

## John 16 Good Friday sermon 2008

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### \* III – Magpie at 12:00! (Picture)

When I was 14 years old I used to ride my bike a lot. One weekend, I heard about a magpie in the area that was swooping down on people and attacking them. So I decided to check it out with my friend. We found the magpie's street. And as we turned into the street, my friend stopped. But I pedalled as fast as I could, hoping to see the magpie, but not stick around long enough to be attacked by it.

I was flying down the road, going a million miles an hour, and I suddenly heard a noise behind me: "phooh, phooh, phooh". It was the sound of a gigantic pair of wings swooping down on me. I heard my friend calling out to me "It's the magpie! It's the magpie!" Of course I knew that, although it did sound more like a Pterodactyl at the time!

I rode up onto the footpath, hoping to gain cover from the trees. She followed me. Back onto the road. Still following. Then she got me. I was hit. Its beak was like a drill in my head. Before the days of bike helmets I might add! I kept pedalling madly, yelling out screams of pain and fear.

It was an adventure. One I won't forget. But to be honest, there was a little bit of fear. I was afraid. I was afraid of not being on control. Afraid of not knowing what to expect.

Today I want to ask you – are you afraid of the unknown? Do you fear what could happen next? Do you fear that you may not be in control of all the things in your life? I have 3 boys. So I'm clearly not in control of everything in my life. When I wake up in the morning to my 5 years old saying: "Jonah vomited on the floor", I'm reminded that I'm not in control of many things in my life.

And sometimes that is frightening. Sometimes I feel just like I did at 12 years old, out-pedalling a psychopathic magpie. Every one of us here today is different. Different life issues. Different fears. We live in an uncertain world. I'm not talking about the uncertainty of interest rates and unemployment, or whether you can own your own house. I'm talking about *real* fear. The fear of life without hope. Life without joy. Life without a future. (Life without God.)

In John chapter 16, Jesus is leaving his disciples. And they are afraid. Afraid because what lies ahead is unknown to them. What lies ahead is out of their control. They will face great opposition. They followed Jesus for over three years and they knew it would be a pretty rough ride sometimes. They knew people would attack them. They knew that people would hate Jesus and hate them *because* of Jesus. But now they hear the most frightening thing – verse 5 – as Jesus says:

### \* ***"Now I am going"***.

What will happen now? Fear grips the disciples. Fear of the unknown. Real fear. Life threatening fear.

### \* III –Climb Everest (Picture)

Peaking of fear – is anyone afraid of heights? Did you know that for a mere \$27,000USD you can join a 2 month expedition with a full support team to climb to the top of the world – Mt Everest. 8848 metres high. Now imagine selling all you had and going on this trip of a lifetime, and getting *nearly* to the top, braving the weather, the pain, the injuries, and your tour guide then turns to you and says: **"I have to go now."** Imagine that! What would you do? What would you say? "I beg your pardon? No you're not! You're not leaving us here! We're half way up a mountain. We need you to get us to the top! And we need you to get us back safely! You can't leave us now!"

The disciples must feel like they've ben left high and dry half way up a mountain! When Jesus says: "I have to go!", **WE** know that he's talking about his death. **WE** know that he will go and be

crucified on a cross and will die, but then he'll rise again. But what the disciples hear is "Goodbye. I have to go now." And they're afraid.

And Jesus knows this – verse 6 – he says:

\* *"Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief"*

\* And so he says to them, in verse 7, "When I go, I am sending a Counsellor."

The Counsellor that Jesus is sending is the Holy Spirit. In other words, Jesus is saying – you won't be alone. You won't lose your leader. The Holy Spirit will guide you. And what will He do? Well, verse 8 gives us an important answer:

\* *"When he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement..."*

I want to suggest to you today that if we can come to terms with what the Holy Spirit is **doing** in this world, and if we can listen to him, then we can understand what to do with our fear.

So, three things:

\* **(verse9) 1. TO convict the world in regard to sin.**

We have done the wrong thing against God again and again, but without the help of the Spirit, we actually think we've done OK. Like doing that exam and thinking you've aced it and got nearly everything right. Until the teacher marks it, and you find out you've failed. We think we've done OK. But the Holy Spirit's work is to convict us of our sin – to convict us that we have a problem. That we're not OK.

\* **(Verse 10) 2. To convict the world of guilt in regard to righteousness.**

The Holy Spirit's second work is to convict us that our righteousness is not enough. Some people think they'll go to heaven because they're generally a good person. "I've never killed anyone. I've never stolen much. I give to charity. I go to church! I give to the poor. I work an honest job. I treat my family well." God says that's **empty** righteousness. **Self**-righteousness. It sounds good, but what about everything else we do?

\* **III** – For example, imagine you make an omelette with 6 eggs. And it's all looking good with the first 5 eggs. Then you add the sixth. And it's rotten. Is that omelette still OK to eat? Is it OK with you? Would you eat it?

Our lives are the same. Full of good things, maybe. But with sin thrown in on top. And that's a rotten omelette. And God will not accept it. Our empty self-righteousness is ruined because of our sin. We can try and convince ourselves that we're right with God. But we're not. And we need help. The Holy Spirit's work is to show us our need to be right with God. And at the cross, Jesus says – I want you take my righteousness and I'll take **your** sin. I'll swap places with you so you can be right with God. Righteous.

\* **(Verse 11) 3. Finally, to convict the world of guilt in regard to judgment.**

Nothing could be more appropriate on Good Friday than to think about this. The Holy Spirit's work is to convict us that everyone will face judgement. The devil, the prince of this world, has already been condemned because of his lies, and we will be condemned if we listen to those lies. We will face judgement and the simple truth is that we need Jesus to stand in our place and take our judgement for us at the cross.

Three big things here: but it basically all boils down to this: we need to be convicted of the truth. Of our sin, our self righteousness and the judgement we will face. Knowing that we sin. Knowing that we are not right with God. Knowing that we will be judged. How do we face that? Have a look at verse 13:

\* *“But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.”*

We need the truth.

**\* III** – The other day, I was watching... sorry,...my **wife** was watching “So you think you can dance” and they interviewed this girl dancer about what dancing meant to her. She said something like: “Dancing defines me. It’s my life. It’s who I am. It’s everything.”

Let me ask you “What defines you?” What is your life all about? What is your purpose? If someone was to describe you, what would they say about you?

If we follow Jesus, our lives are to be defined by truth. And the truth is this: **We** are sinful and **we** need help. We will not be able to understand anything about the cross of Good Friday, if we fail to understand that simple fact – that we **need** help. We **need** to be saved from our sin. And if you know that already, is your life **defined** by that truth? Can you define yourself as “I’m someone who needs Jesus.”

**III** - (Golf Putting Partner machine) My parents **found** this in their garage the other day and gave it to me. It’s a putting partner. You putt the ball in, and it pops out so you can do it again. I tried it the other day. It convicted me of my poor putting skills. It convicted me that I needed help. It convicted me that golf is still very often frustrating.

But I also know that if I use it every day, I will probably get better at it. By grief will turn to joy. I will probably enjoy golf more! And then what? I’ll use it less and less because I don’t need it any more. I’m good enough now.

How often do we say that to God. We use him and depend on him when we think we need him. We “find” Jesus suddenly, and like an exercise video, we use him every day for a while. For inspiration. For a life crisis. For a marriage problem. But what about now? What about EVERY day? Let’s say you’ve been a Christian for 20 years. Do you still need him today like you did 20 years ago? Do we understand that we all have a deep need for Jesus in our lives each day? The work of the Holy Spirit is to guide us in truth and to convict us that we need Jesus. Notice the way Jesus finishes this section? He says, in verse 33:

\* *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

We need Jesus if we want real peace. We need Jesus if we want to be free from fear. And Jesus wants us to have peace. He says that we will face troubles. But he wants our fear to be gone. He wants us to know that he’s always there. He wants us to know that no matter how difficult things get, he has already overcome the toughest of all – he has overcome death for us.

We don’t need to live in fear or uncertainty. Because truth drives away fear of the world.

**Truth:** Our sins have been paid for at the cross.

**Truth:** We can have the assurance of eternal life.

**Truth:** Jesus has defeated death.

But we need him, we must depend on him, to guide us in that truth everyday.

Are you dependant?

Let’s pray.

Help us to depend on you.

Help us to be guided in truth.

Drive out our fear and give us joy as we serve you.