

# Easter Colours

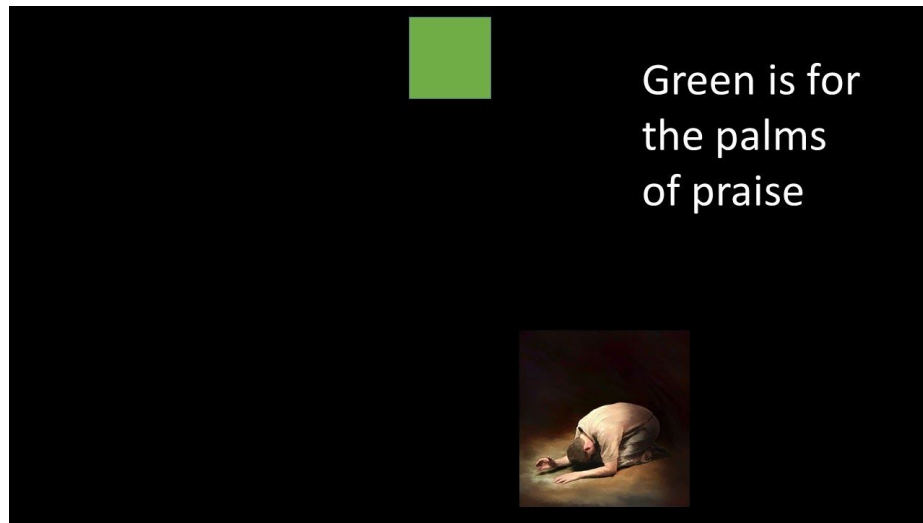
There is a lot of detail in today's readings. It's an important message.

## Our first colour is green

This is to remind us of when Jesus rode into Jerusalem astride a donkey.

**Matthew 21:1-11**

**Green is for the palms of praise**

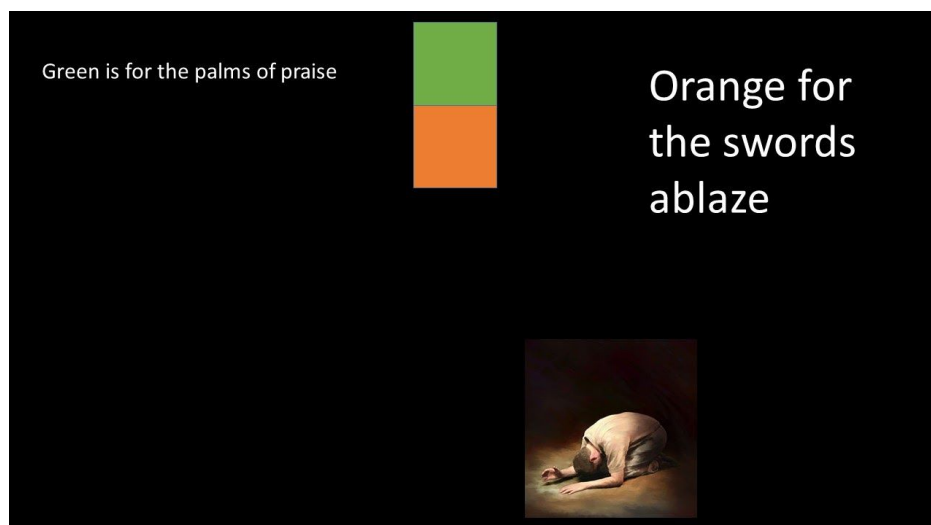


## Our second colour is orange

This is to remind us of how the mood of the people around Jesus very quickly changed from praise to betrayal and arrest. Jesus met with the disciples, sharing the bread and wine to remember the Passover festival. Later, in the Garden of Gethsemane, as Jesus prayed and the disciples slept, Judas led a large crowd, armed with swords and clubs, to arrest Jesus, who had been betrayed by Judas' kiss. Have you ever let Jesus down?

**Matthew 26:14-56**

**Orange for the swords ablaze**

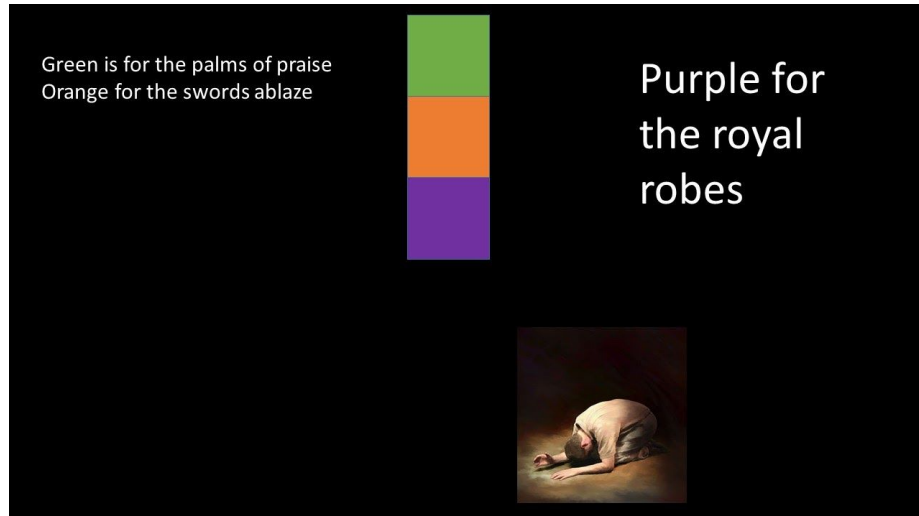


# Our third colour is purple

Purple is the traditional colour of royalty. This is to remind us of the fact that Jesus is King of all, and of how the soldiers and authorities mocked and humiliated him as he stood before the priests, Pilate, the governor and Herod. How do you make Jesus king of YOUR life?

**Matthew 27:11-31, Luke 22:63 - Luke 23:25**

## Purple for the royal robes

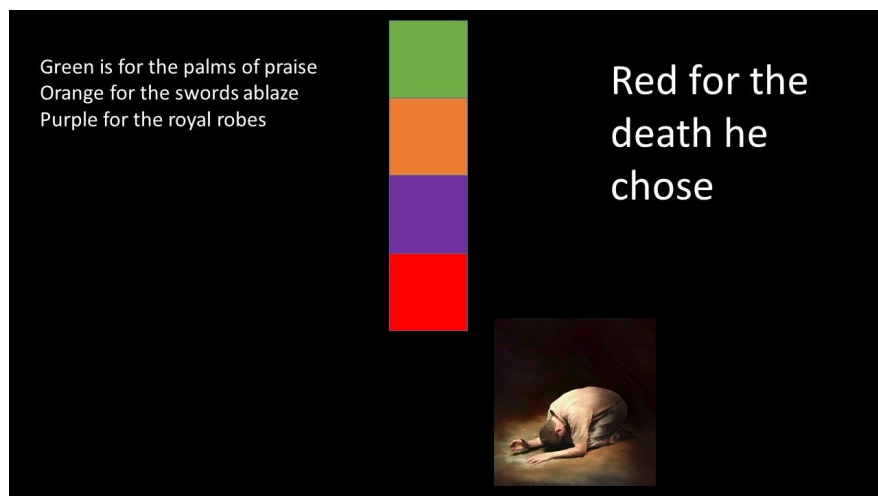


# Our fourth colour is red

This is to remind us of the painful death that Jesus went through; how he was forced to carry the cross to the hill of Golgotha; how two thieves were crucified with him, one of whom came to know God on the cross and join Jesus in heaven. What does this tell us about how much Jesus loves us?

**Luke 23:26-40**

## Red for the death he chose



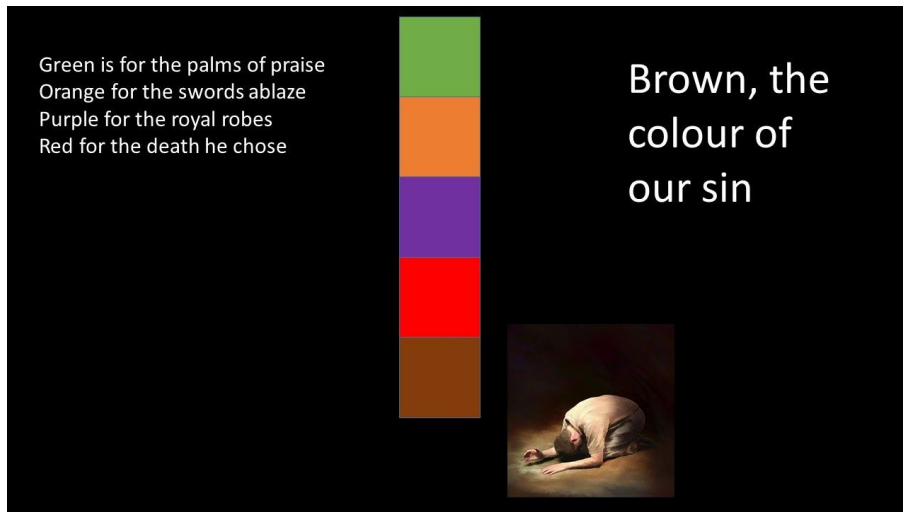
# Our fifth colour is brown.

This is to remind us of why Jesus died. All of us do wrong things, which get in the way of us being friends with God. Jesus did nothing wrong. His life was perfect. God gave his only Son to defeat sin, as a sacrifice for all our wrongdoing, so that each of us could be friends with God. Do you need to say sorry to God for anything now?

Carrying wrong things in our hearts can make us feel sad, guilty and weighed down. Wrong thoughts and actions can hurt us or other people. Maybe you can say sorry to God right now to put things right with him.

**John 3:16**

## Brown, the colour of our sin

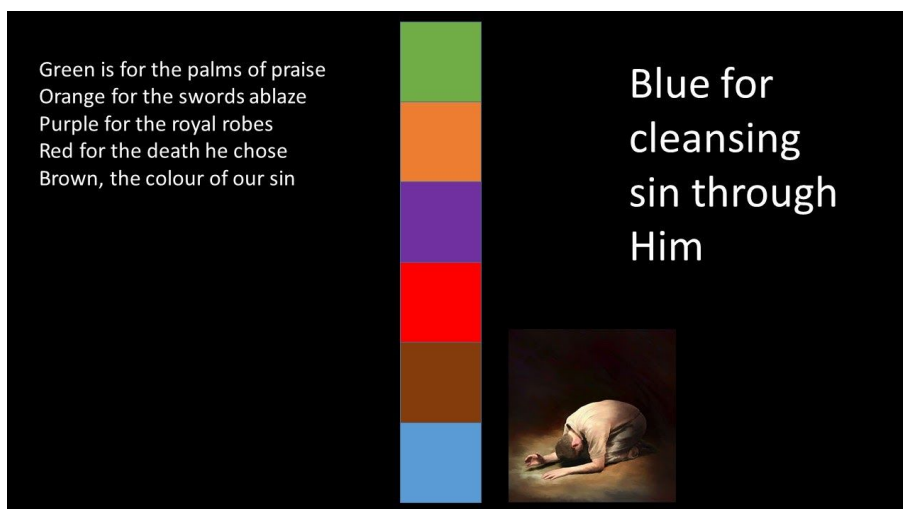


# Our sixth colour is blue.

This is to remind us that it is through the death of Jesus that we are completely forgiven and that each time, when we come before God to say sorry, we have the chance of a new start. Thank the Lord for all he has done for you.

**1 John 1:5-9**

## Blue for cleansing sin through him

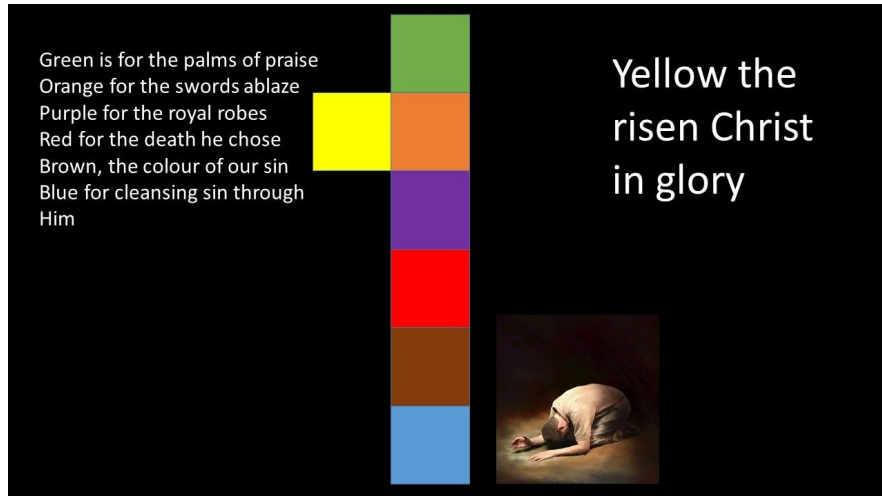


# Our seventh colour is yellow

This is to remind us of the glory of Jesus when he rose from the dead.

**Luke 24:1-12, John 20:10-23**

## Yellow the risen Christ in glory



# Our eighth colour is pink

This is to remind us that Jesus friends were so excited at learning Jesus had risen from the dead that the first thing they did was to rush to tell their friends. I wonder how enthusiastic we are to share the good news of the gospel?

## Pink is for us to share the Easter story



# Aidan Sami Testimony

Good morning Church, for those of you know who don't know me my name is Aidan. Before I start, I would like to thank Pastor Ross for allowing me to share my testimony with you all. I remember saying to mum I want to speak in front of the church one day, then two days later Pastor Ross sent me an email asking if I would like to share my testimony. So here I am, thank you Pastor and thank you God for giving me this testimony.

So little back story - I started going to Easter Camp at Mystery Creek in 2012 and the last year I went was in 2016. At the last camp I was a photographer. It was Sunday the last night, the night where you can feel the Holy Spirits presence. Those of you who have been there will be able to relate to this. I was standing up the front near the stage and had paused for a moment and was in awe of Jesus power and started to tear up. This random guy saw me standing and came to me and put his hand on me and prayed for me. He said "you've been through heart break and disappointment and it'll happen again, but always know God is with you. God this man has been going through things but give him your strength to keep on going." After praying I felt this sense of peace and then proceeded to walk outside of the auditorium because I thought I would go and take some photos outside. As I took one step out of the door I felt God's voice say "No go back inside" along with this feeling of wanting to stay inside. I saw my friend Ayla sitting in the first row with her group. I went and sat with her and we began talking about how we feel this massive sense of peace being here. Then she asked me what's your favourite verse and I said "Colossians 3:15, NIV: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." Then I said to her you know what's crazy I bought this band from a stall at camp today that has the word peace on it. Ever since that moment I have had this peace from God in my life. This was how I gave my life to Christ and started my walk with him.

Keeping the theme of peace going, when I was in my last year of high school at Fairfield College I was Head Boy so I had a lot of responsibility. After one of our council meetings, the Maori committee leader came up to me and asked me to help her with a poster she had to make. So of course, I said sure I'll help you. As we were working on the poster she asked me "how do you stay calm in your role because you must have a lot going on". I paused and said God. God is the one who fills my heart with peace and calms my soul and allows me to fulfil my role to the full potential. She also paused and that prompted her to say I need to work on my relationship with God.

Fast forward to today, around 8 months ago in June of 2019 I moved to Auckland with the aspiration of furthering my career. I started working at a major public relations firm which was an amazing opportunity as it was in the same line as what I had studied for. Although it seemed like a dream job, I would come home upset and was not happy at all. So, after about a month I decided to quit basically because I had given up. Times become tough which had put me in a compromising situation but somehow, I made life work on no income. A month later I got a job working at Platypus Shoes. Which was a wonderful job that I truly enjoyed. When it came

to January after the busy period I started getting less and less hours at work and was really frustrated by that. I came to realise that it was in these frustrating moments I tried to figure things out on my own, times in which I should have stopped and trusted God to continue working in my life. Never once in the bible does it say, stress about it, worry about it or figure it out but time and time again it says trust in God.

Time goes by and job wise nothing changed. Along with that, the life style in Auckland that I was living was hectic, on the go, non-stop. I was in a relationship with a girl who wasn't a Christian. She never discouraged me when it came to my faith as she knew how strong I was in Christ. It was me that lacked motivation and was losing sight of God. Although in the start I didn't think this would be an issue as I felt I was quite strong in my own faith, as time went on I started to spend less and less time with God. I never really made time for myself, so throughout my time I started to lose myself and my relationship with God and lost track of my health as well.

As time went on, I started to have this feeling of something not feeling right and I asked God "what am I doing, God get me out of here or just change my situation." I'd come to realise that this life just wasn't for me but I was stuck in a rut and didn't know what to do or how to get out of it. I was stressed out to the point where I just wanted to be alone and not be around anyone. At the same time my mum was praying for God to change my situation using these exact words. Keep in mind I had not told mum how I was truly feeling about being in Auckland.

Mum told me after I moved back home that she had been noticing a change in me when I would come home on the weekends. She also had an uneasy feeling but didn't know what it was or how to pray for me. She asked the Holy Spirit to show her how to pray and she prayed "God you can see Aidan and you know his situation. Father please change Aidan's situation if it isn't of you" and she kept praying this prayer almost every night.

As mum was praying for me, for God to change my situation she got this sense of God saying 'I will fill Aidan's heart with my joy again. There have been some days where I still have times where I feel pretty flat, worn out, lethargic etc but those hard days have gradually become less and less and I know God is filling my heart with his joy just as He had promised mum.

It was in these unfamiliar times where my faith was growing and it was by the fear I was facing which allowed my faith to grow even when I didn't realise it.

For those that don't know I have had a couple episodes of seizures. This is when my brain kinda goes into overdrive and my body starts to have muscle spasms which I can't control. So, on Sunday 26th January I had my third seizure episode which put me back into hospital. The lifestyle I was living would have contributed to the seizure this time. I came back home to Hamilton with mum and dad and got this sense of peace back that I had lost and I knew that this is why God took me to Auckland in the first place. That was to show me what life is like without Him. He bought me back home to Him. He bought me back into His hands. It's like those big claw games

at the arcade or even of a digger which picks things up and puts them where they should be. God picked me up and took me where he wanted me to be. A couple of weeks later I was talking to my cousin Noel and told him this and he said you know what's crazy our grandma had said the same thing to him 2 months ago that God is showing Aidan life without Him here in Auckland and he will bring him back to himself. Our grandma is a strong Christian woman and a prayer warrior. This was round about the time I started feeling like I had to get out of this and the same time my mum started praying for God if it was his will to change my situation.

This blew my mind, but it solidified everything that had happened. Every single step of the way, before or after something major or small has happened, God has been present and His Holy Spirit has been felt by not only me but mum and dad as well. It has brought us all even closer together but closer with God as well. That showed me how important it is to have people of faith around you at all times so you are able to fellowship and grow and feel encouraged by each other.

On 14th March dad's good friend Tony was at home with us. Some of you would have met him as he came to Sunday's church service with us. We were fellowshiping and enjoying being in each other's company. We felt God's presence and I was in good spirits. In the night time I received a call that had got me feeling down and upset. This was a Saturday and, on the Sunday, I was going to be singing. I did not let what happened that night get me down and knew the devil was trying to attack me which drove me to wake up and go to church. Coming into church I talked to Pastor Ross about what had happened and told him this time I was not phased at all. He told me I wasn't fazed as my roots were so planted in Jesus that the devil would not be able to sway me. That same day Geoff preached on Colossians 2 which talks about our roots being in Jesus. Colossians 2:6-8 says "6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ." That just blew me away and showed me that this situation I'm facing was not a problem because God showed me he is here in the midst. What blows me away even more though is that, Frances tapped me on the shoulder and asked me to come and see her before I leave. She said to me as I walked in for singing practice she could see a struggle on my face and that I had been going through something. Frances said there is always compassion in the struggle. The way she saw me worship with my heart wide open she saw I had the compassion of Jesus in my life. The choice I made to come to church and still sing on that Sunday morning was super important. I could have stayed home, still feeling upset but the fact was that God had already planned my day by placing people in my path to encourage me.

God puts us through trials and tribulations that makes us stronger, hoping it strengthens us in our faith. Because faith is something you've got to have before you need it, people expect Christians to have perfect lives when in reality, God is continually testing us and shaping us for eternity. God's will isn't ours to understand hence why we have to continually trust in Him. Where ever we are.

I want to thank you my church family from the bottom of my heart for keeping me and all other youth and children of our church in your prayers. I believe the turnaround in my life is an answer to all of your prayers and it humbles me to know how much love and care there is in our church family. I have witnessed chains that were holding me back breaking away from my life.

Everything that has happened hasn't been smooth sailing. There have been challenges especially around ending the relationship. I've been through some very hard and sad days. The difference this time though, was being at home I have mum and dad for the moral support but every step of the way I have looked back at God and been so thankful for everything he's done for me and what he will continue to do. When it comes to relationships I always thought to myself that it wasn't important to have a partner who is a Christian but this experience has really opened my eyes, that this is one of the most important decisions of my life. If that person doesn't love Jesus then it creates a barrier and makes it hard for you to both to understand each other on a spiritual level.

I truly believe I am where I am but by the grace of God. I know this won't be the last difficult thing I go through but I know God is already in my future.

1 Timothy 4:12 says "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

I have some takeaways for you today.

- Front up to the consequences of your decisions. Moving up to Auckland and living the lifestyle I was living was my decision.
- Stick with God because as I have learnt He sticks with us. We are the ones to walk away from God. So trust in Him that he will guide the way.
- Pray, pray, pray, pray, pray. Make praying one of your top priorities. Whenever you feel down, happy, nervous, anxious, grateful, unsure, confused. Pause ... and talk to God. He is always right beside you.



- We are young, but not invincible. Look after your health and well-being. 1 Corinthians 6:19 says, You surely know that your body is a temple where the Holy Spirit lives. This Spirit is in you and is a gift from God. You are no longer your own.

Kia Kaha, Kia Maia, Kia Manawanui. Be Strong, Be Steadfast, Be willing.

Let us finish with a prayer. Father God, we come before you and we thank you and glorify your name for giving us all our own testimony. Thank you that when we are going through testing times you never leave us, you are always right there with us. Help us to always keep our eyes on you and our hearts open to allow your holy spirit to lead us in your will. Thank you that you use people around us to speak to us and bless us. God, we thank you for sending your own son who died on the cross to take away our sins and for bridging the gap between us and you Father.