

Weekly Grace — (compiled by your Chaplain)

Jewellery Jesus or Genuine Jesus?

From: <https://www.risenchurch.org.au/risen-blog/2018/jewellery-jesus-or-genuine-jesus>

Who is Jesus?

It was a Buddha's head that started the thought. The head was in Bunnings ready to receive your newly purchased soil and spring bulbs.

A profound religious thinker who changed the path of history can now exist in every second tranquil Aussie garden. Utterly domesticated!

Jesus is a lot like that. A glittering model of the place he once hung and died blings on many necks. An oversupply of crosses adorn buildings and logos. Add to that the sheer number Christian schools, church-connected hospitals and service organisations and Jesus seems to be part of the furniture of Australian society.

Jesus and his death are so very commonplace. But to be part of the furniture is to be domesticated.

When we see all these organisations that are part of our Christian-influenced culture, we can easily think we know who Jesus is. But Jesus' radical nature, controversial claims, audacious actions, profound compassion, and sometimes searing words are not present in these symbols. Nor are the meaning of his death and resurrection.

Vapour-trail Jesus vs. Thundering Jesus

Jesus' words, claims and actions might be behind the buildings, the crucifixes, the schools and hospitals but they are like jet vapour-trails. Vapour-trails are amazing and cool. I loved seeing them criss-crossing the wide blue skies of outback NSW where I grew up.

But the vapour-trail and the thundering, ear-splitting, heart-pounding power and presence of a jet are not the same. One can be admired safely from afar; the other is utterly unsafe. There is nothing domesticated about a jet when it does a flyby. There is nothing domesticated about Jesus when you've really met him in the Bible.

Here's the question: have you met Jesus? Not the jewellery version—he was once here. Nor, the vapour-trail version. But the real version. The undomesticated Jesus of the Bible.

If you haven't felt some of the heart pounding power, been shocked at his audacious claims, horrified by his betrayal, or caught off guard by his compassion then I suspect, deeply, you have not encountered Jesus.

If you have not been undone at some point by his fierce love for you, exposed by his embrace of the cross then, again, I do wonder if you've met Jesus. If you do not wonder at his love, have you met him?

If you have not been undone at some point by his fierce love for you, exposed by his embrace of the cross then, again, I do wonder if you've met Jesus.

I don't mean to make you despair if this is you. My hope is to help you.

Turn to God in prayer asking him to expose you to the real Jesus. And then, sit down with one of the Gospels. Put aside all distractions and read it. And then repeat. Repeat the prayers and repeat the reading until Jesus roars in your heart, fills your mind and commands your will. And then take the undomesticated Jesus out to the world.

(P.S. If you'd like a copy of any of the Gospels to read for yourself, ask the Chaplain – they're free!)