**Ministerial Meandering**

*Taking time - Spending time*

Disraeli - the British Prime Minister in 1868 and from 1874-1880, was quoted as saying, ‘Since we live in time, we should regards time as a prime function of our existence. Therefore to be late is either rude or inefficient.’

However, I have looked it up on the internet and cannot find it either attributed to him or anyone else - so perhaps I dreamt it. Either way, I think it’s quite apt.

Time is an odd commodity; it is here and then it is not - it is the fourth dimension - it is irretrievable. You cannot move it about; you cannot take an hour of yesterday and transplant it into today or tomorrow; as the Kristofferson song says, ‘…yesterday is dead and gone, and tomorrow’s out of sight…’

We all do things with time; we waste it, we take it, we spend it, we use it, we give it, and we can ask for it.

Some of these are very similar; using and spending time might be regarded as the same thing; giving, taking, and asking are obviously not; which leaves us with wasted time - which is certainly a tragedy.

What we need to beware of is ‘taking’ someone’s time. That could be regarded as theft. If you keep someone waiting because you are late for an appointment - you are wasting their time by misusing your own. Kristofferson’s song goes on to say, ‘…all I’m taking is your time, help me make it through the night.’ Perhaps it would be more appropriate for him to say, ‘…all I’m *asking* is your time…’. You cannot take time from someone unless you steal it from them.

So most of the time we decide to *give* our time to people, things, and causes - because to us this seems a good *use* of our time, or a wise way to *spend* it. However, our decisions on how to allocate our time every day is often not thought out in a very systematic way.

A lot of what we do are habits; we get up, wash, walk the dogs, eat breakfast, brush our teeth - and then, perhaps, we will sit down and think about how we are going to *spend* our time this day.

I am not advocating a regimented timetable for your day - although I know that some folk have to do that because of their jobs or their list of work projects (or ‘honey-do’ lists), but I am suggesting that how we *spend* our time is important, so that we neither *waste* it, nor *take* it from others.

I also think that it is a good idea to *spend* time with God each day, as that is probably the biggest investment you can make in your life - so make sure that the time you *give* to *spend* with God is not *wasted* time.