

What are we really yearning for?

We travelled back from Canterbury recently and took the opportunity to pop into a furniture shop and the way home. Big mistake. Why? The furniture store is very large and it has its origins in Sweden. So far so good. The shop is based at Lakeside just over the Dartford Crossing from Canterbury. By now you might be beginning to realise our mistake but it was nothing to do with IKEA. There was traffic, lots of it, and lots of it very snarled up in long, jam packed, ridiculously slow, emission producing, and patience testing queues...

There is a great deal of excitement around the development of electric cars, hybrid cars and driverless cars at the moment. Billions of £££s \$\$\$ and I daresay Euros are being poured into research with the promise of reduced emissions, cleaner air and an improved environment. I don't buy it.

Travel almost anywhere in the UK and domestic recycling has been introduced by local councils and has caught on by people everywhere in a big way. All very laudable. But have we cracked it? Are we going to save the world this way? I'm not sure.

Food is fantastically abundant in the UK at the moment and the range and variety of foodstuffs available in our shops is extraordinary. Generally speaking the variety, taste and dependability of the fruit, vegetables, meat, bread, pasta rice and so on and so forth is getting better and better. Good? I have to say yes as a lover and consumer of food. But at what cost? I'm not just talking here about the money we pay over counter or at the tills each day or week.

The Toyota Prius is a small, low-emission, "environmentally friendly" automobile that was, at one time very popular with a group of so called "A List" Celebrities. How did it compare with a large gas-guzzling Land Rover Discovery? A decade ago a detailed and extensive research project demonstrated that the total cost to the environment from manufacture to scrapping was significantly greater in the case of the Toyota. What are the comparable figures now I wonder? However clean cars become, unless there is a very radical shift in transport policy our roads will continue to become ever more congested. I think that a big move to public and shared transport would be a far better solution in every way.

Recycling? I don't know about you, but our green bin gets fuller and fuller as we recycle more and more. Yay? Nay! I think we are all consuming too much. There is too much packaging these days and are too much plastic. We are discovering that plastic can be very nasty indeed.

Why is it that almost everything we buy is wrapped up, and wrapped up more, and wrapped up again and again. It looks nicer, it sells better, it stays cleaner more hygienic and better preserved. Our food comes from all over the world don't you know? It travels a long, long way. It needs looking after. It needs quality control. It needs tighter legislation - it needs so much more of everything. Including energy – probably finite, probable polluting energy. Do you see where I'm going with this?

The account of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden in the first book of the Bible is a story about God's provision. According to the story Adam and Eve had everything they could ever want or need in the garden. But, they wanted more. They went against the will, desire and purpose of God. They wanted more and they took it. What did that cost them? Well, when Adam and Eve took more than they were given, they were not satisfied, and nothing would satisfy them – now they were alienated from God.

I think that dissatisfaction means that we want more and more of everything. Our wanting of more and more and better and better can't go on. How will we ever be satisfied? Our answer lies with and in God.

James