

# Easter Day 27 Mar 2016

[Acts 10: 34-43; Ps 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Cor 15:19-26; John 20:1-18](#)

[Easter C March 27, 2016](#) Textweek

Who would make the best leader, what odds would you give to say Tony Abbott and Malcolm Turnbull; I guess some would say the odds *shorten* if we look further afield... What about the odds for Ted Cruz or Donald Trump?

The question for us to consider is how do we determine and choose who to follow?

Scratch the surface of most political debate and we'll be embarrassed by just how we decide; for the two most operative mechanisms for determining political choice are firstly 'what's in it for me'; that's why tax cuts are a perennial feature of elections, and the second primary mechanism is 'spin'; we are steered one way or another.

And the same is true for the Church and perhaps for all religious traditions.

As we encounter Easter, and the mystical narratives that 'tell' the story, we might be aware of what interpretations we are actually influenced by; we might look for the 'spin'; and also seek our own self-interested position in relation to the narratives.

Published in over 160 hymnals the African-American spiritual hymn "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" has been sung in churches for well over 100 years. Like many hymns it is a singing of the gospel narrative, and like most advertising jingles it carries a memorable message.

Although the last lines carry a refrain in each verse that says "*Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.*" the message is clear "**they** crucified my Lord'; not me!

Published in over 560 hymnals is the Easter carol "There is a green hill far away", and even that title distances us from the story; it also carries a theological jingle that says:

3 He died that we might be forgiven,  
he died to make us good,  
that we might go at last to heaven,  
saved by his precious blood.

4 There was no other good enough  
to pay the price of sin,

he only could unlock the gate  
of heaven, and let us in.

Both these simple examples give us a glimpse of the Church's 'spin' on Easter; both ask little of us for '**They**' crucified him, and '**he**' died so that we are saved; and the Jesus jingle that reinforces '**he**' is very special for "There was no other good enough."

Sing these hymns long enough and we lull ourselves into self-righteousness, and make an idol of Jesus that is actually at odds with everything he was, everything he taught and everything he died for.

To encounter Easter we need to look again and see Easter as our story, it is an illustration for us to see ourselves and to glimpse, even grasp the enlightened truths that Jesus revealed.

Jesus provided a revolutionary view of the world, a view that totally reconfigured the whole understanding of God. Although a worshipping Jew for his early life, he saw God in a new light, not the powerful, controlling judgemental God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but rather the abiding God, the source of life, sacred life enfleshed in humanity. This new understanding was life changing in that it opens the eyes to resurrection as a lived reality, and the abundance of love as the very essence of creation.

In 1905 Einstein published two papers on special relativity, and the equivalence of mass and energy, another revolutionary worldview.

On February 11<sup>th</sup> this year two teams announced that they had made the first observation of gravitational waves as predicted by Einstein; Gravitational waves cannot exist in the Newtonian theory of gravitation; and so a new worldview replaces the old.

As the Church we are still to discover the enlightened worldview that Jesus revealed over 2000 years ago; and that will take the same effort, and desire to seek, that the scientific world employed; we cannot pretend with hymn singing that we know what was revealed to all in the process of Easter.

And so where to begin, if indeed we are to begin, this Easter; how can we look again at the narrative of Easter and discover the gravitational waves that open our eyes to a new worldview...

Let's start with an aside and appreciate that Einstein was a refugee, a refugee who was given a chance, and then wonder how many Einsteins our border security forces have imprisoned in foreign lands because of our fears, because we have no appreciation of abundance.

We might also ask what other crucifixions we have been complicit in because we failed to embrace what Jesus taught.

Now going back to the forces that influence who we choose to follow: Easter, like Einstein's equation, requires that we let go of our previous reference points; and so we might start by deleting our 'What's in it for me' approach, and that is most difficult for Christians, for we already pretend that we don't have that approach...

Then we have to learn to tune into (and out of) the orthodox 'spin'; and that too is difficult for just as Einstein grew up learning about Newtonian physics, so we also grew up and have become familiar with the understanding carried by hymns and reinforced by church teaching.

Maybe we should start a new process of seeking, and see that Easter is love story and a re-telling of the story of creation, a story of creation for each moment of life.

A story that that tells of creating a new future from the act of self-giving love; and a story that encourages us to face our fears, our fear of change, a fear of losing what we have, a story that reveals us as the body of Christ and so too the realisation of resurrection.

Could it be that in our self-giving is unfolding of our divine nature?

Take time to read the love story of Easter, discover yourself as the crowd, as Pilate as the centurion, see your folly in the disciples and wrestle with your Judas.

Then take time to read it again more slowly and discover that you are also Jesus to see that he reveals *There is another good enough* and that you are that other.

Read the love story till you find the gravitational waves that will create ripples in your time and space, ripples that lead you into a worldview of eternity...

He is risen – and so are we!

Peter Humphris