

Tyndale Thought for the Day

22nd May 2020



I'd like to share an experience I had twenty years ago. I was on a silent retreat at Buckfast Abbey. I didn't find it easy. I discovered silent meant silent, not just for periods during the day, but all day and every day. For a week I struggled with the lack of conversation, though there was one person to whom I could speak, a monk, my spiritual director. He gave me a scripture passage to read where Jesus asks his would-be disciples, "What are you looking for?" As I was pondering over these words, I went to pray in the chapel where there is a glorious stained-glass window depicting Jesus with outstretched arms and I realised what I was looking for was the renewal of my faith and the deepening of my commitment. As I looked at that face in the window I felt Jesus was saying to me, "Let go!" My response was that was easier said than done. I had been struggling with my ministry for years and at times it had been so hard – and the Jesus who looked down on me seemed so stern. Later, as I turned around to leave the chapel I found the image of Jesus reflected in the glass door. Here his face didn't appear stern at all. It was as if he was saying to me, "Yes, I know it's hard, but I've been behind you all the time." That was a tremendous reassurance. I had found what I was looking for – and so can all of us. At a time when we're struggling, we can take courage that the Jesus who was with us in the past is with us now and will be with us in the future – no matter how difficult that may be.

Peter Webb