29th March 2023

Value

"Of what value is an idol carved by a craftsman?
Or an image that teaches lies?
For the one who makes it trusts in his own creation;
he makes idols that cannot speak."

Bible, *Habakkuk 2:18*

My reflection on auctions yesterday got me thinking about the value of things. There are artefacts which have a monetary value, of course. And there are other things with no measurable worth, but which are precious because of their significance – our "sentimental value" stuff. If such things were lost or destroyed in a fire or a flood, or stollen from you, the loss would cause more distress than the loss of things that can be replaced.

Some of you will know that I wear bi-lateral hearing-aids (that's heading-aids in both ears, for the uninitiated) and have done so for a while. I have my hearing checked from time to time, so, over the years my hearing devices have been appropriately adjusted and, occasionally, upgraded. A few weeks ago, our dog ate one of my hearing-aids – yes, it's true! So, I had to phone the audiology department to explain. It was embarrassing, akin to explaining to a teacher, "The dog ate my homework, Miss!", and I wasn't sure the audiologist would take me seriously. But she did, and promised that, in a few weeks, I'd have a new hearing-aid.

I don't know how valuable a hearing-aid is, and I'm reassured that my dog-chewed one can be replaced. But it's something beyond that which struck me. It's not the value of a hearing-aid that matters. That's just a "thing" that's replaceable. But it's my *hearing* that's important! I remember when I first had my hearing-aids fitted, I was excited that I could hear birds singing! I'd forgotten what they sounded like, and there they were again, chirping merrily – just for me!

We forget to value the simple things in life, while we often focus too much on what we accumulate and measure in monetary worth. So, today, take a little time to notice the birds singing, and all the other things that are of value in your life. And, while you're about it, make sure the dog isn't chewing something that's not supposed to be chewed …

A prayer for today

Lord, forgive me for making idols of the things that have no real worth. Help me to value what's beyond measurement – and to give thanks for what really matters. Amen

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