our usual patterns of
procrastinating, of always waiting...for our
birthday to curb unhealthy habits, or the first
of the month to finally stop spending money
stupidly, or for the new year to try and
change...well, change just about every darn
thing.

Don't wait!

Start again...right now!!

Instead of continuing that self-defeating
self-talk, or defensive posturing, we can
simply start over. Right now. **Be Eastered!**
Today, this hour, this moment...in our real
lives.

~Having an argument with someone, you
could take a deep breath, and start again
with more compassion.

~Binge eating or couch sitting through a
Saturday, you could realize what the heck
am I doing to myself—and not wait for
Sunday to stop, but stop right then and there
at 5:42 pm. Saturday afternoon. And begin
again.

And forgive yourself.

~You could be about to make a racist, sexist,
classist remark, and hear yourself before you
even speak...and so don't! And wonder:
what it is the fear and anger that pushes
“me” to such stereotypes.

You can begin your day again anytime you
want to...Brad said so!

Instead of spending way too much time wallowing in not feeling worthy, and putting yourself or others down as helpless or hopeless, shaming yourself or others, you can begin to **change** how you feel about yourself...*and* others--**Now**.

When you change your inner thought world, your worldview, your self-talk, your mind, it changes how you see yourself and perceive your reality. And...so...
You can start again.

But here's the thing: Easter's starting again isn't only about you.

Easter is
“personal **crucifixion**” moving into **corporate** resurrection.
It's not that you are saved, it's that we are!

Jesus' resurrection is an act of corporate empowerment!
He doesn't rise by himself, rise to save you.

He rises to save humanity from ourselves...so we can begin again, over and over again, our resistance to violence,

personal and corporate...
the violence your thoughts do to yourself,
the violence our thoughts do to so many!

We must free resurrection from the “strangle-hold”
of the individualism of our times.

This means resurrection was not an event...an isolated event which took place once, two thousand years ago and one guy named Jesus is resurrected. And somehow magically forgives us in the future.

Rather we understand resurrection as a perpetual process refreshing us again and again, resurrecting

our individual integrity within our corporate humanity.

Corporate Resurrection supports each of us with what it is we now need most for each has what
the other needs...and frees us
from our usual ways of thinking
and the fear that consumes our self-talk.

For we do deeply know:

our truest need is not for personal immortality
(heaven in the future)
but rather our deepest need is for a life before death...
for us, yes, but also for everyone!
(Heaven here and now on earth...as Jesus says!)

This is an embodiment of the deepest understanding that none of us is freer/healthier/wealthier/more secure than the least of us.

(This is biblical!)

And, right now...today, we are experiencing this understanding as never before...it is our lived, shared experience as we stay home in solidarity to support community well-being: our health inextricably linked to everyone else's health.

What a great example of being Eastered!

In solidarity with care for self which is care for all,
there is resurrection for each and all.

When we break the neutrality of silence and abandon our complicity with injustice, the new life begins...for us, for us all.

In solidarity, feeling the resurrection of the many,
we change our mind,
we live our deepest wisdom.

We do deeply know: our rights are their rights...we are ONE.

We take on a passionate non-violent resistance...to a virus,
to arguing, binging, to postponing, denying, conniving, blaming.
We resist all that challenges
our corporate well-being.

Oh my God! Oh...my...God!

Still...many choose to live in that crucifixion mind set.

When all the while, we have had enough power within ourselves
to go beyond the mind we have and create a very
different life: a resurrected life.

But it's never too late: we can change our mind!

A reorientation of our thinking that results in a radical reorientation of our living.

We can choose to step back from life's drama with a non-anxious perspective embracing the long, corporate view...

allowing holy, self-energizing compassion to reshape our thoughts and actions.

Oh, and, yes, *when we do*, we'll get nailed for it...*at first*.

Been there?

But compassion, justice, can't be stopped.

...and you know what: We don't look good on wood!

So, let's not stay there...up there on that "woe is me, fear-filled, shame-based" cross of a mindset!

Come on down, back to life/to love!

Friends, the challenge of Easter is to transform our minds,

go beyond the mind we have, how it is we have thought
about ourselves and each other...up till now!

Easter is: to be alive, full of passion, not accepting what is not just in our individual and corporate lives...and non-violently resist it!

Start Again!

Choose resurrection...knowing even as Eastered people:

*we do expect problems!

*we accept fear as part of growth!

*we manage our fear...of failure and success

*we are confident we are not alone and we

find our courage to go and be in all the right places,
even in the hardest of places and times...
in solidarity with one another!

We Easter People have come for times such as these!