



217: An Early Spring Reflection

Two days a year, the earth from pole to pole receives an equal distribution of light and dark day and night. The equinox is always around this time of year, spring for those above the equator, autumn for those below. No matter where you live for one quiet moment in time, on the day's way to becoming longer and the night's path to shorter, they meet in the middle, gracefully passing through 12 hours each. The solstice in June and December tend to our heads more dramatically. The extremes always do, but it's the equinox I'm growing more and more fond of the day that marks this middling time. We are always in a middle, at an end and a beginning. And so it's good to have a way to mark them all.

This moment, the one that is both not quite and almost on the way, but not there yet. The moment itself is marked by what they call the celestial equator, which is a scientific way of saying, "Use your imagination." It's a line, an imaginary one that follows the equator, but instead of a pretend line on the earth, it's one that's in the sky. This matters because only two days a year, does the sun cross the line, once on its way north and one's on its way south.

Only two days a year can we perform what let's call a childhood experiment. Step one, grab a stick or a ruler. Step two, look up the latitude of your location. Step three, place your stick due south at the angle of 90 minus your latitude. And then at noon on equinox, your stick will cast no shadow at all, a moment with a perfect match of light. And so on that one moment in time on equinox, the middle feels like a destination. The moment of movement is marked by equal light that cast no shadow.

If our body was the earth and our lives the sun, is this the day we might always be working for? That elusive balance, everyone both says isn't possible, but also tries to find equal parts work and play, trying and trusting just enough and not too much all held in perfect balance. The more I live and pay attention, I don't think balance of time or schedule or skill or duty is what we really want. What we really want is balance on the inside of us, a piece that goes beyond what we could explain or understand. And then from that place, what we long for is balance on the outside of us, a piece that permeates our homes, our towns, our countries, and the world.

How can I be balanced on the inside even when I have full shadow or full light? How can we bring peace to the world even in the midst of chaos? What does equanimity mean for me today? Author Christie Purifoy writes in her book *Garden Maker*, "Flower gardens, don't begin with flowers. They don't even begin with seed. They begin with desire and vision, and they begin with dirt." A few more questions as we approach the first day of spring. What is the state of our soil? What seeds are ready for planting? What vision do I have for their blooms? As we reflect on the rhythm of life around us and within us, give us equanimity in this mad and beautiful world. Bring to us the quiet stillness of balance. Show us the gift of both the darkness and the light. May the spirit of God calm us and be our peace as we approach the day of equilibrium and do our next right thing in love. Amen.