

The Lakeside



Message in a bottle

Verse of the day for Monday April 21, 2025 - Matthew 6: 28-29

28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

Read Matthew 6 for meditation and inspiration.



For the Love of Money

Dear Lakesiders and friends,

In the spring of 1843, a renowned British engineer by the name of Isambard Kingdom Brunel took a rare break from work to entertain his children with a magic trick. Unfortunately, things went awry when he accidentally swallowed a gold coin he had hidden under his tongue. Over the following days, Brunel and friends, family, colleagues, and doctors tried various remedies to dislodge the coin, including vigorous back-slapping and gravity-defying shaking, but none succeeded.

Seeking an engineered solution, Brunel devised a contraption that allowed him to hang upside down and swing in wide arcs, hoping that motion and gravity together might force the coin loose. But this, too, proved unsuccessful.

Finally, after enduring more than six weeks of this predicament, Brunel reluctantly underwent a risky and unpleasant tracheotomy. Without anesthesia (as it was not yet available in Britain), the doctor made an incision in Brunel's throat and attempted to extract the coin with long forceps. However, Brunel's violent coughing forced the doctor to abandon the attempt. Six weeks later, Brunel was again strapped to the platform and Brodie kept open the tracheal incision while Brunel was struck on the back. At last, 'two or three efforts to cough followed, and presently he felt the coin quit the bronchus, striking almost immediately afterwards against the incisor teeth of the upper jaw, and then dropping out of the mouth. Talk about the quest for gold with challenge and pain, well this was it!

This difficult story about a gold coin caused me to think of the first letter the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy in the sixth chapter stating: "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Of course, the children's magic trick was not really a display of the love of money but the gold coin and the sorrow and pain it caused does make us think of Paul's words to his young follower Timothy. The point is that GRATITUDE for what we have and not the focus and quest for the gold/money we want is God's call and claim on our lives. Be thankful for all the gifts of God and what has been given to you by God's providential grace.

With a thankful heart for each of you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Roger".

Roger