

A gravel path leads from the foreground into the distance, flanked by a stone wall on the left and trees on the right. The path is dappled with shadows from the trees. In the background, a bright horizon is visible through the trees, suggesting a clear day. The overall scene is peaceful and evokes a sense of a quiet, rural setting.

Stepping out of the shadows...

...and living with more joy & peace

Colin Barnes

In the shadow of the cross - John 16:16-33

There's

- Real pain – 20-22, 33
- Joy
 - It's not the end, the pain will pass – 20-22
 - Father loves them – 23-27
- Peace
 - Don't worry what it looks like – 32
 - Jesus has overcome – 33
- More than one story!
 - A dark, grief-filled one
 - A brighter, hope-filled one

Stories of the cross...

- The Jewish one
 - A false prophet
 - Dying to save God's people from error
- The Roman one
 - An upstart would-be king
 - Dying to keep the peace
- The Christ one
 - The Son of God
 - Dying to save humanity and bring peace to the world

The background of the slide is a light blue color with a pattern of various virus particles. The most prominent are large, spherical particles with a textured surface and numerous protruding spikes, resembling coronaviruses. There are also smaller, more spherical particles scattered throughout. The overall effect is a dense field of microscopic organisms.

What story are we living in now?

- A fearful one? Is this Judgement?

- A hopeless one? Is this the End?

- A trusting one? Is this a Sabbath?

Is this judgement?

- Is God punishing the world?
- Does it sound like Jesus?
 - Who came to save – John 3:16-17, 12:47
 - Who chose not to condemn – John 8:1-12
 - Who discouraged looking for judgement
 - In disasters – Luke 13:1-5
 - In sickness – John 9:1-7
 - Of unbelievers – John 12:47, Luke 9:51-56
- Could it be discipline?
 - Anger only a moment, favour is for life – Psalm 30:5
 - Of us, not others! Romans 5:1-5, Hebrews

Is this the end?

- We've already seen tsunamis, wildfires, famines, earthquakes...
 - These days don't look apocalyptic!
- Yes & no
- Yes, these are the last days – Acts 2:17
 - There will be disease – Luke 21:11
 - But these are birth-pangs and life is coming
- No, this is not the final day – Matthew 24:3, 36-44
 - It'll be peaceful – Matthew 24:36-44
- First the kingdom must fill the earth – Daniel 2:35, Isaiah 9:7

Could it be Sabbath?

- The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry by John Mark Comer
 - God giving us our hearts' desire?
- To help us
 - Rest
 - Know we are not in control
 - Rely on him rather than ourselves
 - Dream new ways of being
- Time to reconnect
 - To prioritise God
 - To know him as Father - The Lord's Prayer
- Pandemic by Lynn Ungar

Which story will be choose to live in?

- One of judgement
- One about the end
- Or one about reboot & reconnection?
- Jesus is inviting us to step out of the shadows and into the warmth of his love
 - To let go of pretending you're in control
 - To embrace the relief of knowing it's not ultimately all dependent on you
 - To know you are dearly loved
 - To dream...
 - To reconnect – Psalm 23, Romans 15:13