

The Bigger Picture

Doing Church Differently

12th July 2020

Welcome

Welcome to the 13th
The Bigger Picture.

We hope you continue
to find it helpful

God's peace be with you,
Mike & Sharon

Word for the week

Words of wisdom from our Pastor, Mike...

Not long before lockdown, some of us started to think about the merits of Spirit Cafe. I was not entirely convinced, but after considerable guidance from God, especially over a dramatic 24 hour period, I realised that this is something that he may be eventually drawing me/us to.

Then recently, I discovered that since December 2019, some Coventry Methodists are hosting a fortnightly Christian event in one of our local Costas. This time I was sure immediately that this kind of event away from the church building might be something that God will call me/us to in the future.

Finally, since we launched into online church at the end of March, I have felt increasingly drawn to producing very short video talks addressing believers, unbelievers or both. I'm wondering whether this may turn out to be mainly a tool for outreach for me/us to do in the coming months and years.

We all know that we have a responsibility to witness to a watching world. We are called to do that in different ways. I hope you already know how you can reach out to others in appropriate ways and that you take most, if not all, of the opportunities that God gives you to share the good news with others.

What we daren't do when we eventually return to the church building is to be too inward looking. As a church, in small teams and as individuals, we must faithfully respond to the unchanging mandate from Jesus to 'Go and make disciples of all the nations'.

Will you let me know how you feel about all this?



CONNECT

Sunday 12th July

Sermon - "[A Vital Choice](#)"

A short message - "[A vital choice](#)"

All Age Talk - "[Big Decision](#)"

Thursday 16th July

10.30am - *Encounter* - Bible Study on Zoom - led by Mike—"Paul's Productive Suffering"

Sunday 19th July

10.30am - *Worship & Praise* - a church gathering on Zoom with a short talk from Mike and worship songs from Helen.

Church at Home—Family Worship

On the MRBC website are resources for families who want to worship together.

This week the worship is on the theme of the Narrow Gate with prayer activities, songs and an all age talk on YouTube

<https://youtu.be/WXIE1Ubu2Y>

www.mrb-church.org.uk/children-and-families-on-sunday/

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life."

(John 14:6)

Bible Study

Mike's thoughts on the Sermon on the Mount, this week looking at Matthew 5:6

Jesus Promises Blessings

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

Matthew 5:6

Righteousness is not some pious stance with a large Bible in our hands!

Righteousness is doing what is right; it's about right living. It is demonstrating likeness to Christ in character and conduct that gives evidence of his presence in us.

Jesus encouraged his followers to have a hunger and a thirst for righteousness. To understand the

context in which Jesus spoke and what thirst might mean for a person in 1st century Palestine, consider this story:

'A man on a journey encounters a sandstorm. As the hot wind blows, there is nothing for him to do but to wrap his head in his burnous (a hooded cloak) and turn his back to the wind, and wait, while the swirling sand fills his nostrils and his throat until he fears he will suffocate. He becomes parched with an imperious thirst.'

It's this kind of extreme hunger and thirst that Jesus says we should have for righteousness. If we long for righteousness to this extent, Jesus promises that we will be filled. Filled with the Holy Spirit; filled with peace; filled with joy; filled with contentment.

God Speaks...

In this series we'll look at the different ways we hear from God

...through pictures

"And the Lord said to them, "Now listen to what I say: "If there were prophets among you, I, the Lord, would reveal myself in visions. I would speak to them in dreams"

(Numbers 12:6)

Throughout the Bible God speaks to people in visions, or pictures, from the prophets of the Old Testament to the apostles of the New Testament.

God's visions can come as a single picture as happened to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:11, or a short clip, such as the Apostle Peter saw in Acts 10:11-13.

Some people may think that visions are for Bible times only, however, God is the same today as yesterday, if he spoke through visions in the Bible then he speaks through visions today.

Just as in the Bible, God may not speak to everyone in pictures, just as you don't communicate to all your contacts in the same way.

In my experience, an understanding comes along with the picture. To explain, I'd like to tell you about one of the pictures I've had from God.

A couple of years ago I had a friend going for IVF – I didn't know what to pray anymore. They had been down the road of adoption and when that

eventually came to nothing, they looked at the IVF option. There were a lot of people praying for this situation. On the day they were going for the first implantation I said, 'Lord, I don't know what to pray.'

I immediately saw a picture in my head. It was a simple picture of a man in basic Biblical dress standing behind boxes/crates. But with this simple picture I had full understanding – this was Saul (1 Samuel 10:22) being anointed as King. It wasn't God's best for them but the people kept asking for a human king so he let them have what they wanted despite all the trouble that would bring.

Through this picture, I understood that my friend would get pregnant. It wasn't God's best for her but through the persistent prayers of many people, they would have their baby, with all the trouble (hard work) that a baby brings. That baby is now 2½ and keeping his parents on their toes.

Why does God speak through pictures?

Usually, it's to give a particular word to a particular person(s) at a particular time. It may not be on the same level as scripture but it is a way God can communicate so be open to the possibility that he'll give you a picture.



"I will pour out my Spirit on all people"

Prayer & Praise for the Week

Prayer Pointers

This week please pray for

- Sunday** God's continued inspiration and blessing on our Sunday Services and Thursday Bible Studies via zoom.
- Monday** Sharon R, Caroline and all of the Cherubs staff as they work hard to give the children some normality while keeping them all safe.
- Tuesday** the charity workers, such as Heartlink, operating in India where there is no social security or state aid. Pray for their protection, that they have insight and leading from God in how to best serve.
- Wednesday** all of the young people associated with MRBC, give thanks for their skills and giftings and pray they find a way to use their passions to serve the Lord.
- Thursday** our brothers and sisters who normally attend Thursday worship but are unable to join the zoom Bible Study. Pray they experience God's love and know his presence in their worship times at home.
- Friday** Glo, Martin, Terry R and others with significant health concerns known to you.
- Saturday** the residents of Coventry, that God would shower his grace upon them following the recent prayer walking in the city. We encourage you to continue to pray for the residents whenever you walk the streets, whether that is for exercise, to walk the dog, or to get somewhere. Connect with God and pray his light into this city.

🎵 Sing Your Praises to the LORD 🎵

A week of worship from worship leader, Rachel.

1 Thessalonians 1:3 says

"we continually remember before God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."

In this time of waiting for lockdown to end and for life to get back to some kind of normality we have had to be patient and wait.

My reading this morning was about waiting for God. It said "while we are waiting, God is working." So let us thank and praise God in our waiting and thank him for helping us to endure and get through this time - hopefully stronger and closer to Him, trusting Him for all our needs.



Remember, God is still working while we are waiting.

Songs for the week

(click on the song title for the link to YouTube)

[Martin Smith - Waiting Here for You](#)

[Martin Smith - Surrounded](#)

[Chris Tomlin - In the Secret](#)

[Lou Fellingham—You Are My Peace](#)

[Hillsong United - Another in the Fire](#)

