

[Nature - The Lord's Canvas](#)

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Are you like me? Do so many aspects of nature focus your mind and heart on God?

To wake to bird song streaming through my open window, so full of energetic melody, causes me to sing in praise... sometimes silently in reflective prayer... sometimes loudly in shaky voice that must make the birds cringe. ☐

To gaze in joy at the snowdrops announcing that spring is upon us... their delicate beauty dismissing the harshness of winter. Their visible life is but for a while... yet when we see them no more that is not the end.... they are still there lying under the soil and will appear again. Death and resurrection before our eyes.

I can be distressed, yet mesmerised, watching one of my neighbour's cats 'toy' with a mouse it has caught. Letting it loose only to leap on it again and again until the poor mouse reaches complete exhaustion or dies of a heart attack. A cruel form of sport for the cat... a salutary reminder of how much my behaviour can affect those around me. How easy to tease unkindly... going too far... when 'fun' starts to hurt do I always stop... or go on teasing, not giving due regard as I 'toy' with my friends' and families' emotions and well-being. Do I love as the Lord would wish me to?

I could go on and on getting carried away and bore those of you who choose to read this.

Rather I want to share with you a wonderful experience I had a couple of months ago. I was sitting relaxed on my bed reading a book, enjoying the fresh air gently floating in through the window, when I became conscious of a humming sound I couldn't quite distinguish. It gradually grew in intensity, getting louder and louder, closer and closer. Then, over the wall at the bottom of my garden, a huge dark mass appeared. Bees. The swarm moved as one unit, gently progressing across the lawn towards the window, the movement calm and controlled. They were flying so very close together - except for the odd few who were skirting around - some inches, some feet away, and then returning, scouting the area.

I thought briefly that it might be wise to close my window, but the sound was so wonderful, like harmonious chanting, so I abandoned caution and marvelled at what was happening. When they were about a yard from the bungalow, they began to move towards a wild rose bush to their left; the change of direction so fluid as if the cluster were stuck together with invisible gossamer, their purpose totally

united. They gradually disappeared into the centre of the bush and slowly the sound eased into a gentle almost imperceivable note. The whole process lasted about twenty minutes.

A short while later I went outside to take a closer look. There they 'hung' on the central stem of the rose, huddled around each other, in a massive group which seemed to measure at least twenty inches by five inches in a circular column. I wasn't going near with a ruler to be more accurate! Even though there was a gentle ripple across the swarm ... there was a calmness... as the workers and drones clustered around the queen... a sense of contentment and peace in their time of resting.

What a sight to behold. Those bees knew exactly where their security and future lay. Without the queen they could not exist. Wherever she went they went with her... whenever she rested, they settled too.

When our local beekeeper came to collect them the next day, he told me that once he had got the queen in the collecting box all the rest would follow - their lives revolved around her.

It struck me what a wonderful picture I had witnessed.... the sheer unity of movement and purpose... the queen constantly the central focus of the colony.

The harmonious fluidity as they worked as a team... every bee playing its part.

It made me think of Jesus - the central focus of our lives. The very source of our peace and security whatever life throws at us. These bees were temporarily homeless... looking for a new place to settle... yet they were calm for their queen was at their heart.

I began to pray:

*"Dearest Father,
may we your family at Clare Baptist know what it is to be so enthralled and focused on you,
that we move in such fluid unity and purpose...
in your service...
that our lives truly are lived as worship to you.
Amen."*

(Image by [Beverly Buckley](#) from [Pixabay](#))
