

Harvest 2014

Having just got back from holiday, you really do notice those differences when you go to another country. I know I'm quite fortunate to have been to quite a number of different countries in Europe and one thing which always strikes me when we go to another country is how much fresher the produce looks in the shops. We went into a couple of supermarkets in Portugal and their fruit and veg sections make ours look dreadful. They don't seem to have any pre-packed stuff wrapped up in plastic bags, or ready prepared salad and vegetables wrapped up in cling film and plastic boxes. But there were piles of whole fresh vegetables and fruit, all looking fantastic, with plenty of choice and really inviting.

Then you go round another corner and there's a whole cheese department to die for. Not cheese wrapped up in plastic packets or already sliced up into handy squares, but whole round cheeses of all different shapes and sizes, many of them made by local producers and the choice was unbelievable.

I came home feeling rather jealous and wondering why we didn't have supermarkets like that, they made ours look quite bland in comparison. But then I started to think about what we do have and all the choices we have. I remember going to our supermarket this

week, I wanted some apples, I like Golden Delicious but in front of me was this bewildering variety of apples, some I had never even seen before and I had no idea what they were like. So, I've bought some of the many different types of apples for you to try.

You go a bit further down the aisles in Morrisons and come across a whole section dedicated to biscuits, the choice is amazing and again full of biscuits I've never even tasted before. We all have our favourite biscuits and so I've brought some of them for you to try. A bit further in Morrisons, just round the corner you come to another section full of different crisps and snacks. I got some of them for you to try too!

Ok Morrisons doesn't quite match up to some of the supermarkets abroad and sometimes they often don't have what you are looking for, but there is still so much choice. There are shelves full of every single item. It's such a bewildering array and one which is guaranteed to dismay many people from different parts of the world where there's barely one brand of every type and no choice at all. Our supermarkets are certainly full of the harvest and it seems we need to keep building more and more shelves to accommodate it all.

☞ Jesus told a story about all this. He told it to two brothers who were arguing over some property that was left to them.

☞ This is the rich farmer who owned lots of land.

☞ This is the seed that belonged to the rich farmer, who owned lots of land.

☞ These are the small barns that tried to store the harvest, grown from the seed that belonged to the rich farmer, who owned lots of land.

☞ These are the big barns, built instead of the small barns that tried to store the harvest, grown from the seed that belonged to the rich farmer, who owned lots of land.

☞ And these are the massive barns, put up to take the place of the big barns, built instead of the small barns that tried to store the harvest, grown from the seed that belonged to the rich farmer, who owned lots of land.

☞ This is the sound of the all-night party in the big house, not far from the massive barns, put up to take the place of the big barns, built instead of the small barns that tried to store the harvest, grown from the seed that belonged to the rich farmer, who owned lots of land.

☞ But this is the sound of silence... after death interrupted the sound of the all-night party in the big house, not far from the massive barns, put up to take the place of the big barns, built instead of the small barns that tried to store the harvest, grown from the seed that belonged to the rich farmer, who owned lots of land....
.....who had forgotten that the most important thing in life was to be rich in the sight of God.

I guess the end of that story silenced the two arguing brothers and it makes us think too! What is really important and makes us rich in God's eyes?

If all our supermarket choices were all taken away, what would really matter?

☞ Harvest is a time to say a big 'thank you' for the many blessing we do receive from God and also perhaps a time for us to reflect on the way we sometimes take those small things for granted.