



FIRST-SUNDAY CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

SEPTEMBER 2020 • FACE INTO THE TRUTH

As you touch into to the current news in word and image, what rises up for you in your body, heart, and mind? Take a moment, be with it, bless it.

Recall scenes of peaceful protesters, faces of youth as well as the old. Recall faces of Black, white, Hispanic, Arab, Asian, Native American marching, chanting a vision for America and an end to militarized policing of Black bodies. Recall the wall of moms, lawyers, and teachers protecting protesters.

No one of us supports violence and the destruction of property. It undermines the right to give voice in this democracy and has unleashed lethal weaponry and militarized responses. Why, we ask? Why the violence? Who agitates? Who benefits?

How in these moments does anyone speak of restoring law and order to the House of America? We must not fail to see the racial fault lines in America's foundation, that for the past 244 years have privileged white people and debased Black people.

Professor Eddie Glaude Jr. writes:

A moral reckoning is upon us and we have to decide once and for all whether or not will truly be a multiracial democracy. We have faced two such moments before in our history: 1) the Civil War and Reconstruction and 2) the black freedom struggle of the mid-20th century ... Both were betrayed.

One was undone by Jim Crow; the other by calls for law and order and the tax revolt by the so called silent majority of the late '60s and '70s...



Truth was answered with the murders of Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.¹

Their deaths rent the very heart of the Freedom Movement.

Racism enslaves the soul of our nation. It lives in the very air we breathe. While we say "all men are created equal" we see daily that white lives are more valued than Black lives; that liberty and justice for all is a lie.

Will we rid ourselves of the stench of racism and come to see and value who we truly are and help create a New America?

Have you ever noticed how the color, the various hues of a person's skin is uniquely beautiful, precious and reflects the Holy One, from whom all colors flow? Oh, do pause, and see, and pray.

Holy God, Breaker of Chains, Precious Lord, guide us as we grow courage to undo fear and hatred with Your Disarming Love.

¹Excerpt from *Begin Again* by Eddie S. Glaude Jr. © 2020 Published by Crown, Division of Random House LLC NY.

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*Mindfulness gives you the inner space and quietness to look deeply,
listen well, and be alive, awake and aware.*

- In stillness dwells the calm abiding Presence. I rest in you.
- There beyond reason, and thought is the One who draws me on. Be still my soul.
- Nothing to do, nowhere to go, no bells and whistles, only silence. I am free.

*Mindfulness, that deep silent encounter with the innermost center of our being.
Therein grows our capacity for the universe, for spirit, for God.*

Remember, AWARENESS is key – awareness I am sad, awareness I am cranky, awareness I am withholding, awareness I am at ease, awareness of such felt gratitude.
Awareness of just what is without blame or judgment or criticism ... Awareness is the gift.

Mindfulness Practice: Set a time of 5, 10, or more minutes.

Gently in silence, invite yourself to be with whatever you are aware of, whatever is arising in you ... thoughts or feelings ... breathing into it and out ...

- If what you are aware of is unpleasant, difficult or brings dis-ease, focus your breath there and allow the discomfort to soften and release.
- If your awareness is pleasant, receive it with a smile and release, pass it on. Each time returning to the breath, in and out.
- If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the breath flowing in and out.

Simple mindful verses: You may choose just one to practice.

- Breathing in, I know I am breathing in. Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.
- Breathing in ... breathing out, breathing in ... breathing out, in and out.
- Breathing in, 2,3,4. Breathing out, 2,3,4.
- Breathing in, I am aware of my heart, Breathing out, I smile at my heart.

Let your imagination name any part of your body you wish; you could name friends, family, co-workers, elements of the cosmos, Earth, and other species.

My responses to this First Sunday reflection:


