

Tyndale Thought for the Day

19th June 2020



Did you know that two out of every three of the 70 billion farm animals killed for food each year are farmed industrially in factory farms? Did you know that one out of every six or seven birds on Earth is a chicken? According to the RSPCA, every year over one billion chickens are slaughtered for meat in the UK. More than 90% of these chickens are raised in crowded sheds with little room to move around freely. Have I put you off your meal yet?

Did you know that God cares for the welfare of animals? Ancient Israel depended on farming goats and sheep to provide them with milk, meat, cheese, clothes, tents, bags... The Old Testament book of Deuteronomy – the Israelites' law book – governed how they should treat these animals. "The seventh day is a Sabbath... you shall not do any work... [nor] your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock" (Deuteronomy 5:14, ESV). Caring for your animals is one of the Ten Commandments.

It is undoubtedly more expensive to raise livestock as living beings rather than as factory produce. But what if we were to pay a little more for our food and a little less for yet another entertainment channel? What if we sacrificed a little more of our wealth? Could choosing ethical, sustainably farmed food even be an expression of our Christian worship?

Don't get me wrong – I am no vegetarian – there is a steak and ale pie in the oven as I write. But I am thinking a lot more about what we buy in the supermarket and where it comes from.

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