



# Just a Preview

Well, the turkey is eaten, the mulled wine sipped, the last crumbs of mince pie swept off the carpet, and a lot of important viewing has taken place. I wonder what movies you saw? My favourite bit of the cinema experience is watching the ads and the previews. The ads, because it is sometimes a real challenge to guess what product is being advertised; the trailers because they whet your appetite for what you might want to see in the weeks ahead.

## *The real thing?*

Sometimes you can watch the trailer and feel as though you don't need to go to the movie—you've seen all the best bits already. Other times you might feel that the trailer is misleading—the actual movie is very different from the trailer. In both cases you could feel annoyed with the maker of the trailer: they haven't done a good job. The best trailers make you really excited about what is to come; you have an idea of the big picture, but there is plenty you don't know. The images are from the real thing, but they still leave you wanting more.

## *Is life like that?*

I'm not asking whether aliens are real, or whether our lives should match up to the latest rom com. Some movies are great just because they are so far removed from our real lives. No, what I am talking about is whether our lives, here and now, are a preview for the afterlife, or if they are the real thing. I feel very sorry for people who think that this is all there is. But if this life is in some sense a preview for the one after, what sort of scenes can we expect in the full show?

## *Creating the future*

I want to push the illustration two ways. If we are talking about God's movie, the trailer—which extends right from creation, through all the events of the Bible, and up to today—shows all the pain and evil we suffer in this world, and points to a wonderful life afterwards for those who choose, through Jesus, to share it with him.

But there is also a movie of our own life story, which we are directing. Each choice or action we make is part of what we will in due course become. We are making the preview of our eternal destiny. Why not make 2016 the year you decide the shape of the big picture of your life? Put Jesus in it!



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