

Thought for the Day 29th April - John Reed

Read Philippians 2:1-13

We were all horrified last week when four police officers were killed in Kew in Melbourne, when a truck ploughed into them as they conducted a roadside stop of a Porsche that had been speeding. Our thoughts go out to their families in this extraordinary difficult time.

The driver of the truck has now been charged with several counts of culpable driving. The driver of the Porsche has also been charged with several offences. Sadly, one of the things he is reported to have done may not be a chargeable offence, but has been quite rightly found to be deeply offensive in the eyes of the wider community.

You see, apparently (remember, all this is subject to investigation and the courts and we shouldn't be too quick to rush to judgement) ... apparently, as he stood at the side of the road watching the carnage (in which his car was destroyed as well as the four officers losing their lives) he said to a dying police officer: "All I wanted to do was to go home and have my sushi and now you've [expletive deleted] my car."

A person lies dying, and all he cares about is his car and his sushi and how his evening has been ruined? Really???

It's a level of self-absorption that boggles the mind.

When it stretches to those sorts of extremes, we are deeply offended by it. But aren't we all at times at least a little guilty of selfishness? Of caring first and foremost about our own feelings, our own interests, ahead of others? Remember the ugly scenes of people fighting over toilet paper in supermarket aisles? Whether it be hoarding 5,400 rolls of toilet paper (did you catch that news story?), or hiding the TV remote so that nobody can change the channel apart from you, we all in our own ways are inclined to put ourselves first, to think about what we want rather than the needs and interests of others.

Which makes this just one of a multitude of ways in which God challenges us and calls us to be different. We are called to respond to the example of our Lord Jesus who, out of concern for us, emptied himself and died for us (verses 6-8). In like manner, we are to look not only to our own interests, but also to the interest of others (v. 4) and do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit (v. 3).

It sounds easy. It is easily said, and read. But, as recent events have shown, it runs contrary to our corrupt human nature. But this is the radically counter-cultural life that Jesus both lived himself and calls us to live in response.