



WORKTALK WEEKLY

08 JUNE 2010

## Welcome to WORKTALKweekly

### In Between Times 5: Loss

It is very unlikely that anyone reading my words here does not have some experience of loss. Put simply, you know what it is to have and then not to have. It may be a physical loss, such as a company or a sum of money or some treasured possession (we don't tend to feel much loss if we are not attached to the subject to the loss). It could be loss of some aspect of yourself, such as your health or fitness or faculty such as sight or hearing. Again - and perhaps most prevalent - you may be dealing with the loss of a person - either through their death or their departure in some other way.

The greater the significance of the person or possession, the greater your attachment or love, the greater their importance in your life, then the keener you feel the loss.

It is almost certain that everyone you encounter this week will be carrying a sense of loss in their soul. Financial, corporate, personal or private, that space remains, which seemingly cannot be refilled or ignored. If it is attached to a time, then each year will be a reminder.

There is a day in the year which is known as Good Friday. For those who experienced the first occurrence of the events that the day now marks, it felt anything but good. It was a day of loss and it heralded one the most remarkable 'in between times' in history.

For the followers, friends and family of Jesus of Nazareth, that day contained multiple losses. The cocktail mixture of heady feelings they felt would have varied according to who was feeling them. Mary lost a son, John a best friend, Peter his hero, James his leader, Mathew his rescuer, others their hope, their leader, their teacher, their healer, their guide - Mary Magdalene lost her everything.

Although they met together, each one was alone with their grief - loss is by definition personal, individual and private and no one else can feel it for you. Each has lost something unique to themselves and each had to face it alone, even if they attempted to comfort each other.

For these people, it was a time of unspeakable pain. They had reconfigured their lives around this carpenter from Nazareth and had seen things that had blown the roof of their minds and now it all lay in ruins in a borrowed tomb.

There are numerous lessons about loss which emerge from this 'in between time' - the loneliness of loss - the individuality of loss - the mystery of it - why did it happen? There are couple of glimpses of the other side of the 'in between time' which are intriguing. Jesus was delivering a thief to paradise, and maybe a message to prisoners according to a cryptic later writing by Peter. If you wish to ponder this, then please do and pause at this point.

There is, however, something quite startling, worth observing about this particular 'in between time'. If you have read the accounts of Jesus of Nazareth, you will know that he predicted this 'in between time' constantly in the three years prior to that fateful Friday. These predictions were no secret. Listen to his enemies, who went to Pilate 'Sir, we remember that while he was still alive that the deceiver said "after three days I will rise again". That's why there was a guard on the tomb in the first place. It is also recorded 16 times that Jesus predicted the 'in between time', he also used metaphors of joy after childbirth, bridegroom returning, Jonah and the fish - the narratives are full of it.

The truth of the matter is that none of his family, friends or followers actually believed him. This 'in between time' and its accompanying sense of loss has matured in a bath of disbelief.

The couple on the Emmaus road spoke for them all when they used the words 'we had hoped' as a prelude to their despair.

Hold on to your hat before you think the lesson here is that we should learn to believe. I am utterly sure I would be as disbelieving as them that Friday and Saturday if I had been there.

The question that gives us light for this 'in between time' is 'how do we know that they did not believe?' The answer is 'because they are honest enough to tell us'. And there you have it.

Some losses usher in such painful 'in between times' that we just don't believe in much of anything anymore. That's the state they were in. The fact that we should be eternally grateful to them for is that they had the courage to tell us.

This is an 'in between time' of radical authenticity. It is a time of admission of raw humanity, hallmarked by a willingness to admit what would be so tempting to cover up - namely that they simply didn't believe.

This transparent and costly honesty creates the conditions for the birth that tends to accompany the end of 'in between times'. Out of the womb of their unbelief is born a powerful new belief, strong enough to transmit to millions of others.

So here is the invitation to authenticity. When the loss occurs, do not be afraid to admit to the presence of disbelief in your soul - for, if present, then the admission is the admission of truth - a truth which, like The Truth, will set you free to be instead of to pretend, to live instead of to act, and to lead instead of mislead. Pain will always be pain - but in its face, courage has its goodness. Perhaps this was another reason why it was called Good Friday?.

**So in between now and the next WORKTALKweekly, do feel free to email us your thoughts to [wtw@worktalk.gs](mailto:wtw@worktalk.gs) or leave a comment on our [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) profile.**

Work well  
Geoff Shattock

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## **BIBLE SECTION**

### **Luke 24, 15 - 25**

15As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; 16but they were kept from recognizing him. 17He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. 18One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19"What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." 25He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

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WORKTALK, 56 Baldry Gardens, London SW16 3DJ  
T: +44 (0)20 8764 8080  
<http://www.worktalk.gs>

[comms@worktalk.gs](mailto:comms@worktalk.gs)