

The Book invites us to see the world as an **enchanted place**. In Hebrew, word Spirit (as in God's Spirit) and Breath and Wind are all same word—often carry all three meanings at one time. Humans are priests carrying the divine image around and the whole Earth is a temple. The word “Glory” means shining radiance—like the sunshine lighting up Spring. The Bible is a so much more than a text to poke. It's also a **Mystical Pipe to smoke**.

I get this feeling in concentrated form reading post-resurrection stories: Jesus, appearing in a new physical-spiritual form in rooms, along a road, on side of a lake, on mountain.

Reading these differently since read Emily's chapter in SJ on **Joseph**—brother almost murdered by his 11 brothers, thrown into a well instead, scooped up by Egyptian slave traders, then rose to prominence in Pharaoh's court, falsely accused, thrown in prison, rose again to a new-higher prominence the brothers who betrayed him came to Egypt looking for food during a famine. And Joseph didn't turn on them, but neither did he make nice right away—didn't show himself right away, was an emotional wreck who took his time reconciling over several interactions. **A version of this happening in resurrection appearances over 5 weeks**

These episodes meet us right where we live in a MI Springtime—world around us is lighting up with life and we wish we could take more of it in but also licking our wounds and maybe causing some along the way ... the beauty & ashes all mixed up

John 20: 19-29 Comment on some surrounding things to help us picture the scene, and then focus on main thing.

When therefore it was early evening of that first day of the Sabbath-week and the doors were locked for fear of the Judeans [Observant Jews wrote NT ... who had no idea Jesus faith would be co-opted by Rome; Judeans were Jews from Jerusalem, not Galilee] **Jesus came and stood in their midst and says to them, [present tense: invite to picture it happening now] “Peace to you” [normal greeting: hello/shalom] **And saying this he showed them both his hands and his side****

Pause here: Second appearance, first to **Mary Magdalene** ... he doesn't need to show Mary his wounds: she was at lynching tree, watching horrified, whereas all male disciples abandoned him ... but now he's with those friends who **betrayed** him for first time ... **and he wants them to see his wounds: “he showed them...”**

What are wounds? **Reminder of a past injury that often carry some residual effect of injury.** Risen Jesus has wounds! [Sign ...]

In particular, the wounds/scars are a reminder of the fact that these friends betrayed him—ran for their lives while was crucified

He's physically fine now. Better than ever. But he carries reminder of past injury and residual effects, which would be emotional.

Everyone in this room has or likely will experience the betrayal of friends, or family, or work colleagues, churches, your country. So here we are picturing Risen Jesus and we have a point of identification. We share something in common with him: **trauma, injury, lingering, residual effects of betrayal.**

There's something about the injury of betrayal that cuts deep. Betrayal is an injury caused by people close to you, turning on you—causing you harm. Harm is greater, closer to you they are.

Often people who are betrayed feel shame. If family members reject you—as our gay congregants raised in religious families have often experienced—it's natural to feel shame. Automatic, physical response to being put out of a group, or having good standing in the group revoked. (Losing a job)

There's the shame that comes with feeling duped: *How did I let this person get so close? Why didn't I see this coming?*

It's a difficult injury to share with others, isolating. Some divorces don't involve betrayal—things just didn't work out. But often they do, and when they do, it's difficult for the betrayed party to share that. Marriage is public, then you get divorced—people wonder, "What happened?" Do you say what happened? Complicated...

After a betrayal, how do you trust people again? And yet our well being depends on trusting people. Part of the injury of betrayal.

No reason to think that as a human being Jesus didn't have all these feelings that betrayed people have. That kind of trauma was signified by his wounds.

For all these reasons, it can be very difficult to show other people the wounds of betrayal. Which leaves us suffering in silence ... and may cut us off from the opportunity for comfort.

When my wife of 42 years died suddenly in 2012, I was **awash in comfort**. You get the comfort from family, friends, **even strangers**. Person at bank when you take deceased loved one's name off the account. "I'm so sorry for your loss."

2 years later underwent another trauma---lost a church family, most of my close friends (fellow pastor/colleagues) over LGBTQ.

Much more complicated loss, because it involved so much **betrayal**. Denominational officials who brought hammer down, were all my friends. That's just one small example.

After a year of therapy, counselor said, "Who knows what you went through? How difficult it was?" Small list. "Maybe if you were more open about, selectively, you would receive more comfort" ... a big injury needs a lot of comfort ..."

That part, showing my wounds to people was really difficult to do.

Took me a few years to begin to do that. Board retreat, shared some of the details: "Wow, I didn't know that. I'm so sorry." Tell less sanitized version to newcomers. "That must have been so hard." Yes it was. Beginning of burden lifting....

Brené Brown: whole-hearted/courageous people share one thing in common (result that shocked her): their willingness to admit to, acknowledge, and selectively reveal their vulnerability (wounds, need, weaknesses, insecurities) Counter-intuitive [guy on plane]

When Jesus showed them his wounds, he was making a classic vulnerability move.

He was selective, not showing his wounds willy-nilly to anyone.

Yes, these were the friends who betrayed him, but he also knew they felt deep remorse (Peter's weeping)

Showing his wounds was part of patching things up with them.

He didn't minimize his injury—*No big deal! I'm fine!*

He's saying, *"What happened to me hurt, and I carry the scars"*

When their first response is to be overjoyed (because they realize this is really the Lord)

He gives them very sobering response:

Thus, on seeing the Lord, the disciples were overjoyed. So Jesus again said to them, "Peace to you. As the father has sent me, I also send you [Jesus was sent as a sheep among wolves,

required courage, involved suffering ... so that put a damper on their joy, no doubt ... but also said, "You'll get a second chance to be faithful under pressure."

And, saying this, he breathed on them, and says to them, "Receive a Holy Spirit" [not "the Spirit" but "a Spirit" – a Pentecostal "witness," shiver, passing taste?]

For those whose sins you let go, the are let go; those you hold fast, they have been held fast' Curious: he gave them a prayer that said, "Forgive if you want to be forgiven" but here he stresses their agency – choice – freedom in forgiving. I wonder if this has to do with his own experience of betrayal ... **when you are betrayed, you cannot feel forced to forgive** (and you don't need to beat yourself up for not being ready to forgive...)

Showing people your wounds takes a lot of courage and you have to be careful who you show them to, and not feel forced to do it.

One of the things that's hard about betrayal: it's an injury that lingers long. Broke my ankle and doctor said, it will be 2 years before it's back to full strength. Betrayal is a deeper injury than a broken ankle, takes longer

Psalm 120 "broom-wood coals" [footnote]

The wounds of betrayal linger long and we can only show them to others, in stages

First interaction is brief (in and out)

Following Sunday, he appears again and it's more involved.

Thomas wasn't there first time. He's there now, and he wants to see the wounds, to be sure it's Jesus.

Jesus shows up again, with Thomas there. Listen what he says to Thomas, ***"Bring your finger here and look at my hands."*** Earlier he just showed them, at a distance, no touching. This time, he lets Thomas inspect his hands, put his finger on hand wounds.

Then he adds, ***"and bring your hand and put it into my side"*** (must have been a big scar)

Then Jesus says, ***"Cease to be faithless but be faithful instead"***

Word is often translated believe, but it's *pistis*, loyalty word

Jesus is not just speaking to Thomas to to all of them. You blew it one time, but here's your second chance, "Cease to be faithless, but be faithful instead." Don't betray me. Be loyal to me.

Jesus is a revelation of God for people who have experienced betrayal.

He **experienced betrayal**, and **he carries the scars** to this day.

He understands the **lingering effects** of betrayal.

He himself **took his time dealing with** it and **we can take our time**.

Quiet Reflection

Pick a spot where you could imagine having a relaxed conversation with someone. A place in your own home Or coffee shop ... outside in a park Picture scene, just you sitting there. Now imagine Jesus taking his place as though you had a pre-arranged time for coffee or whatever First, he says I know ... take all the time you need.