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## Big Picture #1

2013 05 25, John Fenn, [www.supernaturalhousechurch.org](http://www.supernaturalhousechurch.org)

Hi all,

A man arrived at his girl friend's apartment but she wasn't ready, so he made himself useful by putting away the clean dishes from the dishwasher. No asking, prodding, or hinting by her - he just thought he would help out. She was impressed! This guy is marriage material!

As he was unloading it she went to the cupboard for something and found he had stacked the measuring cups in the wrong order - instead of nesting them as they were designed, he had stacked one on the other in the order he got them out of the dishwasher.

She opened her mouth to say, 'That's not the way these should be stacked, next time...' when something stopped her. She thought, 'Is this really important?'

### Trivial, or deal breaker?

She remembered her friends complaining about things their husbands did NOT do - laundry, dishes, cleaning the house, helping with the kids - And she thought, "Am I going to correct him over measuring cups not stacked correctly when he took it upon himself to empty the dishwasher? We may be together the rest of our lives. Is this really important?"

In a flash of time she saw years into their future - years of her correcting little things he did wrong. She suddenly realized she had assumed her way was the only way and she thought it her job to train him - nested measuring cups here, properly folded towels there, dishwasher loaded the 'right' way...

In a revelation of role reversing clarity she imagined herself going to the grocery store, and him saying to her as she left: "Do you have the list? Make sure you use the coupons! Remember I like the whole milk not the fat-free stuff. And get the right washing detergent this time! Ours is the bright orange one. Be sure to get our favorite ice cream. And remember you have to pick up the dry cleaning too!"

### The risk

She realized by keeping quiet she was risking laundry disasters, clothes left another day at the cleaners, wrong items bought at the store, food in the 'wrong place' in the refrigerator, and wallets and keys on the table that is supposed to be spotlessly clean. But she realized it was worth the risk keeping quiet.

And in that moment of clarity instead of correcting him, she closed her mouth and gave him a big kiss: "Thank you for unloading the dishwasher honey!"

They've now been married nearly 20 years, and he still does things 'the wrong way', but it all works out because they each look at the big picture instead of pointing out each other's mistakes.

### What if...

Let's play what if. What if she had opened her mouth to correct him with the measuring cups? Then she would have moved effortlessly to how he did the laundry, how he cleaned the house, how he folded the clothes, how he kept the car - nothing would be off limits to her corrections!

And he would have felt trapped with no where to turn, for anything he did would be wrong. Perhaps he would eventually shut her out so that anything she said was answered in automatic mode; 'Yes dear' while never actually listening to what she was saying.

Or maybe resentment would build up in him to the point he kept a low anger simmering, feeling she never saw the good he did - how hard he worked, that he took it upon himself to unload the dishwasher, go to the store, clean the floor, empty the trash - all he got was correction on how he did all those things not quite right and nothing was ever good enough for her. But she would never understand, after all, she was just trying to help.

### Not the correct perspective

Some Christians are what her boyfriend could have become in my 'what if' scenario because they think God is constantly looking over their shoulder trying to tell them how they could do things better. Or they feel trapped, that He is always ready to correct even their best efforts. Some are angry at Him as if He is just trying to help, they feel they can't do anything right.

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### Big picture...Ephesians 2:6-7

But what if God is more like the way this woman reacted? What if He chooses to overlook the incorrectly stacked measuring cups of our spiritual life in favor of the big picture, and just give us a big spiritual kiss (blessing)?

What if He chooses for the sake of the long-term relationship, to remain quiet, even silently cleansing us of sins we did but weren't aware of, all because of His great love and the fact we will be together for eternity.

Ephesians 2:6 says "...And God (the Father) did raise us up together and did seat us together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..." This verse is about our salvation, our instant access to the Father, our adoption to the Father through Christ.

But verse 7 tell us **WHY He saved us**: "...that He might show in the ages that are coming the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus."

The Father saved us so that in the AGES to come He can continue to show us how much He loves us! His purpose for the cross wasn't just about this life, it was about the ages to come - eternity with us. He is looking at the big picture.

Verses 6 & 7 together: "God the Father, did raise us up together, and did seat us together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that He might show in the ages that are coming the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus."

The Father is not an over-bearing or maybe even abusive Father continually pointing out each 'measuring cup we don't stack properly' in our lives. The Bible says He is actually already thinking about how He can show His exceeding grace and kindness towards us in the ages to come. Wow!

### Some thoughts

If you have 100 years of born-again life on earth how does that compare to 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 infinity zeros following, in a glorified, sinless body in heaven through the ages to come? That 100 years is tiny in comparison. So should we be focused on the trials of the here and now, or look towards that 10 to the infinity power years ahead?

Now if you are God and you invested the life of your only Son to die for all mankind, the greatest of all prices paid, and you know that investment has yielded these spiritual children who will forever and ever be with you, wouldn't you look at life in this body as temporary?

**So this series** is about how the Father and Lord Jesus are looking at the big picture of us spending eternity with them, and how we need to change our thinking to their thinking. This is about 'big picture' thinking presented in scripture and evidenced by small 'winks' God gives us through our day that tell us to look higher, deeper, and further into the ages to come.

"Though outwardly we are wasting away, inwardly we are being renewed day by day...so we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen, because that which is seen is temporary, and that which is unseen is eternal." (II Corinthians 4: 16,18)

More about the big picture next week...until then, blessings,

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## Big Picture #2

2013 06 01, John Fenn, [www.supernaturalhousechurch.org](http://www.supernaturalhousechurch.org)

Hi all,  
I'm looking at passages that tell us the Father and Lord are looking at the big picture in our lives, rather than zeroing in on every little thing in our lives.

### Lord's Supper and the marriage proposal

In Jesus' day, when a prospective groom wanted to become engaged to a woman he went to her house with a cup of wine. Her father and her brothers (as witnesses) then negotiated the engagement with the groom. Usually this negotiation included the dowry, the groom's plan over the next year to prepare a home for her, the marriage ceremony details, and a contract was entered into as a result, breakable only by divorce.

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When details were set the woman was called and the groom's cup of wine was placed before her as the groom said this:

"You believe in God, believe also in me. My father's house has many rooms, and I'm going to prepare a place for you, then I'll return and bring you with me that where I am you may be."

It was a common custom of the day as it is today in many parts of the world, for a groom to build a room onto his father's house for them to live in, thus this statement. If the woman accepted the groom's proposal she would drink the wine to seal the contract as a point of remembrance, while also looking forward to her wedding day.

In John 14:1-4 Jesus quoted these words to describe Himself going to the cross and then to His Father's 'house' to prepare a place for us - the big picture. He therefore asks us to drink the wine of the Last Supper, which was done just before He said this as acceptance of our betrothal to Him, while also looking at the present through the eyes of the future marriage.

Even with the cross looming the next morning, He was pointing us to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

This is why He had also made the statement that no man knows the day of His return - in the custom of the day the timing was set by the groom's father, eagerly keeping the secret of the timing of the wedding within himself as a surprise for the couple. The groom's father withheld permission until the room the groom was preparing for his (His) bride was completed, as well as the bride's own preparations completed. Then the Father gave permission for the groom to collect his (His) bride.

#### **Secret message imbedded**

Jesus ended His time with the disciples with a command to remember Him at the Last Supper, looking backwards, yet imbedded within was a quote from the marriage custom of the day, looking forward.

What Satan and religion and we ourselves do, is separate our thoughts from the big picture to concentrate on the present 'small' things, to our own hurt. Throughout the New Testament the writers couple dealing with the present by looking at it through the eyes of a certain and eternal future.

#### **Count with me now**

Even as John closes the life of Jesus with coded talk of a future marriage ceremony, he started his gospel with a coded reference to a future marriage ceremony as well, through the earthly wedding at Cana. Within this story is an imbedded message about our heavenly future.

The first chapter of the Gospel of John details 4 days one after the other, the only time he does that in his whole gospel. But there is a reason.

John 1:19 starts out saying 'And this is the record of John (Baptist)...and continues through verse 28, which concludes day 1. Day 1 is when John the Baptist is asked if he is the Messiah, which he denies.

Verse 29 says 'The next day', starting day 2. This is when John said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world'. (Note; He took away the sin of the world, not sins. He dealt with the root sin not our individual sins, so that by paying for the sin of the world all our 'little sins' are automatically paid for.)

Verse 35 says, 'The next day', starting day 3, which is when Andrew introduces Peter to Jesus.

Verse 43 says, 'The day following', starting day 4 which continues to verse 51. This day Jesus invited Philip and Nathanael to become His disciples.

So we see that John 1:19-51 there are 4 days one after the other detailed for us - but why?

The answer is seen in the next verse, John 2:1 which says, "On the third day (3 days later) a wedding took place in Cana of Galilee..." This is where He turned water into wine.

In other words, we see Jesus' activities for 4 days as detailed above, then we don't see Him 2 days, then we suddenly see Him on day 7, the wedding at Cana.

#### **The 7th day**

John is giving us a clue to look at the big picture, not just the details of a week in the Lord's life. In prophetic



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language, a day is as 1,000 years, so look at this week that way: 4 days, or 4,000 years, Christ is seen by mankind - the 4,000 years between Adam and Jesus' ministry.

Then for 2 days or 2,000 years He is not seen. This is the time we are living in, after the Ascension but before His 2nd coming. That is 6 days or 6,000 years total.

The last day, the 7th, is a wedding and marriage supper - the 7,000th set of years, which answer to His coming and the Millennial reign of 1,000 years on the earth.

(The 6 water pots with water that was turned to wine is a picture too. They were used for washing as the text indicates, yet they were turned to wine which is a type of the blood of Christ washing us clean. Also, 6 is the number of man, or 6,000 years, showing how Christ was active in redemption throughout man's history.)

The apostle John is led to start his gospel with a natural event of a wedding, yet imbedded a message to us to look up, look future, look at the big picture, not just at the part of life we are dwelling on now. While dealing with the here and now also remember to look up to the future event of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. This helps us understand our present lives forge within us qualities of eternal value.

#### **When Barb....**

When Barb was first born again, she believed on the Lord in the midst of a very dramatic set of circumstances, but that is her story to tell. Yet it serves as the backdrop to her need to know the Lord was real, that He had a plan and future for her, and out of His willingness to give her assurance He gave her this experience:

She was in an upstairs room in her house late one afternoon, looking west through some trees at the ever lowering sun and the light playing through the waving branches and leaves. Suddenly the whole wall of her house disappeared, the natural world disappeared, and she was standing in heaven with Someone she assumes was the Lord, on her right side.

She was so captivated by what she saw it never occurred to her to turn and look at Him. What she saw was a stone rectangular block house set in a yard, with flowers and plants and birds and butterflies around, the crude stone house standing starkly plain in the midst of all that color and activity. She says the blocks of stone were similar in construction to the pyramids, yet with cut outs where a door and windows would go, yet just a rectangular collection of block stones forming the outline of a house.

She asked 'What am I looking at?', He said, "This is your home in heaven. As you give us more to work with, we'll build it for you." And with that, the vision disappeared and she was back in her room.

#### **The largest construction project in the universe**

The largest construction project in the universe is the subject next week - and it is both personal in nature, and heavenly in scope. Whatever we are going through in this life there is a deeper meaning to be found, an exhortation to look up and look future, to look at the big picture. Until next week.

Blessings,  
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## **Big Picture #3**

2013 06 08, John Fenn, [www.supernaturalhousechurch.org](http://www.supernaturalhousechurch.org)

Hi all,  
I've been talking about how the Father and Lord want us to see the big picture instead of focusing on details which lead us into a downward spiral spiritually and emotionally.

#### **The Father's response**

I was helping pull the pants up on my son Chris, who is mentally 4 years old though physically 33, as he sat on the toilet, now ready to be helped out to his chair in the living room. My mind was still reeling over his accident 2 weeks before, the very difficult but productive first dental visit to stabilize the 4 teeth he had broken off and jammed back into his gums during his fall, and all the ensuing details to be planned and scheduled.

I was thinking about how I owed people phone calls, Skype calls, Facebook Instant Messenger responses, email and all the studying and writing I had to do. I was thinking of teaching series, making more video classes and writing thank

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you notes. I was thinking about mowing the grass, planting the garden, the various spring projects, and how all the above lay neglected while I (and Barb) took care of Chris.

All these things and so much more were whirling around my mind and emotions in no particular order as I said; "Father, how can I do all the things in ministry I need to do when things like this happen to Chris? Nearly everything in ministry stops to care for him...." when the Father broke in to my outpouring:

### **"Chris IS your ministry!"**

That stopped me in my tracks, the revelation of what He was saying sinking in. Words that you and I speak are containers of thoughts and emotions, but we, being mere humans, are limited in our ability to accurately communicate to one another all we are thinking and feeling when we speak.

### **Learn to listen for the echo**

But the Father doesn't have the frailty of human limitations, and so often when He speaks just a few words, they carry a book's worth of His thoughts and emotions, all downloaded at once upon the hearing of His words. That's what happened to me. As you become accustomed to this trait of the Father, you learn to listen what for lack of a better term, is the 'echo' of His voice long after His words ceased.

It is within that echo, that silence after His voice trails off, where the revelation of His deeper thoughts and emotions can be heard - not just felt, but heard, if you listen ever so closely and quietly, lingering in His presence that permeates the moment.

Behind each of His words and sentences is something deeper, and it is within that echo that we peel back layers behind the words like peeling outer petals of a blooming flower ever so tenderly, each petal revealing yet another one still deeper in. So it is when lingering in that echo.

"When you are in Me, I have the whole of you in Me. Chris is not one compartment and ministry another compartment and your time with Barb yet another compartment. I have the whole of you, therefore your life is one. Neither ministry nor Chris can be separated and compartmentalized from the rest of you. Chris is your ministry as much as raising up home based churches or talking to someone in Europe on Skype."

### **Out with the old**

I was horrified at myself, for what I had been saying to Him was part of the old traditional church thinking, and I didn't know any of that old, non-scriptural thinking was still in me as it relates to 'church'. That thinking says, "The events of my life are keeping me from doing the ministry God wants me to do. If I could just get this part of my life in order THEN I could do what God wants." Essentially, that is what my mind and emotions were saying to the Father, flawed and in error though it was.

That kind of thinking says, 'If I could just get out of debt THEN I could do what God has for me.' That kind of thinking says, "If they hadn't done that to me at church I'd be doing what God has for me right now." and "If I hadn't backslidden all those years and missed God, I'd be doing what God wants me to do."

When we are in the Father by virtue of being in Christ, our life is ministry - remember the Greek word 'ministry' is 'service'. We serve God at work and play, at home and in our hobby, around the dinner table or fixing a car. We serve our families, friends, people we don't even know through acts of kindness and just being here on planet earth.

Because we are in Christ we are **all** a royal priesthood 24/7 no matter how we earn a living, no matter our age, gender, or station in life. We are wholly and completely in Him as the Bible says - our old lives are dead and gone and the life we now live, we live in Christ. (Colossians 2:2-4) We are wholly in Him.

Mentally being 'in Christ' or 'in Him' was something I knew - there are over 100 references to being 'in Him' or 'in Christ' in the New Testament. Mentally I knew that, but this hit home hard.

All I could say in response to all the Father said was, "Father, I'm so sorry. I didn't know any of that thinking was still in me. I ask just one thing, let people see your grace when they see our lives, let them see grace."

### **Little thing or big picture?**

I had been doing the very thing I'm writing about NOT doing. I had narrowed my focus to the temporary pressures of this life, getting my eyes off the big picture of the fact the whole of me is in the Father through Christ. I had been like Peter who walked on the water to Jesus, then shifted his attention to the wind and waves and began sinking. The Father's statements were a hand extended to raise me up once again to the big picture.

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### The largest construction project in the universe

In Psalm 56:8 David says: "...You put my tears in your bottle. Have you not written them in your book?"

This verse says the Father somehow took David's tears and spiritually put them in a bottle in heaven, and wrote them in a book in heaven. That sounds like poetry except for the fact the Bible has many statements that say the Father translates earthly pains and sorrows, offerings and prayers, into heavenly material.

In Acts 10:4 an angel appears to the Roman, Cornelius: "Your prayers and your offerings have come up as a memorial before God." Memorials are something that stand as a record for all to see, of something or someone of note. Somehow the Father turned Cornelius' offerings and prayers into a memorial in heaven.

In Revelation 5:8 the apostle John sees bowls of incense coming up before the Father, which, he says, "Are the prayers of the saints." How He takes prayers uttered from our heart and turns them into incense in heaven is beyond our understanding, but He does.

### What Jesus is preparing

In I Corinthians 3:12 Paul says though Jesus is the foundation stone, we must watch how we build on that foundation; gold, silver, precious stones, or wood, hay and stubble. The last 3 being a result of envy, strife and divisions that plagued the Corinthians at the time.

He likens earthly envy, strife, and division to spiritual wood, hay, and stubble - so what qualities make up the gold, silver, and precious stones he says to build with? Walking in love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness... and other character traits of a maturing believer are those precious things built upon the Foundation Stone.

In I Peter 2: 4-8 Peter rightly states that Jesus is the Corner Stone, and says, 'But you are living stones, built up into a spiritual house, a royal priesthood...'

Do we get that? Each of us is a living stone, being built up into a spiritual house. Just as Jesus' life was transformed into the cornerstone of heaven, each of us is a similar living stone, each contributing to the construction of heaven. Now you might think that is symbolism, but look at the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem: "The wall of the city had 12 foundations, and on them were the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb." (Revelation 21:14)

Each tear, each right decision, each prayer, each sacrifice unseen by man but seen by the Father and Lord - it all gets transformed into heavenly material.

### The bride is the body of Christ, right?

What do you get when you get all those tears and offerings and prayers and right decisions recorded in heaven? What do you get when you compile the lives of millions of believers down through the ages who have overcome great hardship, or left strife, envy, and division in order to walk in love, joy, and peace, so that those gold, silver, and precious stones might become part of their heavenly material?

You get the largest construction project in the universe. "Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband...'Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb....and he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like jasper, as clear as crystal..." (Revelation 21)

This is the ultimate 'big picture'. It is assurance that our lives are not for nothing. That in Christ all we have gone through and overcome, all those unseen hardships seen only by God who knows the heart, are transformed into the heavenly Jerusalem. We as a body are the bride, and our lives are transformed into the material of the holy city, which is therefore also the bride, the Lamb's wife. Amazing grace!

As we pray, overcome, cry, and make right decisions because they are right no matter the cost, He takes all that and builds our part of the heavenly Jerusalem. As the Lord told Barb that day after she was first saved and saw the roughest of building blocks that is her home in heaven: 'As you give us more to build with, we will build it.'

No matter what we are going through, we must look up at the big picture. It is glorious!

Blessings,  
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## Big Picture #4

2013 06 15, John Fenn, [www.supernaturalhousechurch.org](http://www.supernaturalhousechurch.org)

Hi all,

I've been talking about how the Lord looks at our lives from a 'big picture' perspective, since He has invested in us for eternity. Unfortunately, we tend to take issues in our lives and make them larger than they should be in the face of eternity.

### Just a moment

You don't have to live very long on planet earth before someone betrays and hurts you. From playground betrayals to high school soap opera-like romances, and on into adulthood, hurts and betrayals are something we've all experienced.

Ministry and church life can be particularly hurtful, and one day a woman in the traditional church we pastored hurt Barb deeply. She took things Barb told her in confidence and shared them openly with others. And it wasn't just the betrayal, what hurt Barb more was that this woman valued their friendship so lightly, as something not to be protected, but rather, disposable.

Having her words taken out of context and her heart bared open before immature people who reacted as immature people do, hurt Barb deeply. The woman never apologized, and though Barb forgave her, the emotions still hurt.

As she was still deeply hurting some weeks later, the Father broke into her brooding and said: **"Don't turn a moment into a lifetime; It's only a moment."**

(I have a cd/MP3 series on forgiveness that may help some. Jesus said forgiveness is a decision, not an emotion. A person can forgive a person yet take even years to work through the emotions - that process is covered in the series)

The Father's words set Barb free emotionally for she had become so focused on the 'little picture' that was the hurt and betrayal that she had forgotten the 'big picture'. This woman's actions proved she was not ready to be a true friend to Barb, and therefore forced Barb to let their relationship remain dormant until we all get to heaven and it will be 'safe' to pick up the relationship with her again.

Something Barb and I discussed at the time was the Father's words: "Don't turn a moment into a lifetime." That statement meant the Father was showing her she had a choice - it was her choice to carry that moment in time's hurt throughout her life, the small picture, or she could step back and see that moment compared to eternity, and let it go. Barb chose wisely, to see the hurt in a big picture framework, and it lifted as a result.

### Left all?

In John 1:41-42 Peter is introduced to Jesus by Andrew, Peter's brother, with the claim 'We have found Messiah'. Nothing happened at that meeting, but Peter was left to consider the claim of Jesus as Messiah. The next time we see Peter and Jesus together is in Luke 5: 1-11. Peter and his business partners, brothers James & John, are loaning one of their boats to Jesus so He can speak to a crowd along the lake shore, taking advantage of the better acoustics of water.

Thanking them for the use of their boat, Jesus tells them to cast their nets 1 more time even though they caught nothing all night long, and gives them a huge load of fish, so much so both boats are nearly sunk and the nets were breaking in the process of hauling them aboard.

Upon seeing this miracle Peter falls to his knees and says; "Leave me Lord, for I am a sinful man!", to which Jesus responds, "Don't be afraid, from now on you will catch men (rather than fish)." And they all gave up their business right then and there, and followed Jesus.

Peter, James, and John left the fishing business, leaving Zebedee - the father of James & John - now the senior partner, having to completely reorganize his business without his sons and their friend Peter.

### I'm going fishing

Yet some 3 1/2 years later after the resurrection we once again see Peter, James & John together with others, returning to the fishing business. And just like it was before Peter saw his first miracle in Luke 5, they caught nothing all night long.

And once again Jesus is on the shore giving instructions to cast the net just 1 more time, and when they do so they

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cannot haul in the net due to the huge number of fish, yet this time the net didn't break. Peter is no dummy, in his deja vu experience he recognizes 'It is the Lord', and jumps into the water to swim to shore. (John 21)

I wonder if Peter saw the parable of the net breaking the first time in Luke 5 but not the 2nd, a picture of Peter hopelessly flawed before Jesus came into his life, the net tearing under the strain representing his broken, flawed character that kept allowing 'fish' to escape? (Sins, errors, faults while chasing maturity in God)

So here we are the 2nd time, this time the net doesn't break in a parable of Peter's maturity process the last 3 1/2 years with a view to the rest of his life, and Jesus asks Peter a big picture question: "Do you love me more than these?"

#### **Not James, John, Philip or Nathanael**

Some would suppose Jesus was asking Peter if he loved Him more than James & John and the others loved Him. Or perhaps asking Peter if he loved Him more than he loved his friends.

But that would be completely inconsistent with every other interaction between God and man from Genesis through The Revelation. At no time in the Word does God ever ask a comparative question involving people - do you love me more than your best friends love me? Do you love me more than you love your friend? Do you love me more than your spouse loves Me?

In the Old Testament there are some comparisons made between serving idols versus serving the God of Israel, but never a question comparing one person's love for Him versus another's love for Him.

No, the context makes it clear Jesus is asking Peter if he loves Him more than fish and fishing. The 'these' are fish. Do you love me more than these fish we just ate, Peter? Do you love me more than your fishing business? Early on Peter had left the fishing business to follow Jesus - he had made a big picture decision.

#### **Emotions and the big picture**

Jesus once again asks him to make a big picture decision, and He asks that decision be founded upon deep love for Him, asking 3 times, "Do you love Me? Feed my sheep."

When the Lord asks us to make a big picture decision as he did here with Peter, notice it is made out of love for Him, and that he doesn't send us to a conference or therapist to work through the emotions of such a big decision.

For instance, in John 8:11 when the woman is caught in adultery and Jesus saves her from a horrible death by stoning, He simply says, "Go and sin no more", or "Go and leave your sin". He doesn't say to go see a counselor to deal with the 'soul ties' she incurred. He doesn't tell her to pray over a generational sin that opened the door to lust that allowed her to enter into the affair. He doesn't sooth her emotions - He just says to stop sinning - break it off and move on with your life!

He asks her for a big picture decision - make decisions based on your destiny, not based on the short term.

So when Jesus asks Peter for a big picture decision founded upon love for Him, He doesn't go into detail soothing Peter's emotions and answering questions about how to turn the business once and for all over to Zebedee, or to sell the business and boats. He doesn't tell Peter how to tell his wife and kids they are probably going to have to give up their home and live out of a suitcase much of the rest of their lives, and most likely move out of Israel.

He does tell Peter something about the ramifications of making the big picture decision: "When you are old others will bind you and stretch out your hands and take you where you don't want to go", thus signifying John 21:18-19 says, that Peter will die by crucifixion.

#### **He always shows us the finished vision**

He doesn't tell us how to work through the emotions of a big picture decision, whether that be Barb returning a moment in time to merely a moment in time rather than a lifetime, or Peter making a decision knowing that when he is old he will die by crucifixion. He just puts it out there for us - Will you do this?

Saul of Tarsus persecuted the body of Christ in Jerusalem, but Acts 8:1 tells us every single believer in Jesus left Jerusalem except for the apostles. So Saul had to expand the hunting down of these people to other areas, which took him to Damascus one day.

The Lord wasn't ready to allow persecution to expand yet, and so interrupts Saul's trip by appearing to him before he can reach the city gates. He had been dealing with Saul for some time, because the Lord comments to him: "It's hard





(for you) to kick against the ox-goad".

The ox-goad was a pointed stick with which a person walked behind an ox and jabbed him to keep him going a certain direction. The Word was the pointy stick the Lord had been using to try to get Saul of Tarsus in the right direction, but like a stubborn animal, he kept 'kicking' against the Lord's jabs. Essentially the Lord appeared to Saul and said 'Give up!'.

The Lord tells Saul to get up and go into the city, where it will be told what he must do. At that point the Lord appears to a another disciple and tells him to tell Saul some things, and mentions this: "He is a chosen instrument to proclaim my name before the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel, and I will show him how much suffering he must endure for my name."

The testimony of Saul of Tarsus is found in Acts 9, 22, & 26, with Paul adding or subtracting various details each time depending on who he is talking to. But it is clear the Lord showed him the big picture, the mature ministry, and the consequences of making such a decision.

He doesn't help us work through the emotions directly, He puts the decision out there, shows us the cost to make a big picture decision, and then leaves it up to us to decide.

### **Ages to come**

A couple in our church were picked out of the crowd and prophesied over every time a guest speaker came to our church, and given the same prophetic word about them going to nations to teach people the Word. Yet one of them got into adultery and the marriage ended in divorce.

During a visitation when the Lord was teaching me about prophecy, I asked Him about this couple, saying, "Isaiah 55 says your Word doesn't return to you without accomplishing the thing it was sent out for, so what about all the words over this couple? How will they come to pass?"

He said: "Some words spoken in this age won't be fulfilled until the age to come." I said, "I've never heard that before, I need chapter and verse!" He kindly responded: "There are many prophecies in the Old Testament that leap over this age to speak of the millennial age to come, and you believe them, so why is it so hard for you to believe that some prophecies spoken in this age will be fulfilled in the next?"

You see, God's Word in our lives WILL come to pass. He shows us the mature vision, the completed work, and then sin and life happen and small picture decisions are made, until one day we look back at how we have failed Him and wonder how we will ever be granted entrance to heaven. Or if we make it we think, we will hear how sorely disappointed and perhaps even angry with us He was our whole life.

Yet nothing in our lives has caught Him by surprise, and when He speaks a Word, a vision, an invitation to a big picture decision to us, He did so having seen all the detours and failings in our lives.

His big picture Word WILL come to pass in your life. If not in this life, then maybe 100 years from now, maybe 400 years from now, maybe 900 years from now - but whether it comes to pass in this life or the next, know that in the big picture we are already in eternity. We don't die and THEN pass into eternity. You have already started living forever.

This life is only a moment, don't make it a lifetime.

More next week, blessings,

Blessings,  
John Fenn  
[www.cwowi.org](http://www.cwowi.org)

## **Big Picture #5**

2013 06 22, John Fenn, [www.supernaturalhousechurch.org](http://www.supernaturalhousechurch.org)

Hi all,

In 1965 the British band 'Herman's Hermits' had a hit song entitled 'Mrs. Brown, You've Got a Lovely Daughter', which was on an album I bought in the late 1960's when I was about 10 or 12 years old. (I know, that dates me doesn't it? I turned 55 last month, gulp, yikes!)

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Even now, I have Herman's Hermits 'Greatest Hits' on my iPhone as part of my 'Easy Listening' playlist.

### **We interrupt this email for an editorial, lol**

I've said this before, and I know it doesn't sound spiritual, but I often find it easier to pray in the Spirit and talk to the Father with some of the more mellow songs of the 1960's and 70's that I grew up with playing in the background, than I do with many modern Christian rock that either scream at me or have lyrics that tell me I'm lower than a snake's belly. (But there's a lot of great Christian worship too and I listen to a lot of that!)

But some Christian songs (even some 'worship' songs) are like they used to say of some country songs if you play them backwards - you get your truck back, you get your dog back, you get your girlfriend back, you get your job back...

### **Back to Big Picture, lol**

You need to know that I've known 'Mrs. Brown, You've Got a Lovely Daughter by heart since at least 1970, and all that time I thought the opening line went like this (in my best imitation of singer Peter Noone's heavy Manchester accent): "Mrs. Brown you've got a lovely daughter, girls who shop as her are something rare..."

The song is 2 minutes 24 seconds long, and for at least 43 years I've been happily singing along 'Mrs Brown you've got a lovely daughter, girls who shop as her are something rare...', never knowing why this teenage English boy is admiring some girl's shopping habits - until last month.

That's when I was listening to the Herman's Hermits in the background while talking to the Father about the big picture and praying in the Spirit, when it happened.

### **Suddenly I see**

I was receiving revelation about examples in the gospels where Jesus would shift attention away from the person or moment at hand to look at the big picture view for perspective, then zero in again on the issue - He clearly did that to place whatever crisis or failure of the person in the context of the big picture so they wouldn't lose heart.

And while I was thinking on that, this song started and the Father suddenly said, "It's like this" as He somehow turned my attention away from Him and onto the background music that now seemed much louder and suddenly very clear: 'Mrs. Brown, you've got a lovely daughter, girls as sharp as her are something rare..."

OH...Girls as SHARP AS HER are something rare, not girls who shop as her are something rare!

### **Carry over effect**

Since I was 10 or 12 years old I'd been wondering about the shopping habits of some girl from Manchester, when all along he was singing about her being 'sharp' - which communicates intelligence, wit, attractiveness - NOT that she was a good shopper.

The Father used this as a teaching tool and made His point clear: The 2:24 second song is like our lives, and often in the opening lines of our lives we learn something wrong, yet because we learned it early we carry it with us all our lives. This causes us to make decisions and form opinions based on that wrong belief, which makes everything built on that belief a bit off and incorrect in nearly every area.

That wrong understanding in the opening line of the song tainted the whole song for me for 45+/- years! How often do we think something of ourselves or God that we lay down as a foundation, upon which we build this whole self-image or God-image, only years later we understand the 'lyrics' correctly!

### **Those famous Swiss cows**

When Barb and her best friend Kathy were about 6 years old and had probably watched the movie 'Heidi', about a little Swiss girl, Kathy told her she wondered how cows in Switzerland could stand on those steep Swiss mountain sides. Without missing a beat Barb told her that Swiss cows have shorter legs on one side of their body than the other, which allows them to remain level while standing on steep mountains.

12 years later and now 18 years old, Barb and Kathy were roommates in a dorm at Indiana University, and they were talking about the theory of evolution and Kathy says, 'You know, like those Swiss cows growing short legs on one side to adapt to their environment.'

Barb was amazed and started laughing and told her Swiss cows don't have short legs on one side - it was just a joke. But Kathy was in disbelief and shock that it wasn't true for she had believed that since Barb told her, and they spent



the next hour looking up information on Swiss cows and their legs just to prove Barb was just joking 12 years earlier.

### **Big, small, big, small, big**

Luke 22:14-23 is about the Last Supper and the big picture work of the cross. But in verse 24, the very next verse, the disciples did as human nature does, make an important big picture event all about them and what they think about it, which is 'small picture'. Who will be the greatest among them?

Jesus helps them get their eyes off 'self' and the small picture, to look at the big picture in verses 29-30. He tells them He gives them part of the kingdom the Father gave Him, and they will judge/administrate over the 12 tribes of Israel in the future kingdom - so stop jostling for position in the here and now.

Jesus never changes - He is still urging us to get eyes off self and onto the big picture. But...

Then Jesus turns to Peter to sandwich that mighty and amazing future of them judging the 12 tribes of Israel in the kingdom to come, with a revelation that Peter is first going to be sifted like wheat. "Satan has desired to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that when you have turned again, you will strengthen your brethren." (v31-32).

### **About a 1/2 step off**

Peter, bless his heart and completely wrongly timed, tries to go big picture on Jesus: "I am ready to go with you both to prison and even to death!" But Jesus focuses again on the small picture: "I tell you Peter, you'll deny me 3 times before the rooster crows."

Looking at the big picture is not a denial of the facts nor neglecting the job at hand and issues that must be dealt with. Keeping the big picture in the back of our minds while dealing with the intense crisis of the 'small picture' keeps things in right perspective and gives us the strength and hope to continue on.

That's why Jesus felt comfortable sharing the small picture of Peter's denial of the Lord in context that he would one day sit on a throne administrating Israel in the future kingdom. He always places our problems in context of the big picture, while urging us to deal with whatever issue is at hand honestly and uprightly.

And then Jesus moves from Peter's small picture denial to the big picture again as He tells them essentially that He is leaving them so from this point forward they need to go out fully supplied. Then they go to the big picture events of the Garden of Gethsemane.

### **Back to those lyrics and cows**

In the first century the teaching was that Messiah was coming to defeat the Romans and restore Israel to world prominence once again as in the days of David and Solomon. It is upon that foundational misunderstanding that many of Jesus' disciples followed Him. One of the original 12 was 'Simon the Zealot'.

The Zealot party was a political movement that wanted to incite the people to rise up and force the Romans out. It is believed by many that was the core reason Judas betrayed Jesus, trying to get Him to prove to everyone He was Messiah and put Him in a position to confront the Romans and then have to do miraculous things to defeat them.

Even in Acts 1:6 'when they all came together' right before the Ascension, as a group they asked: "Lord, is it now you are going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" They were STILL wondering if He was going to kick the Romans out at that time!

All they had seen and heard and done in the last 3 1/2 years with Jesus, now resurrected from the dead, did not undo they foundational 'wrong lyrics' of their life song they thought they knew so well. They still believed Swiss cows had legs on one side shorter than the other so to speak, even though they had been 3 1/2+ years with Jesus.

### **Are we any different?**

No matter how long we walk with the Lord in this life we are still relearning the lyrics, relearning that many 'facts' aren't facts at all, but error and traditions of men. Paul said in I Corinthians 14:10 there are many voices in the world, and none without significance. The trouble is that we come to the Lord and His voice which we are following, with other voices still bouncing off the walls of our minds, emotions, and life experience.

Being a disciple means rearranging those other voices, those 'small picture' foundations upon which we've built a flawed life, and putting them in correct context and seen from the proper perspective of our future and our citizenship which is even now, in heaven. (Philippians 3:20)

Suddenly, the song makes sense. Suddenly you realize those cows are like every other cow out there. And suddenly



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you see the Father and the Lord Jesus for the goodness that is them, and the love story begins...

New subject next week - deal with the small picture from the vantage point of the big picture!

Blessings,  
John Fenn  
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