

Luke 12: 13 – 21

### The Me-Me Monster

That is one of the shortest parables that Jesus told ... but did you notice how many times the words 'I' or 'my' cropped up? **(11 times)**

This reminds me of a character in a video I often show to Confirmation Groups – both young people and adults about prayer.

The video is about a teenage boy called Sidney Penge ... and deep within Sidney lurks the dreaded **Me-Me Monster** – in the deep recesses of his heart. This Monster has to be kept happy at all times – and so contact with God, the example of Christ should never happen, should never be admired.

But Sidney then discovers that a girl he fancies – actually believes in God, follows Jesus and prays ...

Well-worn mechanisms, strong habits manage to distract Sidney from finding out more ... until the day before important exams ... exams for which he has not worked nor revised.

And so he starts to think about prayer ... and the **Me-Me Monster** stirs within him ... and then hatches a cunning plan saying:

**Prayer:        Prayer for me,  
                  Prayer that 'I' will pass my exams  
                  yes ... fine ... all for me.**

**“Dear God, help 'me' to pass 'my' exams even though 'I' haven't done any work.**

**If you don't ... then 'I' will look stupid and 'I' will never pray again.**

**So there ...!”**

Well, he failed his exams and gave up on prayer for quite a long time ... until another chat with the girl he fancied.

She explained: 'Prayer isn't about God always giving you what you want ... it's about opening your heart to him. You can tell him what you want ... but it's about listening to him ... and letting God be in charge ...'

**PTO**

The **Me-Me Monster** in Sidney Penge's heart got very agitated and upset ... but soon a spring-clean of Sidney Penge's heart took place ... and the **Me-Me Monster** was chained up and the chains were made of prayers for other people!

Back to the parable of Jesus ... it seems that this man's **Me-Me Monster** was in complete control of his attitudes, words and actions ... and the story doesn't have a happy ending.

Each of us has a sort of **Me-Me Monster inside** ... is it in control or is it perhaps chained up ... because our prayers are predominantly for others – that's one way of being rich towards God?

So we're going to follow Sidney's eventual example this morning. There are two circles around this Me-Me Monster (**you could draw them**) ... the circle nearest to it is for 'prayers for yourself', and the larger outer circle is for 'prayers for others' ... you could write your name at the top.



Now in the inner circle – the one closest to the Monster – I'd like you to write in 3 or 4 things you have prayed for yourself ...

It's not wrong to talk to God about what we want but this morning we're thinking about the balance of our prayers and keeping the **Me-Me Monster** in check ... so I'd like you to look at what you've written ... and choose just one to keep ... put a line or a cross through the others.

And when we come to our intercessions we'll use the other circle.

*(During our intercessions we prayed for a variety of situations, people in need etc. and we were then encouraged to write any that we wanted to continue to pray for in the outer circle, to take home with us, so that we could continue to pray for them during the week).*