

Sometimes things are just not right.

Many years ago, when I was a baptist minister, I attended an annual assembly, which was held that year in Dunedin. The practise for these gatherings was to start on Thursday with the Pastors and Spouses Day, it would culminate in a dinner that evening. The assembly would begin proper on Friday.

As we gathered in the auditorium Friday morning, our General Superintendent, (the bishop) if you like, made an announcement.

One of the lovely volunteers who had helped prepare and serve the Pastors and Spouses meal, had been killed in a car accident on the way home. She lived out of town and had had an accident after leaving the event.

As you can imagine, we all felt shocked and saddened, and if I'm honest, slightly responsible.

But, did we pause, no. Did we have a moments silence, no. Did we pray, no. Did we acknowledge this wonderful woman and her sacrifice in any way, no.

Did we mention her name, I don't think so?

Sometimes things are just not right.

You read the paper about sneaky, dodgy stuff happening in Russia and China, in North Korea. We have just escaped 5 years of Donald Trump. The situation in Brazil and India is grim, and if it was possible, getting grimmer.

Sometimes things are just not right.

We see public expressions of anger and grief all over the world. Riots in Hong Kong. Protests in Myanmar. Mass gatherings everywhere with the Black Lives Matter movement and climate change concerns.

Sometimes things are just not right.

Public expressions and acknowledgement of grief and anger are very important. They give us the opportunity to express those feelings, this is why protesting in a meaningful way is so often helpful to us.

But it's not just protesting, it's also why funerals are so important. It's why we have funerals. They allow us to settle, and let things be for a few moments in time. To pay our respects, to acknowledge our loved one, loved people, to do honour, be present and in attendance.

Some of you will have been in the situation where someone has said they don't want a funeral. No chance to stop, mourn, and remember. Speak, pray, or act in any way.

Sometimes things are just not right.

Effectively we are left with no words, and this is a problem for us, because we need words. We need to be able to express ourselves, mourn, speak, do something. We need to be able to stop, acknowledge, and be present. At times we need to protest.

Powerful people hate words. Unless they in control of them.

Sometimes things are just not right.

This is why oppressive regimes,, dishonest Presidents, and Dictators, hate activists, writers, artists, priests and poets. Because their job is to give us words. Powerful words of mourning and remembrance. Words of action, description, colour, words of prayer, of beauty. Powerful words of change. These words help us to express our sense of injustice, of unfairness, to express our anger and our grief.

Words that acknowledge what has been lost.

Sometimes things are just not right.

David gives words to his personal and Israel's public anger and grief, he and all Israel mourn over the death of the King and his prince. David does personal and public honour to the man who pursued him, who wanted him dead.

To his son, his beloved friend.

To the Israelite hopes of King and nation.

David does honour to what they had hoped would be, instead of what was.

Something isn't right, and David is giving words to that.

As we live in and are apart of our world, sometimes we are angry, sometimes we grieve. For ourselves and our families, but also for the situations that just are. Let's try and give words to those feelings, let's pray, let's write, let's speak ... let's even protest.

Let's acknowledge what might have been lost.

Let's do this ...

Because ... sometimes things are just not right.

Amen.