

# Coach House Church BEACONS

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## BIGGER PICTURE

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I watched a family walking down the beach. The adults were walking quickly as they could see a dark cloud looming and moving swiftly towards them. However, they couldn't just dash back towards shelter as they had a young child with them. This young child was oblivious to their urgency. He had seen a pool to splash in. As they encouraged him to get a move on, he then stopped when he found an interesting stone...then some seaweed...then a hole to jump into...and so it continued. The child didn't see the importance of dark grey clouds or what that would mean. He was entirely interested in the experience of the moment. His view was not long term.

There are two points that came to mind about this scene. Firstly, the young child did not have the experience or interest level to be overly concerned about what may or may not happen further down the line. Secondly, he had no need to worry about future events because the adults who cared for him would do all that, as they had done so far.

In Matthew 18:3 Jesus says, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of God.'

He wasn't saying that we should become immature or that we should be easily distracted by everything in our path. He was saying we should not worry ourselves unduly about what the future may or may not bring.

Philippians 4:6 reminds us not to be anxious about anything but to bring it to God in prayer. 1 Peter 5:7 tells us to give our concerns to God to deal with, like handing over a heavy bag for someone else to carry.

Matthew 6:25 – 34 is a well-known passage that encourages us not to worry. Like the child who relies totally on his carers for providing everything he needs, so we can rely on God for what we need day to day.

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away

in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[el]?

and it finishes by saying:

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

A friend once described our life's journey as a series of jigsaw pieces. Bit by bit the pieces are joined together. Sometimes we can make sense of the emerging picture and sometimes it is a mystery to us. But, it is like God has the box in his hand and can see the picture on the lid. The creator can see the bigger picture and we can only see the pieces. We have to put our trust in the one who has the better view.

The young child did not need to see the bigger picture because his carers did. He could trust them to look after his best interests.

We become like little children when we entrust the bigger picture of our lives to God.

Throughout Jesus life on earth, he was aware of the bigger picture, the reason for his stepping down from heaven to be confined to a mortal body. Some of the people he met along the way got the idea while others didn't. Some recognised how unique he was, and more, that he was sent to be the Messiah, the Saviour of the World.

In Matthew 6, Jesus was having a meal in a house in Bethany when a woman entered with a very expensive jar of perfume. It says in verse 7

While he was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume and poured it over his head.

She recognised something about Jesus that demanded her respect and adoration of him. She saw something of the bigger picture. This wasn't just another prophet, another leader. Yet in verse 8 it says that the disciples were indignant. They could not understand why she was wasting expensive perfume. They were acting like the child on the beach I mentioned before – just looking at the present experience and not seeing the bigger implications. Jesus' response indicated how important this act was and how pleased he was that she recognised who he was. I especially like Jesus comment in verse 13 Wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman's deed will be remembered and discussed.

How true that is. That small act of kindness has echoed through history.

In the garden of Gethsemane, is the one of the most moving moments in Jesus life. This was a point when he could have called upon his divine powers, to save him and rescue him from what was to happen.

Matthew 26:38 He told his disciples, 'My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death'. And in verse 39 it says that 'he bowed with his face to the ground, praying, 'My father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken from me. Yet I want your will to be done not mine.

To have a choice is a good feeling. It's when there is no other option available that we feel powerless. It is like being backed into a corner with no way out that frustrates us and causes us anxiety. It's like when you know you have to go to the dentist, or that hospital appointment, that course of treatment –and there is no option, because to take it is for our benefit, no matter how uncomfortable. But imagine having a way out from the worst agonies that we can't even begin to comprehend. Imagine deciding to take the impossible route rather than the get out clause. That's what Jesus did. And why? Because he knew his actions were the only solution for the bigger picture – the salvation of the world as it says in John 3:16.

It is difficult to come to terms with such a great sacrifice. But when we read passages in the bible that celebrate the success we can see why Jesus persevered and endured for us.

In Revelation, John was given a vision by God of what was to happen in the future. He glimpsed the big picture. In chapter 5, the necessity for Jesus' death and the glorious victory of Jesus' resurrection is described. There is despair in verse 2 And I saw a strong angel, who shouted with a loud voice. 'Who is worthy to break the seals on this scroll and open it?' But no-one in heaven or on earth was able to open the scroll and read it.

The final ruling can't be made until the appropriate person with authority is able to open it. Until some one shouts 'stop and look'. They turn and look to Jesus and recognise that he is the ultimate sacrifice, the acceptable sacrifice demanded by Almighty God. When Jesus steps forward to take the scroll, break the seals and open it, there is a moment of silence in heaven, a moment of awe. The title deeds to the universe are in the right hands. God's intervention through Jesus' perfect sacrifice is complete. The debt is paid, the judgement on sinful man is discharged, once for all and now we have access to heaven and eternity in the presence of our Saviour Jesus, as God intended.

Let's read part of Revelation 5 to finish.

9 And they sang a new song, saying:

"You are worthy to take the scroll

and to open its seals,

because you were slain,

and with your blood you purchased for God

persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.

10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God,  
and they will reign[b] on the earth."

11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon  
thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and  
the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they were saying:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,  
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength  
and honor and glory and praise!"

13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on  
the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be praise and honor and glory and power,  
for ever and ever!"



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## MELANIE JACKSON



*Coach House Church*

leadership@coachhousechurch.org // 0161 432 5604

the coach house church, 222 wellington road north, stockport sk4 2qn