

WE'RE ALL GOING ON A SUMMER HOLIDAY... *(sing along, I know you want to!)*



I'm slowly edging towards my 5th decade on earth. My youngest daughter, Miriam has just broken up from school for the 'Six Weeks Holiday' – although it seems a lot longer to plan for than just 6 weeks... and it is raining... pouring in fact.

My memories of the school holidays are simply these - the sun ALWAYS shone, the tar melted on the roads (and smelled nice), and on holiday we found the MOST AMAZING CREATURES trapped just for a little time in a shallow pond type environment where observation, prodding and sometimes a bit of rescue was the name of the game for the sand covered children. The equipment needed was simply brightly coloured nets, plastic buckets shaped like medieval castles and perhaps a spade. ROCK POOLS and CHILDHOOD HOLIDAY FUN went hand in hand.

Rock pools are fleeting windows into the underwater world which appear when the tide retreats, leaving behind pockets of seawater trapped in the dips and hollows of the seashore. They offer a vital refuge for animals temporarily isolated from the sea – oases of cool and shade for marine animals and plants in a desert of open, unsheltered rock. (<https://www.rsb.org.uk/biologist-features/how-to-explore-rock-pools>)

There is so much diversity to see in a rock pool – and just for a short amount of time, **we are given a glimpse of what has been gathered in a certain place, at a certain time, for a certain time - TOGETHER.** It won't be long until the sea reclaims the contents and by the next 'tide-out' a whole different collection of creatures can be found. The closer you look, the more you see. Slippery seaweed, shells of different colours and shapes – some broken, some whole – some empty, some little homes to little claws and boggily eyes on stalks. Sea snails, limpets, periwinkles, darting fish and starfish. All in it together, just for a while. Just until the tide comes in and takes them back home.

Did you know that crab's taste with their hairy legs? How weird is that!

Did you know that Starfish have no eyes or head? Equally weird!

All beautiful. All different. All in it together. Just for an allotted time.

Here the land and the sea meet – 2 boundaries meet and overlap - and where the land and sea overlap, children play, explore and experience the transient – the fleeting spaces where the 'washed up' have found a haven to live until they are returned back to where they need to be – 'home'.

Where 'boundaries overlap' beautiful 'things' can be seen.

It is easy for us preachers to try and make tenuous links between *objects/stories/situations or things* to highlight a gospel message or correlation to a biblical story or theme. I don't want to do that here. So just some questions you might want to ponder about where boundaries cross over: -

Can we see the Rock Pool as a metaphor (symbolic of something else) – and if so, what can it teach us?

What can Rock Pools teach us about God? Church? Life?

If Rock Pools are formed where boundaries cross ('sea/land'), what can be found at other boundary crossings?

What about HEAVEN/EARTH? Where do these meet? (Matthew 6:10)

Be creative in your pondering. If you enjoy painting, why not paint your thoughts? Or knit/embroider your thoughts? Why not go in search of a Rock Pool, with a brightly coloured net, take your shoes off, feel the sun on your back and just enjoy the place where boundaries meet. You might find a crab with hairy legs 😊

To find out more about Rock Pools -

<https://www.therockpoolproject.co.uk/info/rock-pooling-guide/>