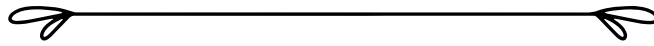


# surprise, easter



“At early dawn,” Mary Magdalene, Mary, Joanna, and the other women prepared spices to anoint the body of Jesus after His death on the cross. In their love and devotion to Jesus, they went first thing in the morning to do what they could do - preserve His body. Suddenly, they were stopped by an empty tomb and two angels that reminded them that Jesus “is not here.” The angels seemed confused why the women were so frightened and puzzled by what they saw. What Jesus told them was going to happen to Him, was exactly what had happened to Him - “on the third day [He would] rise.” From this encounter with the angels, the women remembered Jesus’ words. And in their awe and excitement, they went on to share the Good News to all the people. But by no surprise, people were skeptical, and they couldn’t believe what they heard.

Early in the morning, Jon and I try to wake up as early as our bodies can, to start the day as best as we can. On a regular day, I am feeling tired, groggy, trying to get myself up and ready before the day starts full force with everyone awake. I really love mornings, but a morning can often make or break my day depending on how it goes. So, I silently pray a two-second prayer of preparation and surrender while getting ready, so that I would have the love and patience from God alone to tackle the things ahead.

Some days are seamless, and some days hit me like a ton of bricks. But in this passage, I am remembering the days when I am stunned. Stunned that when I feel lost in my identity, He meets me exactly where I’m at. Stunned when I feel the heavy weight of the world, He reminds me that He is that much greater. Stunned when I don’t feel good enough as a mom, wife, daughter, or friend, that He sees my every effort and every part of me. The women in this passage were stunned. They were stunned that the tomb was empty, stunned that His words were true, and stunned by the hope that this brings for them.

My prayer for myself and for our church is that we are stunned by the greatness of our God - daily. That with each mundane, everyday moment, we would have clear eyes and hearts to see the ways in which He is working. While some holy convictions catch us by surprise, I am reminded that they are no surprise to God. Each “stunned” encounter with God is so intentional by Him, for us. And with this, I pray for this intentionality to others and for hearts that are open and ready to receive.