

Dwelling

Christians believe that God uses the Bible to communicate with us. This practice is about the way the Bible can 'come alive' as you read it.

It's a way of reading a passage which goes back to St Benedict in the sixth century. It isn't about looking for the right answer to a question or increasing your knowledge. It's about finding individual words or phrases which resonate with you or challenge you, and then wondering why. You pay attention to the words that feel good or catch your attention, and the way you respond to them.

1. Place

Find a comfortable seat, in a place where you won't be disturbed for 10 minutes. You will also need a short passage from the Bible. You could use the one on the back of this sheet. Bring a pencil and something to lean on.

6. Finish

As you think about today's practice, what are you grateful for? God loves to hear even the shortest prayer saying 'thank you' for the good things that he gives us.

2. Grace

Take some slow deep breaths as you count to three, and then breathe out slowly, also counting to three. The word 'grace' is another word for a gift. What gift do you want or need from this time? Express it clearly to yourself and, if you want, to God.



3. Space

Read the passage very slowly to yourself a few times, out loud or in your head. St Benedict, who pioneered this exercise, asks us to imagine that we are a cow chewing the cud. What words or phrases 'taste' good or draw your attention? You could imagine that you are 'in the passage' as one of the characters.

4. Face to face

Imagine you are having a conversation, face to face, with Jesus or someone you deeply respect about what you found in the passage. Explain why it felt important to you. Imagine what they would say back to you.

5. Trace

It can be helpful to trace your responses to the Bible over time. Often certain ideas or themes return or develop. Jot your ideas in a journal with the date. Christians believe that God communicates with us through these gentle nudges and prompts as the Holy Spirit speaks to us.

John's disciples follow Jesus

Circle or underline any words or phrases that feel important for you. You could write why they feel important round the edge of the page.

The two disciples of John followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

John 1: 37-39