

Crash, grind, grate.

One Sunday recently we set out for St Mary's in our car. As we reversed there was a crashing, grating sound. The driver thought that she had hit something. Our drive can be difficult to negotiate. The car was in one piece and so was our wall. Proceeding cautiously forward to the road the gentle engine sound was accompanied by clash, grind, grate. We lifted the car bonnet and peered inside. It looked OK to us! A more agile Sister peered underneath the car – everything looked great. We started the engine again and moved slowly forward. Our inspection had done nothing – it was crash, clash and grate.

The RAC mechanic arrived before eight the next morning. The driver of the evening before slowly reversed the car. Not a sound! She edged forward. There was only the gentle sound of the engine. However the keen ear of the mechanic had detected a slight sound in the front wheel. It was dismantled and there was the cause of all that noise – a small stone. He did a test drive around the block. He returned the car to us saying, "These are cracking good cars."

What was the Lord saying to us in it all? Perhaps, it was this. We can be a cracking good Christian willing to do the extra mileage out of love for him but sometimes a little stone is lodged there that is grating and jarring. It may not always show but often it will. It is usually what we say and how we say it that reveals it. Of course, there may be the added noise of banging doors!

A little stone of resentment will catch up with us in an unguarded moment and out will slip the barbed comment. A little stone of criticism will sooner or later betray itself in judgemental speech. Curiosity and self importance will result in gossip. The tongue faithfully portrays the heart. Sometimes it is crash, clash and grate!

We needed an expert to restore our car so that all we could hear was the gentle sound of the engine. We need an expert also to restore the sound of love in our speech. The expert is Jesus. He can remove the stones in our hearts and even a heart of stone he can soften.



It was only a small stone after all!