



THINK ON THESE THINGS..... (our contributor this morning is Tony Wilson)

Reading: Matthew 6:19-21

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Reflection:

I've often heard it said that a fool is someone who knows the price of everything, but the value of nothing. It almost feels like the saying should come from Old Testament Wisdom literature or the Sermon on the Mount, but it doesn't. It's no doubt a modern saying, but I don't think we'll ever know who first thought of it. The Sermon on the Mount comprises a selection of Jesus' teachings, many of which, like the anonymous saying I've just quoted, reverse the worldly values we are used to. Instead they urge us to adopt God's heavenly values.

As we read through chapters five to seven of St Matthew's Gospel we are frequently reminded of this as we see verse after verse which turn generally accepted worldly values upside down. Chapter five begins with one of the best-known passages in the Bible, the Beatitudes. These Beatitudes value people who are often rejected or looked down upon by society. As the Sermon on the Mount progresses we are urged to turn the other cheek, to love our enemies, to forgive others, not to store up treasures on earth, not to worry about things, and not to judge others.

The last five months have emphasized some of these points very much. Money is much less useful when you can't go out to spend it. A short walk in a pleasant location has very great value, but no price at all. As the lockdown eased, a very simple afternoon tea at the home of a dear friend, seemed to me to be so lovely that it had much more value than anything money could have bought for me. Perhaps the stresses of these difficult months have shown us the value of life's simpler pleasures and taught us that money and worldly values aren't everything.

Breath-Prayer for Today:

Almighty God, we pray that you will give us the wisdom to discern the value and joy of the ordinary things in our lives, and to reject those things that are attractive but superficial and which do nothing to enrich our life's journey with you. Amen.

