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Taken from *Bread for the Resistance: 40 Devotions
for Justice People* by Donna Barber.
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A horizontal banner with a black outline and a light gray fill. The word "DEFIANCE" is written in bold, black, uppercase letters across the center of the banner. The banner has folded ends on both sides, giving it a ribbon-like appearance.

Who will rise up for me against the evildoers?
Who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

Psalm 94:16

READING: PSALM 94:12-23

In 2008, the war film *Defiance* was released by director Edward Zwick. The film is based on the true story of four Belarusian Jewish brothers who manage to escape Nazi forces sweeping through Eastern Europe by taking refuge in a forest. The brothers turn their struggle for survival into a battle against the Nazis. They are joined by an ever-growing crowd of other survivors who, emboldened by the band of brothers, choose to risk their lives to defy the Nazi forces in a fight for freedom.

I was first intrigued and then inspired by this daring and bold resistance to authority. I saw a nobility in their cause—a righteous indignation that moved me. The brothers and their friends were a ragtag bunch who, much like David facing Goliath, appeared to be inadequately armed and poorly matched against the vast and

powerful Nazi army. But they were no longer choosing to hide with hopes only of surviving. No, they were choosing to fight so that they might *live*.

I think about the bands of brothers and sisters that rise up today and scream “No!” to pipelines that destroy sacred land, yell “Time’s Up!” to the men and institutions that abuse women, and cry “Black Lives Matter!” to a legal system whose practices suggest that black bodies are without value. I think about the boycotts and the marches, the hashtags and the signs, and I wonder—is this, too, the way of Jesus?

As I consider this current disruption movement, I run through the scriptural narrative in my mind, hunting for evidence that Jesus was involved in acts of resistance, either by instruction or example. However, despite my hopes to the contrary, I could not come up with one example where Jesus or the disciples held up picket signs or marched in the street. There is no record of a sit-in or die-in at the palace gates in Rome. No calls for the resignation of Caesar or Pilate or the chief priest.

**Can a corrupt throne be allied with you—
a throne that brings on misery by its decrees?**

PSALM 94:20 (NIV)

But we need to recognize that there is a record of protest throughout Scripture and that standing *for* often involves standing *against*. Standing for the poor is standing against greed. Standing for the oppressed is standing against tyranny. Standing for love is standing against hate. Standing for righteousness is standing against evil.

Jesus' entire life was an act of defiance. From the moment of his conception in the womb of a virgin to the day he stepped out of the borrowed tomb, Jesus pushed against custom and concept of law. In walking through Samaria rather than going around it, when talking with a woman at a well, by healing on the Sabbath, and when laying hands on lepers, he embodied what it means to defy.

Jesus penned his protest sign in dirt at the feet of an adulterous woman. He inspired men to climb trees so they could see over the crowds. He disrupted many parties and vandalized the temple. He publicly called out religious leaders and challenged the young ruler who was part of the top one percent. He led a march into the city from the back of a donkey; he led a die-in on the cross on a hill. But his ultimate defiance was of hell and death itself when he rose, with all power, from the dead. In doing so, he freed us to live out lives of resistance. In fact, he commands it through his mandate to love.

So we too choose to live out lives of disruption. We resist. We oppose, and we cry. Like our Savior, we dare to contest hatred and defy evil. And in resurrection power, we stand.

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