

Another Day

Biblical reflections for busy teachers



This is my Father's World

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." Psalm 24:1

"This is my Father's world,
He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear him pass;
He speaks to me everywhere."

These lines are from a hymn penned by Maltbie Babcock in upstate New York over a century ago. It is said that, when going out for a walk to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Niagara Escarpment area where he worked as a church minister, he would say to his wife, "I'm going out to see my Father's world".

We tend to associate such thoughts with the awesome beauty of the natural world, but does not our Father's world also include the world of human beings and their creations? City streets as much as rural pathways, factories and offices as much as hamlets and farms, suburban housing estates as much as mountain moorlands? Our Father 'shines in all that's fair' wherever we find ourselves in His world.

Another hymn-writer, Fred Kaan, captures something of this in his 'Sing We of the Modern City':

"In the city full of people, world of speed and hectic days,
In the ever-changing setting of the latest trend and craze,
Christ is present, and among us; In the crowd we see Him stand.
In the bustle of the city, Jesus Christ is every man."

Yes, the earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. This verse from Psalm 24 does not say that the earth *was* the Lord's or that, some golden daybreak, the earth *will* be the Lord's! It says that the earth *is* His.

And what of you and me in the classroom? We are not simply teaching curriculum subjects to our children and young people. We are opening windows on God's wonderful world and looking through them with those whom we teach, drawing attention to this feature and that. Let us think to ourselves and help them to think to themselves, as Louis 'Satchmo' Armstrong put it in those gravelly tones of his, "What a wonderful world!" It is truly my Father's world and He truly shines in all that's fair!

Help us, Lord, to see both on mountain-top and in city-street that you are present and among us and help us to help those with whom we teach and learn to see it too. Amen.