

THE fourth in the YBA's series of Lenten reflections on how we meet Jesus in our daily lives is by the Revd Roy Searle, Baptist Union Northern Pioneer Coordinator, Baptist tutor at Cranmer Hall, Durham, and leader, Northumbria Community.

"May the Lord Jesus touch our eyes, as he did those of the blind. Then we shall see in the visible things those things which are invisible" - Origen.



MY coming to faith was on a mountain top in the Scottish Cairngorms. The call to ministry was on the rocks at Bamburgh on the Northumberland coast and my vocational call to found with others the Northumbria Community brought me to the Cheviot Hills. My heart for Ireland came through walking its ancient paths and sailing its shores. Whilst a great deal of my ministry focuses on urban and suburban contexts it is in the great outdoors that I have encountered God. Celtic Christian spirituality has helped me to open my eyes to see in creation, in the words of the poet William Cowper, "the unambiguous footsteps of God".



Whether walking, biking, sailing or just being outside I have appreciated creation and the beauty of God's earth as being a way of communing with God. It creates time and space to seek him and to reflect, pray, meditate, confess, process and listen. Walking with God is an intentional discipline that helps to deepen my relationship with him. Walking slows the pace from the busy and sometimes frenetic activism of life and ministry in a driven Western consumerist society.



Being out in the open air awakens my senses and creates an awareness to that which is invisible, retuning my heart to listen to God. Whether walking, biking or sailing I am encouraged to play what the Celts described as the 'five stringed harp', our five senses. Looking and anticipating meeting with God in his creation, my vision of who God is and how he reveals himself is extended beyond the confines of a church service, meeting or ministry.

God speaks through his creation, his fingerprints can be detected throughout the world for those who have eyes to see and hearts and minds to receive. Walking in the countryside, a city park or coastline helps me to regain a sense of awe and wonder, reverence and appreciation of the Creator, of life and cultivates and deepens faith. It delivers me from the dissection that blights many Christians and churches only seeing God at work in sacred /religious ways.

It reminds me of those many people and occasions throughout Scripture where people walked with God. Walking reminds me of the many times when Jesus walked with his disciples and revealed to them who he

was and what following him entailed. When we walk with God we open ourselves up to the discoveries and adventures of following Christ.

*Bless to me, O Lord,
the earth beneath my feet;
bless to me, O Lord,
the path I tread;
my walk this day with the Father,
my walk this day with Christ,
my walk this day with the Spirit.*

From Celtic Daily Prayer, Northumbria Community

[Click here](#) to view a youtube clip of Roy's reflection.

Every blessing,

Your YBA Team

