

Happy Easter!

Spoiler alert: Jesus is not in the tomb.

Jesus has just died a very human death--but is not there at the tomb when the women get there.

How many of us have looked for Jesus in the place we last experienced him—then were surprised that he wasn't there-- but in a new place?

We shouldn't be surprised. But we always are.

We *like* the old.. We tend to hang onto what we know like it is a precious jewel. Sometimes it is. But sometimes it is not. It's just *familiar*, broken in like an old pair of shoes. Like the real clutter gathering dust in the attic, or the more amorphous mindsets that no longer serve us—or anyone else. We sometimes desperately want to hold on to the past.

We show no signs of curiosity as to what it might be like-- to look at the world with new eyes.

So the women return to where they last experienced Jesus, and he's not there. He'll meet them in Gallilee. He won't meet them where they *are*-- but where they're *going*.

Harrumph.

Jesus is going to meet them in a familiar place—but in a completely unfamiliar way. And it terrifies the women. I'm sure it terrifies the men, too. After all-- they are in hiding. Will they be able to break out of where they are, break out of their fear—to go to a new place?

The other day someone handed me an acorn that they had drawn out of the earth. The husk was still attached to the nut, but a tiny shoot had pushed its way through the outer casing, looking for nourishment in the ground. New life was its aim, and the casing of the nut would soon be discarded in the process.

It is a natural process: birth, growth and becoming something new.

So why do we persist in hanging onto the husks of our old life, then? What are we afraid of?

Are we afraid to leave the security of our safe and familiar shell?

Would we really prefer the limited vantage point of the acorn, or would we prefer to take our fears in hand-- and see the world from the top of the mighty oak?

Jesus died so that we would know that his love will always help us continue to grow, to help us understand that our world, **our lives**, and God's eternity intertwine. And that all people must be a part of that world.

That thought is still mind-boggling, but the disciples had already experienced the radical interdependence of all of creation while Jesus was alive.

Life and death were not the black and white concepts they had thought. Insiders and outsiders were a thing of the past. The poor were every bit as dear to God as their rich neighbors.

They had just begun to glimpse that within God's creation-- everything grows best with the fertilizer of love, and all must be

allowed to grow *together*, and *everything* and *everyone* has a part in the vastness of God's world.

We can drink deeply of the power of love by sinking our roots deep down into the staggering enormity of the ground of God's being, and when we do-- God breaks us open little by little – allowing shoots of love, hope and justice to emerge—first slowly—then faster and faster-- until our outer shell is discarded.

And there we are: fully grown follower of Christ: able to see– not just from our limited perspective on the ground anymore, but from the glory of the heights.

But first—we need to stop being so enamored of what we have always been, and what we still are. If we don't—there will be no room for curiosity about what we might become.

That's what Jesus' resurrection is calling us to do: to see what sort of resurrection might be possible when we let go of all the stuff we no longer need, break out of the old shell that holds our potential, and embrace the new form that we CAN be?

Will we be able to break out of where we are—and follow Jesus to a new place? Because-- he's waiting for us there. Amen.