

Dear Friends,

Over the past few weeks, I have found myself taking the train for several journeys. This means there's a different view of the world and more opportunity for seeing things that might otherwise be missed if sitting behind the steering wheel of the car. There is an advertising campaign currently being undertaken at the underground station at the Barbican. It is from Arizona State University who has a campus base at the Barbican Centre. The campaign is called 'Changing Futures.' The posters have the line 'this is our moment to change the future.'

When you read this what do you think of? The future that is being alluded to is that of increased education. But the future can take many different forms. For some, the moment to change the future comes with a new treatment plan, or the beginning of a new chapter or phase of life. What does the phrase mean to you? Is it about life or something to take at face value? Could it have a deeper meaning in some way? Maybe as a way of building community? Encouraging people in their faith? A life-changing encounter with God? As with many advertising campaigns, there is a play on words, meaning there is a more open-ended way of looking at it.

As soon as I saw it, my mind was drawn to God who, in Jesus, came to earth so that we might be transformed more and more into his likeness. Wherever we are in our faith journey, there is always more of God to know, and the Holy Spirit is always working for others to come to know Jesus, and for everyone to learn more of God in their lives and communities. To have a significant encounter with God always leads to something new and exciting emerging. This is the moment where the future starts.

When we place our hope in Christ a new adventure with God, or a new chapter in our story, begins. Christian hope is to look forward in the expectation knowing that Jesus will be with us in all things. We do not need to fear because we have hope. This doesn't mean that difficult times won't happen, because they will. But it does mean that we can face the future without fear and with confidence. Everyone who turns to Jesus has the assurance of eternal life and what greater hope is there than this?

We can take it that 'this is the moment to change our future' is a reminder of the future hope which is not just for individuals but also for society, churches and communities. It is a collective statement. We should rejoice that Christ came to the world for everyone, so that all people's future can be changed. Our role as churches and a Circuit, is to find the ways to encourage others so they might encounter Jesus for themselves. This is the moment to do that. As more people come to know Christ, the world and the future will be changed for the better.

The poster may have had one brand clearly in mind, but there is a much deeper message to it as well. Let's rejoice in the hope we have in Christ and seek for others to come to know it for themselves.

God bless,
Chris