

The Big Picture

Volume One

Picture Perfect



Rev. Tim Gibson

Know God's Will and how
you fit into it.

THE BIG PICTURE



PICTURE PERFECT
Knowing God's will and how
You fit into it.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

i. Acknowledgements.....	4
ii. Foreword.....	5
I. Chapter One – The Big Picture.....	7
II. Chapter Two - Eagle Like Vision	
III. Chapter Three – Ant Like Calling.	
IV. Chapter Four – The Spectrum Of God’s Calling.	
V. Chapter Five – Vision Is Seeing Jesus.	
VI. Chapter Six – Calling Is Hearing Jesus.	
VII. Chapter Seven – Testing What We See and Hear.	
Conclusion	

This preview just looks at the first 8 pages. The complete book has over 100 pages.

i. Acknowledgements

As this material springs from the many years of developing the 'Big Picture' teaching package there are many people to thank concerning its creation. First and foremost I give all praise and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ who embodies the Big Picture and without Him there would be no vision and no calling to live out of.

Next I would like to thank my beautiful wife, Shendy, who had been my 'sounding-board'. With her keen sense of what 'works' and what 'doesn't' I have been able to compile the good and leave the not so good. She has also been a constant support in the creation of this book, graciously enabling me to have ample undisturbed time, even if it means she has to look after the kids a few too many times.

I thank my three wonderful kids, Melody, Gideon and Matthew not only for giving me many illustrations but reawakening my wonder in God's creation.

Special thanks to Rev.Dr.Albert Isaac (along with his wife Rev.Stephanie Isaac and their children) for encouraging me to put my material into book form.

Thanks to Dr.Bill and Sarah Rigden who disciplined me for many years and taught me much of what is included in this volume. Thanks also to Dr.Mike Crow and his wife Katie who counseled my wife and I and taught us so much just be being who they are in Christ. Not forgetting Pastor Song Meng Liang who has given me room and opportunity to rise up into all God has for me and also Pastor Ong Tiong Chuan.

Finally, thanks to all the many students who have been through my 'Big Picture' seminars and have helped me to refine and change the contents based on helpful feedback knowingly or unknowingly.

Last, but by no means least, thanks also to my own Church congregation and leaders (Church of Singapore - Bukit Timah) who I have tested out parts of this teaching on with encouraging results.

Thank you all.

ii. Foreword

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

In the hustle and bustle of modern day living we often forget the following scene that exists either in faded memories, distant fiction, or now in tranquil corners of this globe:

Sitting at his mother’s feet is a little boy looking up from the floor and asking what she is doing. She informs him that she is embroidering. He tells her that it looks like a mess from where he is. From the underside he watches her work within the boundaries of the little round hoop that she holds in her hand.

She smiles at him, looks down and gently says, "My son, you go about your playing for a while and, when I am finished with my embroidering, I will put you on my knee and let you see it from my side."

The little boy wonders why she uses some dark threads along with the bright ones and why they seem so jumbled from his view. A few minutes pass and then he hears Mother's voice say, "Son, come and sit on my knee." This he does only to be surprised and thrilled to see a beautiful sunset. He cannot believe it, because from underneath it looked so messy.

Then his Mother says to him, "My son, from underneath it did look messy and jumbled, but you did not realize that there was a pre-drawn plan on the top. It was a design. I was only following it. Now look at it from my side and you will see what I was doing."

In the same way, we can gaze up in despair and ask God why our lives and circumstances seem so messy, with dark and bright threads of existence seemingly tangled together with no rhyme or reason. But God our Father would have us sit on His broad lap and gaze upon the big picture sewed into the embroidery of His purposes from eternity past.

Yes, we read in His Word that there is a pre-drawn plan, His design that all mankind is meant to follow. Indeed, all of us will have a unique path to tread that is a strategic part of this divine design.

In Ephesians 2:10 the Greek word used for ‘workmanship’ is ‘poiema’ which means ‘something that is made, particularly out of fabric’. The Greek word for ‘created’ is ‘ktizo’ which means ‘to fabricate’, that is ‘to sew or knit together fabric into a predetermined design’. Therefore, this verse could justifiably be re-written as:

“..we are His embroideries, embroidered in Christ Jesus for good works , according to God’s pre-drawn design and pattern from the beginning of time that we should follow after.”

This book is written with the purpose of taking you to that high place, seated on the Father’s lap, where you can rise above the place of just seeing the **big mess** to seeing the **big message**, His Big Picture. Take time out of the hustle and bustle of your life to allow the Lord to do just that as you read through this appointment with your destiny.

You will be shown God’s plan for mankind from eternity past that is made of common strands that should be seen in your life if you want to follow the Father’s divine will. Then you will begin to unravel that particular strand of God’s embroidery that you are called to be, your specific call that you have been designed to walk in from the beginning of time.

This book is part one in a three volume series and is actually an expansion of my previous teaching series entitled ‘The Big Picture’ which is also available in teaching notes form and in Windows Help File computer teaching aid form (you can find it, and many more of Tim’s Bible teaching packages and Christian resources, at the following web address - <http://www.timshen.truepath.com/teaching.html>).

Here we will see God’s big plan for mankind and the various specific ways we may be called to outwork that plan. Volume two will look in more detail at the Spiritual Gifts as tools of our calling and volume three will unveil the various stages that our calling will go through.

Volume One: The Big Picture – Picture Perfect (this book).

Volume Two: The Big Picture – Painting The Picture.

Volume Three: The Big Picture – The Picture Process.

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April 2003

Singapore

I. Chapter One – The Big Picture

As a little boy I would spend hours with my family putting together the latest jigsaw puzzle. It was a really enjoyable time of fun and family bonding, but above all I learnt a valuable principle that abides with me even now:

If you want to know where the pieces fit look at the big picture first.

When I first started helping with the puzzles I would just take one piece and try to fit it in anywhere my eyes led me. This of course was a long, tedious and unsuccessful process that made me feel like giving up. It also bugged the rest of my family and often interfered with their attempts at placing the correct piece. Many times they would have to help me remove one piece that I overzealously tried to make go into the place I thought it should go!

We can also be like this in our Christian search for God's place for our 'piece' – for where we really fit in. We dip our foot in here and there, hoping the rest of us will just slide into place, only to find we get stuck and need help getting out.

In the process we upset those around us as we either take the place they should be in or we block them in getting to where they should be. Many Christians give up trying to find what God's perfect will is for them because they adopt this doomed strategy.

However, soon I learnt that I needed to refer to the big picture on the lid of the puzzle box so that I could more easily see where the piece I had in my hand really fit. It was simply a case of seeing the context into which the piece fit and matching the shapes and colours on it with those of the picture on the lid.

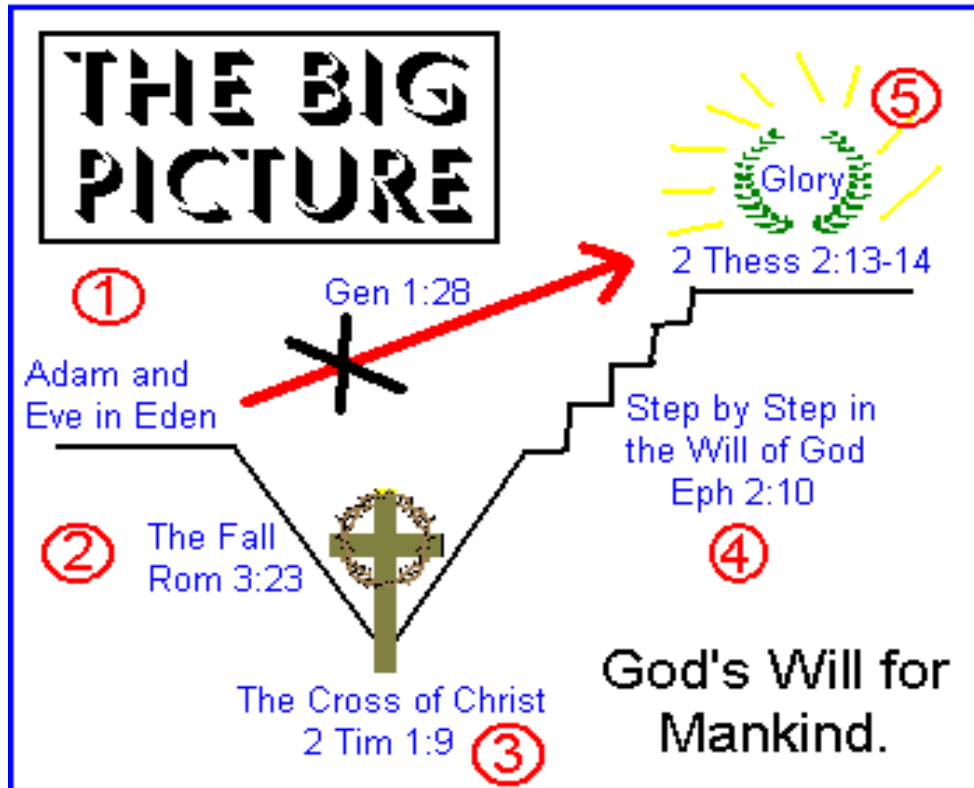
If we really want to know where we fit into God's plan and purpose then we need to do the same thing – to see the big picture of God's design for mankind. We also need to know what 'colours' and 'shapes' (giftings and abilities) we have been created with so that we will know the context into which we should be placed.

During the first few chapters I will be doing the former, unveiling to you the big picture of God's plan for all mankind. This will reveal to you God's 'general will' or 'vision' that He desires all of us to follow after. On seeing this you will appreciate the context into which you must be placed to fulfill God's design for your life.

You will be taken through Scriptural principles that will help you piece together what God is already showing you about His design on your life, whether you are aware of it or not. This will help reveal to you your specific 'calling' which you will be gifted appropriately with by God to move in.

The next volume will look in more detail at our God-given spiritual gifts that will be the tools of our calling, to get the work done as we move in God's specific will for us. The last volume will explore the process God will take us through as we walk in His calling for us.

In this chapter I will go through the five stages of God's plan for mankind, as revealed in the Bible, which can be displayed in the following diagram...



The book goes through each of these stages and then looks at the Eagle-like vision and Ant-like Calling we need to have plus practical ways we can see and hear God's will and walk in it.