

Notes on Matthew 4 : 18 – 23; Revelation 10 : 1 – 4, 8 – 10
‘The Word you predict...’

Here, again, are the answers from the ‘Really Obvious Bible quiz’. It’s called the ‘Really Obvious Bible Quiz’ because these are the sort of things you would expect I’m going to want you to know, but they aren’t. To know there are 66 books in the Bible, that there are 7 different sections in the Bible, that it was originally written in 3 languages and that we don’t know how many authors there are is interesting but not necessarily useful. This is the great spoiler we all need to understand because the danger is, is that we assume that if we know this sort of information it makes the Bible more manageable to our needs but this is to fail to understand the Bible. When we open our Bibles we enter into the ‘strange new world within the Bible’ that is to open our eyes to the bigger horizons of what our life in Jesus is. This is seen through the idea of both the mosaic and the mind map.

The mosaic and the mind map act as metaphors for the size of life we have in Jesus. This life is described in a number of different ways: it is described as being united with him in his resurrection (Romans 6:5), it is described as living in the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11) or life in all fullness (John 10:10). Our mind map of 12 different and colourful elements interact and interlock with each other in the way the different coloured tiles of mosaic make up the image. Our text for the year, ‘Eat this book’ is an attempt to use as colourful a metaphor as a mosaic and our mind map to live the Bible as big as possible. The invitation to ‘Eat this book’ is nothing like the ‘Really Obvious Bible Quiz’. To treat this eating like that would be like being content to list the ingredients used, to memorise recipes or to know how many kilocalories there is in food. Whereas the heart and soul of Mosaic Discipleship is to both invest and train you to learn, as it were, to cook. This is why during the summer and autumn you are invited to learn ‘How to read the Bible for all its worth’, or to think Planet wise, or to participate in Forest Church, or to engage in different ways of Prayer or to join at the Mike and Sandra’s as they follow a study led by Jeff Lucas on DVD. ‘Eat this book’ is an invitation for us all to think and live outside of the box and for us all to start at square 1. Therefore I will assume nothing apart from the truth that we are all novices as we begin to explore the ‘strange new world within the Bible’.

Square 1 start with four words, or rather four metaphors, we’re to use like keys to open doors, maps to explore the territory or poems to inspire our love. Throughout the series we will build on, expand, evolve and play with these words letting them take us where they will. So step 1. The first word is Inspiration, as described in 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21. This word reminds us that though the Bible was written by men, yet it is always more than that. This is because the Holy Spirit was involved in his own mysterious way in making the Bible more than it is. The second word is Revelation. The Bible at its heart is a polemical book that God uses to open the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf as God makes himself known to those who hear and read it. God did this through the Prophets, through Jesus (John 14:9) and he does it today through the Bible. The third word is Word

of God. The Bible is the record of God's words and it is how God speaks to us, to reveal his love, his mercy, his grace and of what our response is to be too; as in Nehemiah 8:9 and Acts 2:37. The fourth word is Authority. The Bible is our core resource in our knowing God and so it demands our willing submission to it as well as our own wrestling with it too. These four words are not to be thought of as independent of each other, instead that interact with each other to help us better understand and imagine a living and dynamic living of 'Eat this Book' today. This phrase is an invitation to us all to see, to experience, to explore and to live the Bible in 4D.

The aspiration of Mosaic Discipleship is our 'Learning to imitate Jesus by faithfully following Him in our lives day by day.' As John ate the scroll he was given by the angel so he discovered faithful following meant two things. The first is that it is sweet to taste and Mosaic Discipleship is to help all of us to 'feel good' as we follow Jesus. But this is not all, as secondly, it is to also taste sour. Mosaic Discipleship reminds us that we are not to live out our following of Jesus according to our own tastes and preferences but we to its. We are to embrace the challenges and difficulties of obedience as we obey our Lord and as we persevere in love to our Saviour. When we open our Bible we step into this 'strange new world' and part of its strangeness is the invitation to we eat it.

Welcome to square 1.