

The Big Picture

By Santiago Lange



When Michelangelo was commissioned by Pope Julius II in 1507 to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel he didn't just pick up his brush and begin painting. He labored for months over hundreds of sketches, colors schemes, and themes before he ever began setting his scaffolding in place. Michelangelo painted while lying on his back from 1508 to 1512, working meticulously on every detail until the Chapel was completed. It has been said that one day Michelangelo was painting in an obscure corner of the Chapel when he became frustrated with his work. He was so frustrated that he decided to blot out what he had done and start over. One of the workers who was working in the Chapel asked Michelangelo why he worried over something nobody will ever know about. The great artist replied..."because I will know." It was the vision, the bigger picture in his mind, that gave him the determination and the drive necessary to complete the details of his great work with such focus and dedication.

Likewise, when Jesus prepared to leave His disciples and ascend to the right hand of the Father, He gave His followers a plan that was much more than details, it was the big picture. Jesus told His followers:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. {19} Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, {20} and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Mat 28:18-20 NIV)

Jesus didn't tell his disciples how to build the buildings they would meet in one day. He didn't insist that they worship with one particular kind of music or play just certain types of musical instruments. Jesus didn't insist that they use individual communion cups instead of one common cup. There were a lot of details that He could have given to his disciples while He was visiting with them for the last time on earth. Instead, He planted within their hearts the big picture of all the nations of the world becoming His disciples. □