



Barbara Brown Taylor (Home By Another Way):

"Easter always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the spring equinox. As complicated as that sounds, it makes ancient sense, since it means Easter coincides with the greening of the earth."...

"Christ is risen and the whole world comes to life. Sap rises in dormant trees, spring peepers start their peeping, and trumpet lilies spill their sweet smell on the air. The connection is a happy one, guaranteed to renew our faith in the creative power of God."

John 20:11-18

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"—and that he had said these things to her. - John 20:11-18

1. Easter turns what is natural in our broken world (loss, pain, sorrow) on its head.

John 20:1: Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb...

John 20:11: But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb.

Barbara Brown Taylor: *"When a human being goes into the ground, that is that. You do not wait around for the person to reappear so you can pick up where you left off - not on this side of the grave, anyway. You say good-bye. You pay your respects and you go on with your life as best as you can, knowing that the only place springtime happens in a cemetery is on the graves, not in them."*

Easter is the breaking in of the unnatural, of the supernatural into the natural.

Easter: Jesus died and rose again. He conquered the grave, crushed evil and death, and is making all things new!

And the basis of all this is the certainty of the resurrection, not as symbol or metaphor but as historical truth and reality.

Kathy Keller: "God worked it out so that we didn't have to take the resurrection just on trust, He actually made it verifiable."

Kathy Keller: "*The stone was rolled away, not to let Jesus out, but to let us in, to not only trust but to **verify** that the resurrection had taken place in time and place and history.*"

Verify:

John: Records Mary as first eyewitness

John: Records Mary confusing Jesus to be...a gardener?

Paul: Over 500 people saw risen Lord, and are still alive when Paul said this.

Why does it matter that the resurrection of Christ happened in time and place and history?

If the resurrection is just symbol/metaphor...

1 Corinthians 15:14-19: And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain...And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins...If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied."

If the resurrection of Christ happened in time and place and history...

You can have Certainty!

You will have Hope.

2. The resurrected Jesus comes to address your tears and deepest longings and calls you by name.

Verse 15: Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you searching?"

The risen Jesus cares about you and engages your crushed hopes and dreams.

Verse 16: Jesus said to her, "Mary."

The risen Jesus calls you by name.

3. Easter enables you to let go and move forward.

Verses 16-17: Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "**Do not cling to me**, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Barbara Brown Taylor: "[Jesus] was not on his way back to [Mary] and the others. He was on his way to God, and he was taking the whole world with him."...

"This may be why all the other gospel accounts of the resurrection tell us not to be afraid – because new life is frightening. It is unnatural. To expect a sealed tomb and find one filled with angels, to hunt the past and discover the future, to seek a corpse and find the risen Lord – none of this is natural."
...

"Death is natural. Loss is natural. Grief is natural. But those stones have been rolled away this happy morning, to reveal the highly unnatural truth. By the light of this day, God has planted a seed of life in us that cannot be killed, and if we can remember that then there is nothing we cannot do: move mountains, banish fear, love our enemies, change the world." ...

"The only thing we cannot do is hold on to him. He has asked us please not to do that, because he knows that all in all we would rather keep him with us where we are than let him take us where he is going."...

"Better we should let him hold on to us, perhaps. Better we should let him take us into the white hot presence of God, who is not behind us but ahead of us, every step of the way."



EASTER

HE IS RISEN