

WEEKLY SERMON

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Take comfort in Jesus; ignore fear and superstition

Friday the 13th has long been associated with bad luck in western culture.

The origins are difficult to pin down, but the superstition seems to have gained ground in the 19th Century, although some people believe the origins stem back to the middle ages.

The date became more notorious to me in my teenage years through the 1980s with the release of the Friday the 13th horror film series. The fear generated through the character at the time stayed with me even though I have never seen the film.

The franchise was a huge success and led to 12 films in total, all building on the same character. The films have helped to associate Friday 13th with all things bad and build a superstition based on little more than spin and hype that has lasted in popular culture.

I wonder how many of you thought as you wrote or read the date today, 'I wonder if anything bad will happen?'.

Coping when things go wrong can be a challenge and when we feel that bad things have happened to us it is easy to blame God. Many people do and many lose faith at difficult times.

But the bible is clear in its narrative that God does not cause us to stumble and fall, does not cause us wrong but seeks to work for our good from a deep-rooted unconditional love.

The book of Job in the Bible is one of the oldest and has a core message that God is always with us and is greater than the suffering we face. Having faith in Christ does not protect us from hurt but does give us an advocate to comfort us in our pain.

Jesus was no stranger to what it was to feel hurt and pain and the Gospels recall the suffering he underwent throughout his ministry.

The Gospel offers the clearest assurance that in our suffering we have a comforter in Jesus, who suffered himself, gave the ultimate sacrifice and reconciles us with our loving creator.

So as the day progresses, instead of thinking about the bad things that may happen, rejoice in the goodness of God and remember that when we are hurt, we have a comforter, healer and friend in Jesus.

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