

Thought for the Day

*1 Teach me, my God and King
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything
To do it as for Thee.*

*2 A man that looks on glass
On it may stay his eye,
Or, if he pleaseth, through it pass
And then the heaven espy.*

*3 All may of Thee partake;
Nothing can be so mean
Which, with this tincture,
‘For Thy sake’,
Will not grow bright and clean.*

*4 A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room as for laws
Makes that, and the action, fine.*

This was not always a favourite hymn of mine - perhaps because it was a staple of school assemblies, or maybe it was the references to drudgery and sweeping that put me off! But then one day a friend told me that when she did a stint as a hospital orderly, she would sing verse 4 to herself each time she embarked on the bedpan round, and I got the point. We have all been clapping our nurses and doctors on Thursday evenings, and of course their work is not glamorous - far from it, but their *action* is certainly *fine*.

But it was the second verse that I never fully appreciated. Yes, obviously glass could be used in the home, and also in the making of telescopes and magnifying glasses, but I tended to accept that as a given fact without thinking any further. Then, last Christmas, a family member brought her ‘virtual reality glasses’ for us all to try out. Suddenly we could be wandering among the planets and marvelling at untold wonders. It was advisable to be sitting down securely, or you could find yourself teetering on the edge of a black hole! Or you could marvel at the world beneath the oceans - such wonderful beauty which, until recent advancement in technology, we could not even dream of.

Our mirrors merely reflect our own personal little bit of the world, so it is good to be reminded that God has a much larger vision for His creation. We can be lifted above our mundane, limited experiences, as we contemplate such incredible truths. But of course we have to come back to the reality of our lives. You will be familiar with the saying that it is possible to be ‘so heavenly minded that you are no earthly use’! But the reverse is also true. We need to remind ourselves that we are a small part of a much greater picture.

God, in His mercy, touched earth and owns us as a part of His plan. His touch has transformed our little earth and blessed us.

*5 This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold:
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told.*

(George Herbert)