

## Verses and quotations

*Your eyes are windows into your body. If you open your eyes wide in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light.*

Mat 6:22 MSG

*I am deeply impressed by the fact that our spiritual seeing is conditioned by our physical seeing. If we go through life oblivious to the things that our physical eyes invite us to notice, it is almost impossible for us to be truly attentive to spiritual realities.*

Juliet Benner

*But the basic reality of God is plain enough. Open your eyes and there it is! By taking a long and thoughtful look at what God has created, people have always been able to see what their eyes as such can't see.*

Rom 1:20 MSG

*We can all see God in exceptional things, but it requires the culture of 'spiritual discipline' to see God in every detail.*

Oswald Chambers

*Let me hear of your unfailing love each morning, for I am trusting you. Show me where to walk, for I give myself to you.*

Ps 143:8 NLT

## Another idea

Use lectio divina with your experience: *Lectio* - 'read' the experience and explore your initial response.

*Meditatio* – think, reflect, explore, make connections with scripture, with what you know of God, or with your own situation, including your questions, struggles and joys.

*Oratio* – 'talk' to God about what you are discovering about God and about yourself through this experience. Respond with your feelings, imagination, body & mind.

*Contemplatio* – rest in the love of God. Allow the Holy Spirit to work within you.

## Resources

Benner, D.G. (2010). *Opening to God: Lectio Divina and Life as Prayer*. IVP: Illinois.

Benner, J. (2010). *Contemplative Vision: A Guide to Christian Art and Prayer*. IVP: Illinois.

Pickering, S. (2008). *Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction*. Canterbury: Norwich. p.74

Zehr, H. (2005). *The Little Book of Contemplative Photography; Seeing with wonder, respect, and humility*. Good Books; PA. p.12

Prepared by Vivienne Holt 2012

## Come and See: Walking and seeing as a way of connecting with God

*The glory of God is a human being fully alive;  
and to be alive consists in beholding God.*  
St Irenaeus.



*The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"*

*They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?"*

*"Come," he replied, "and you will see."*

John 1: 35-39

### **The invitation to come and see:**

Contemplative walking is intentional walking with an attitude of quiet, expectant waiting that does not demand God's revelation, but accepts and is satisfied with the wonder of Immanuel already present in the physical world. This is an ideal attitude. I have also walked when feeling grief, anger and restlessness!

*A wonder wander* is a contemplative walk in nature with a camera, asking God to draw your attention to what he wants you to see, trying to translate that into a photographic image, and using the rough framework: 'I see, I think, I feel' to articulate the experience.

### **The Daily Practice**

- ❖ Go for a 15-minute walk with God in nature with a camera.
- ❖ Notice your breathing and your walking pace.
- ❖ Open yourself to God as you are.
- ❖ Open your senses to the outside world, using your eyes to see, your ears to hear, your hands to touch, and even your nose to smell.
- ❖ Give attention to that which grabs your attention. Capture this with your camera.
- ❖ Discern God's communication with you. (If it is not in this image, keep walking and wait for another.)
- ❖ Allow this to touch your deepest centre.
- ❖ Respond to God's communication honestly, using the framework 'I see, I think, I feel' if it helps.
- ❖ Record this experience after your walk by giving your photo a caption or by a visual or written reflective journal entry.
- ❖ Cultivate wonder, respect & gratitude.

### **Why this approach?**

Our relationship with God is often based on words we read or hear. This approach adds to and moves beyond this.

It is helpful to engage the whole body in prayer when one is feeling restless. Walking does this.

### **Possible Movements**

- from a striding pace to a slower one
- from thinking towards feeling
- from seeing to cultivating wonder
- from words to wordlessness
- from activity to openness
- from expectations to expectancy
- from 'it's all about me' to 'it's all about God'
- from striving to experience God to accepting his presence in small moments of wonder