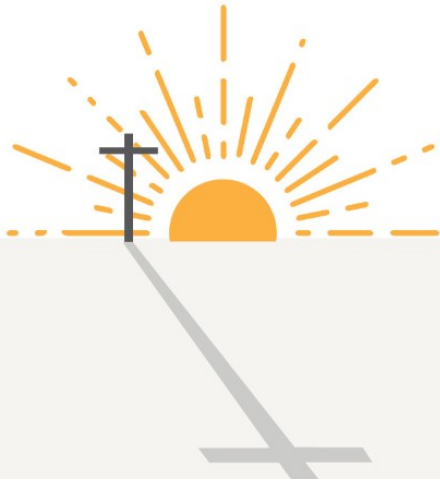


GOOD FRIDAY



Good Friday 30/3/18

The Good Death

Bible Reading: John 10:1-18

Big Idea: Jesus came as the 'good shepherd' who lays down his life for his sheep to give us life; who 'walked through the valley of the shadow of death for us so we now face death with hope.

Key Verse: *I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. (John 10:10-11)*

Call to Action: We want to invite you to join us for a meal of hot cross buns now, but join us too on Sunday for church, to hear more about the resurrection of Jesus and to eat with us, each week tasting the goodness of life lived not in the shadow of death but in the life of Jesus.

Metaphor: Hot cross buns (death at the supermarket)

Slide 1



What's your ideal Friday look like; not just a 'good Friday' — but 'the best Friday'?

Slide 2



A good, short, day of work followed by drinks in the office?

Slide 3



Or drinks out on the town with friends?

Slide 4



Or with your neighbours and friends on the street?

Slide 5



Alone watching the football?

Slide 6



Or maybe your best Friday is the start of a long weekend — where you jump in the car and head off for a getaway...

Slide 7



Drinks by the beach...

Slide 8



Or in the bush...

Slide 9



So many of our pictures of the *good life as Aussies* involve *abundant drinks* — good drinks. Our *thirst* being satisfied...

But maybe *drink* isn't your thing.

Slide 10



Maybe your ideal Friday involves food — feasting with friends...

Slide 11



Gathering around the Barbie...

Slide 12



Or maybe something a little bit *fancy*.

Slide 13



We love *eating*. The abundant life is the life of *eating and drinking* and being *satisfied*. Our best Fridays mean being *full*. Whether it's *friends*, or *food*, or *family*... Full of good things.

For me it's all about carb loading... My ideal Friday starts at a bakery... I love bread. Sweet bread... Pastries... And for the first few months of the year I'm in bread heaven...

Slide 14



I love Hot Cross Buns. They're synonymous with *Good Friday*... And I want to suggest this morning they're a great *picture* of the Good life...

Slide 15



You might be one of those people who complain that Hot Cross Buns are in store the week after Christmas... But I like it. I like that Christmas leads to Easter... I like that the Cross is on display on supermarket shelves...

But mostly I like that they're delicious; and it's bun season... I like to buy my produce in season...

Slide 16



It turns out I'm not alone... Woolworths says there's GREAT demand for Hot Cross Buns; they sell a 10 million in January... If they do that for three months that means every Aussie gets at least one — except I reckon I ate 15 or 20 already this year...

Slide 17



Coles say we love them so much their bakers have developed *six varieties* of hot cross bun... Clearly we love them...

But I don't just want to fill the Hot Cross bun with chocolate or apple this morning — I want to fill them with *meaning*... To suggest they're a taste of *the good life*.

Slide 18



They should be *synonymous* with Good Friday... A taste of *what Jesus came to bring*...

Slide 19

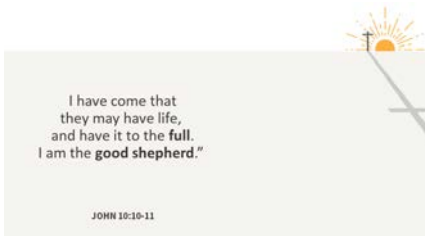


Did you catch this moment *right at the start* of the reading... This statement from Jesus.

I have come that they may **have life**, and have it **to the full**. I am **the good shepherd**.

How many of us think of Jesus as coming to bring *rules and regulations* and here he is saying he comes not just to *BRING LIFE*... But bring *full... Abundant... Good life... As the GOOD SHEPHERD*.

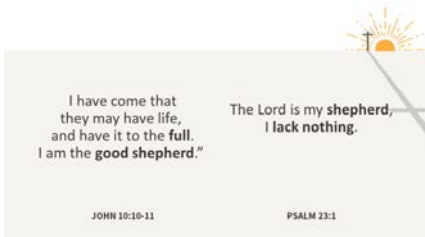
Slide 20



And these words, for the first people listening – and maybe for you – evoke a picture from a famous part of the Bible... You might know it...

This idea of ‘the good shepherd’ is a picture from a famous song from Israel’s history... Psalm 23...

Slide 21



The picture of GOD as a shepherd, whose *loving provision* means his sheep *lack nothing*... *They are FULL*.

Slide 22

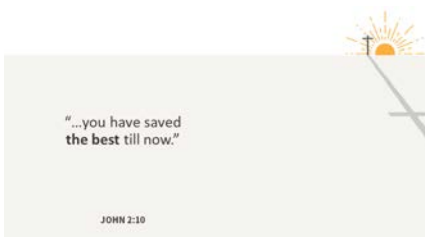


Jesus isn’t a wowser... He came to bring *the good life*... We love our wine... Our picture of *feasting* together...

Jesus’ first miracle recorded in John’s Gospel was *turning water into wine at a party*.

The good life.

Slide 23



The GOOD WINE... The guests are shocked by the miraculous arrival... The BEST wine...

Jesus brings the *good life* with him...

Slide 24



It's the BEST... Like the shepherd in the Psalm provides an **OVERFLOWING** cup at a banquet table...

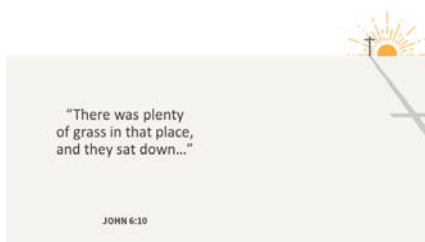
Slide 25



And Jesus... the good shepherd came to load us up on carbs... The **GOOD LIFE**... The **FULL LIFE**...

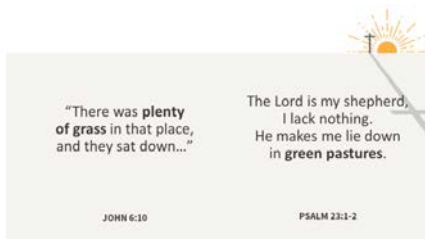
He doesn't just serve up the **BEST WINE**... But a feast of bread.

Slide 26



And this scene from John's Gospel... This picnic... Where he sits 5,000 men and a bunch of women and children down.

Slide 27



Just like a shepherd — a **GOOD SHEPHERD** — leading his sheep to pasture...

And he provides for them...

It's another **PSALM 23** moment.

Another picture of **FULLNESS**... Of **ABUNDANCE**...

Slide 28



Here he is *preparing a table*... *Hosting a banquet*... Providing an abundance... Filling them with *overflowing* goodness... As much bread as they want...

Slide 29



There's stacks of leftovers.

Bread for days. The hungry are satisfied...

Jesus is the Good shepherd.

He's not a buzzkill. He's the life of the party. The host.

Slide 30



He's come to give a *full life*... Real satisfaction... Real care.

Meeting our *real need*.

Slide 31



When he explains this *feast* — his love for his sheep — people — he calls himself *the bread of life*.

He says he *satisfies the hungry* and *satisfies the thirsty*...

Those pictures of the good life we have — of food and drink flowing — they're from GOD.

Slide 32



Jesus is the BREAD OF LIFE... So I love that we celebrate GOOD FRIDAY — a day ALL ABOUT HIM — with buns that bear his symbol...

Slide 33



But why do we need Jesus?

What's wrong with our own good — or great — Fridays?

Why can't we just eat, drink, and be merry... for tomorrow we die...

Slide 34



There's a little hint of why in that, and when Jesus plays off *food that spoils* — food that goes off — with some sort of eternal food... Food that he brings...

Slide 35



See, we know, don't we... That wine can go off...

Slide 36



That you get the occasional bottle that has turned to vinegar...

Slide 37



And we know that bread doesn't last...

Slide 38



Leave it on the bench and it ends up like this...
And these are little pictures of our own lives...
Our own parties... Our Fridays are numbered.

Slide 39



We don't just gather to celebrate, but to mourn...

Maybe you've mourned a loved one since last Good Friday, and this is your first time back at church since last Easter, or the funeral...

Maybe you've felt the sting of death, and none of your Fridays have been quite the same...

Slide 40



Nathan Campbell's family gathered on a Friday late last year to farewell their Gran... She loved hospitality.. So many of Nathan's good memories of feasting come from her table...

She even used to put on Hot Cross bun morning teas for Easter for her church in Inverell... Her Easter morning teas got a mention at her funeral...

Slide 41



But this is something the Psalm talks about too... This shadow... This pall... Death...

This is life, isn't it... Lived in the shadow of death...

Slide 42



We know what it is to walk through this valley... Don't we.

To experience decay — to know LACK... To LACK FULLNESS...

Slide 43



We feel our mortality, and if we're honest... It makes food and drink different... Either this is all we have and we must eat drink and be merry... Or there's a pang of something — a pain, a hollowness — with every mouthful. Or maybe it's both — we chase the feasting and the drinking and we *know it can't really satisfy*.

Slide 44



We're hungry for something more... For something *lasting*... And Jesus says *he has the answer*.

Slide 45



And it's caught up with him being *the good shepherd*. *This promise of eternal life...*

The promise that *we will not perish*...

I don't know about you... But that promises something that might satisfy me.... More than a croissant... More than a trip to the beach... More than a feast...

And it's another fulfilment of that Psalm... That Psalm of trust and hope and longing...

Slide 46



This is a picture of *life forever* with the Shepherd who loves us and provides *the good life* for us. Eternal life. Abundant life. A feast.

Slide 47



And it's at the heart of the Easter story... It's the symbol on top of our buns...

The cross that makes them 'Hot Cross Buns' — and a picture of *the bread of life*. A reminder about the heart of the Easter story, and the way Jesus shows that he is *the good shepherd*

Slide 48



Because the Good Shepherd is the good shepherd... Who brings the good life...

Because he *lays down his life for the sheep*.

Slide 49



But the story doesn't end there — which is part of how this is a 'good Friday' and why the cross isn't just a morbid reminder of our mortality — like the rest of the carbs we eat...

Jesus lays down his life...

Slide 50



On the cross. Horribly executed... As a sacrificial exchange of his life for yours...

Slide 51



In order to take it up again...

Good Friday — the cross — works as one with Easter Sunday...

Slide 52



The resurrection...

The start of our new life... And we'll hear about Easter Eggs on Sunday...

Slide 53



The resurrection opens up *life* for us... The *full life*... The *good life*...

No more decay... No more valley... No more shadow... No more death.

Free to ENJOY the good life.

Forever...

Slide 54



This is why Good Friday is *the best Friday*...

And I want to invite you to start thinking about your Fridays — all your Fridays — in the light of this one... The new dawn...

Life beyond death...

Imagine all your Fridays — your great ones — freed from the shadow of death... Out of the valley, and into the care of the good shepherd...

Slide 55



Imagine if *every good wine, or beer, or coffee, or juice... that you enjoy* reminded you about the 'good life' that Jesus won for you...

That he came to *bring the party*...

To *satisfy*...

To allow you to enjoy good things without the fear of death and *greater things* forever.

Slide 56



Imagine that every crusty bread roll — every pastry — you bite into is a picture of the provision of the good shepherd.

The one who satisfies...

Bread plays an interesting part in John’s story about Jesus — there’s the feeding of the 5,000, but a few times when Jesus shares a meal with his disciples called ‘the Passover’ — which is the festival we use to choose the date for Easter each year... and if we were celebrating Passover still it wouldn’t be with rich, crusty, bread...

Slide 57



But with *flat* bread. Which is how the Passover was celebrated...

Dead bread.

Slide 58



Bread without yeast...

Slide 59



Yeast is *alive*...

It’s in buns. It’s in wine.

Slide 60



Instead of marking that last supper with flat bread now we celebrate it with *living bread*...

Slide 61



And on Good Friday we put a cross on that *living bread* to remind us that the bread of life is from the one who *laid down his life* for us, and took it back up, to free us from death, and to provide the *full life*.... A life where *every meal* is a reminder of his goodness to us...

Not just these buns — as good as they are...

Slide 62



We want to invite you to *join us* for a meal of hot cross buns now, but join us too on Sunday for church, to hear more about the resurrection of Jesus and to *eat with us*, each week tasting the goodness of life lived not in the shadow of death but in the life of Jesus.

Full...Abundant...Good.

Because the good shepherd laid down his life for his sheep... Let's pray.