

The Bigger Picture

Doing Church Differently

19th July 2020

Welcome

Welcome to the 14th
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...

Seven months ago I had this dream...

I am in a crowd of people who are all moving in the same direction. I am eager and excited to move on. I'm dashing through the crowds, nipping into gaps to find the quickest way through. I get to the front of the crowd. There is a staircase. I start to go up the stairs. There is a MAN coming down. He is holding onto the handrails on both sides so that he is blocking my way.

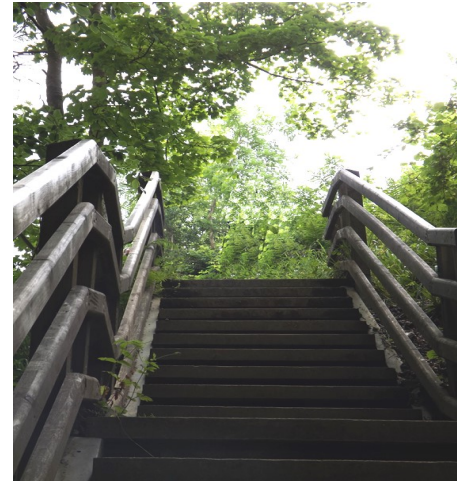
I ask him, "Aren't you going to let me through?" No reply. "Is that anyway for you to walk down the stairs?" No reply. "Are you trying to force me to go back down?" No reply. I grab his arm but he grabs mine back. He is strong and overpowers me, twisting my arm and I say, "Alright, I'll go back down to the bottom of the steps".

I woke up. I told a gifted Christian leader and was given this interpretation:

'You are eager and excited. You go on ahead of the crowd because you are keen to experience more of God but you must remember to take the people with you. Lead from the front, don't charge on ahead. Be encouraged because the people are all going in the same direction as you.

Man – this is God putting a halt on you and hinting, 'Hold on, not now, wait for the others'. Wrestling – this brought to mind Jacob wrestling with God – you have to submit to his will.

I have taken this interpretation seriously by trying not to run ahead of the rest of the church but waiting for the right time to take people deeper into God! Will you be open to God speaking to you through a dream?



CONNECT

Sunday 19th July

Sermon - "What's the Biggest Sin?" - looking at Daniel 4—King Nebuchadnezzar's dream about a tree.

<https://youtu.be/6O54lyJnTX4>

A short message - recorded primarily for Facebook—"Garden" - —<https://youtu.be/tAgt1ST1rwM>

All Age Talk - "Jacob's Dream—God Speaks"

<https://youtu.be/qedixyPi494>

Sunday 26th July

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

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 Jacob's ladder dream, with prayer activities, songs and an all age talk on YouTube.

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

*"He speaks in dreams,
in visions of the night"*

(Job 33:15)

Bible Study

Mike's thoughts on the Sermon on the Mount, this week looking at Matthew 5:7

Jesus Promises Blessings

*'Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.'*

Matthew 5:7

In what ways did Jesus expect his followers to show mercy? There are two basic ways:

Firstly, we are meant to be merciful to those who are in need, like the man helped by the Good Samaritan. That could mean helping somebody unable or unwilling to venture out because of the corona virus or it could mean guiding a stranger who needs directions.

Secondly, we are meant to be merciful to those who have wronged us, even where justice cries out for punishment. The teenager who was raped in Uganda

wanted her attacker to be given the death penalty but God eventually softened her heart. Somehow, she was able to be forgiving but that didn't mean that her attacker should not receive a just punishment for his crime.

Mercy is a divine quality and the promise of Jesus is that when his followers show mercy to others, they can expect to receive mercy from God. Putting it another way, the fact that we show mercy through forgiving others provides evidence that God has forgiven us.

When we obey God's calling to show mercy to others, we will experience that peace of mind that comes when we do God's will.



God Speaks...

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

...through dreams

*"In the last days,' God says,
'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.
Your young men will see visions,
and your old men will dream dreams."*

(Acts 2:17)

Examples of God speaking through dreams is scattered throughout the Bible, in both the Old and New Testament.

The most well known in the Old Testament is probably Joseph who had two symbolic dreams that spoke of his future. Later in life, Joseph interpreted the dreams of other people which led to his own dreams coming to fruition.

In the New Testament there are 5 references to God speaking in a dream, to the Magi, and to another Joseph. These dreams were straight forward instructions surrounding the birth and early life of Jesus.

In all there are 21 dreams from God described in Bible and many references that make it clear people expected God to speak to prophets in dreams.

God spoke to people in dreams in the Bible and still

uses that form of communication today. A dream may be a simple warning, it may inform, it can be for now, and it can be for the future.

God has spoken to me in dreams a number of times, even before I was a Christian. Some dreams have been personal, about my spiritual development, my calling or a warning, and some have been a message for other people or my previous church. In recent years I have probably interpreted more dreams for other people than having God speak to me through a dream.

Not all dreams are from God so how do you know when a dream is significant? For a start you wake up feeling that it was significant, it is usually vivid, and you remember it clearly. God may wake you in the night, to make sure you note the significance, but you will still remember the dream in the morning. If you are unsettled or frightened when you wake then the dream isn't from God.

Some dreams are easy to understand and some are symbolic, like those that Daniel and Joseph interpreted. If God gives you a symbolic dream then he will either give you understanding or provide you with someone who has the gift of dream interpretation.

God speaks - the more we are open to the possibility, the more we will hear from him.

We are in 'the last days'.

Lord pour out your Spirit on us. Amen

"I will pour out my Spirit on all people"

Prayer & Praise for the Week

Prayer Pointers

This week please pray for

- Sunday** Martin P, as he recovers from the operation he had on Friday, for Gloria S who continues to have her fluid drained from her chest, and for Terry R, who continues to have problems with his voice.
- Monday** Ivor G who has been suffering with sciatica for a number of weeks. May he experience God's love and healing, and the strength to get through this testing time.
- Tuesday** the church meeting, that God would clearly show us all the best ways forward.
- Wednesday** the deacons, elders and church staff that they might interact well together and be led by the Holy Spirit.
- Thursday** Sid and June as they cope with Sid's dementia. May they continue to get all the support they need.
- Friday** the Samaritans, that they may be given God's wisdom, insight and compassion when dealing with people who might be under considerable stress.
- Saturday** the Street Pastors as they patrol the city streets late in the evenings at the weekend. Pray that they would receive God's protection, guidance, and wisdom.

SAMARITANS

Awareness Day 24/7

♪ Sing Your Praises to the LORD ♪ ♪

A week of worship from worship leader, Gill.

"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved." (Ephesians 2:4-5)

A story posted on face book recently: I was in the grocery store recently when I heard a loud crash and something shattering. Being nosy, I walked towards the sound and saw people whispering and looking back towards the end of the aisle. When I walked up the aisle I saw an older lady had hit a shelf and many things had fallen to the ground and broken. She was kneeling on the floor embarrassed, frantically trying to clean up. I felt so bad for her that I knelt down beside her and told her not to worry and started to help her pick up the broken pieces. After about a minute the store manager came and knelt beside us and said, "Leave it, we will clean it up." The lady totally embarrassed said, "I need to pay for it first" the manager smiled helped her to her feet and said "No need we have insurance for this you do not have to pay anything"

Wherever you are close your eyes and imagine God doing the same for you! Collecting the pieces of your broken heart, from all that life has thrown at you.

The bill for all the faults, sin and folly has already been paid through the precious blood of Christ. God will heal you. He wants to lift you to your feet again, clean up your mess, and pick up the broken pieces. We can have that same insurance and it's called GRACE!

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

(Hebrews 4:16)

"He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time"

(2 Timothy 1:9)

Songs for the week

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

[Your Grace Still Amazes Me](#)

[The Lords My Shepherd](#)

[In His Time](#)

[Wonderful Grace](#)

[So Close](#)

[Only by Grace](#)

[He Will Hold Me Fast](#)

[YouTube Play list](#)

