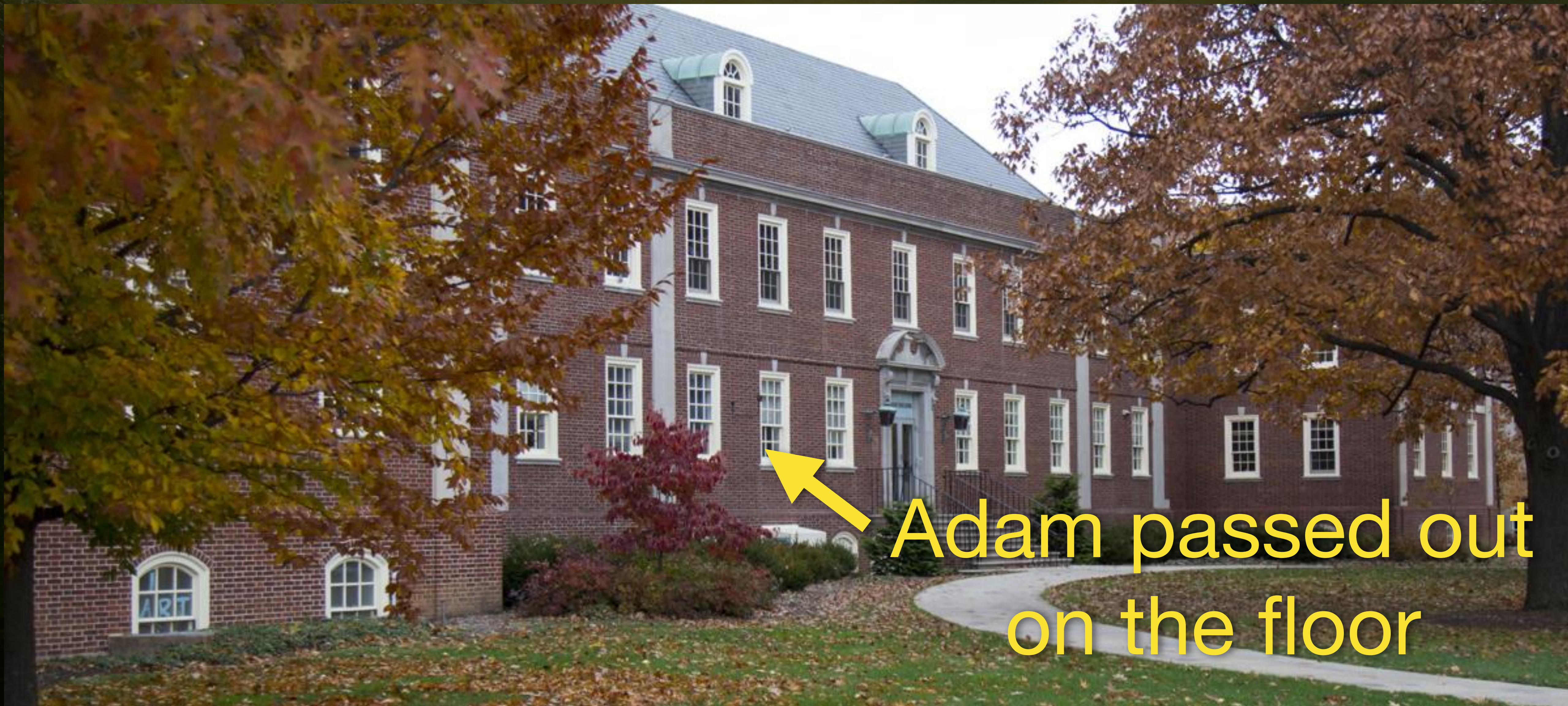


Encountering
GOD
in the Psalms

“RELIABLE AND GOOD” - PSALM 139





Adam passed out
on the floor

We are conditioned to HURRY, not to wait.

Time is money

Second place is the first loser

Buy now, pay later

Instant: oatmeal, breakfast, credit

God's people are a people of **WAITING**:

Awaiting the Messiah

400+ years of silence

Season of Advent

The return of Christ

So, why is waiting SO HARD?!

So, why is waiting SO HARD?!

When we slow down, when we dismantle our distractions or our productivity, we risk exposing the depth of our souls to ourselves, to others, and to God.

So, why is waiting SO HARD?!

What if I don't like what I see?

What if they don't like what they see?

What if God doesn't like what he sees?



Psalm 139

The Inescapable God by Mike Moyers

Psalm 139: An Examination Sandwich



v. 1 Lord, you have **examined** me.
You know me.

v. 23 **Examine** me, God! Look at my heart!
Put me to the test! Know my anxious thoughts!

v. 24 Look to see if there is any idolatrous way in me,
then lead me on the eternal path!

Psalm 139: An Examination Sandwich

Examine = *haqar*

haqar

*To test or search
to discover the reality*



Psalm 139: An Examination Sandwich



Examination

God's Reliable Presence

God's Good Creation

Examination

Lord, you have examined me.
You know me.

You know when I sit down and when I stand up.
Even from far away, you comprehend my plans.

You study my traveling and resting.
You are thoroughly familiar with all my ways.

Where could I go to get away...?

Where could I go to escape...?

If I went up...

If I went down...

...even there your hand would guide me

...even there you hold me tight

God's Presence is Reliable

What do you feel?

What do you notice?

What do you wonder?

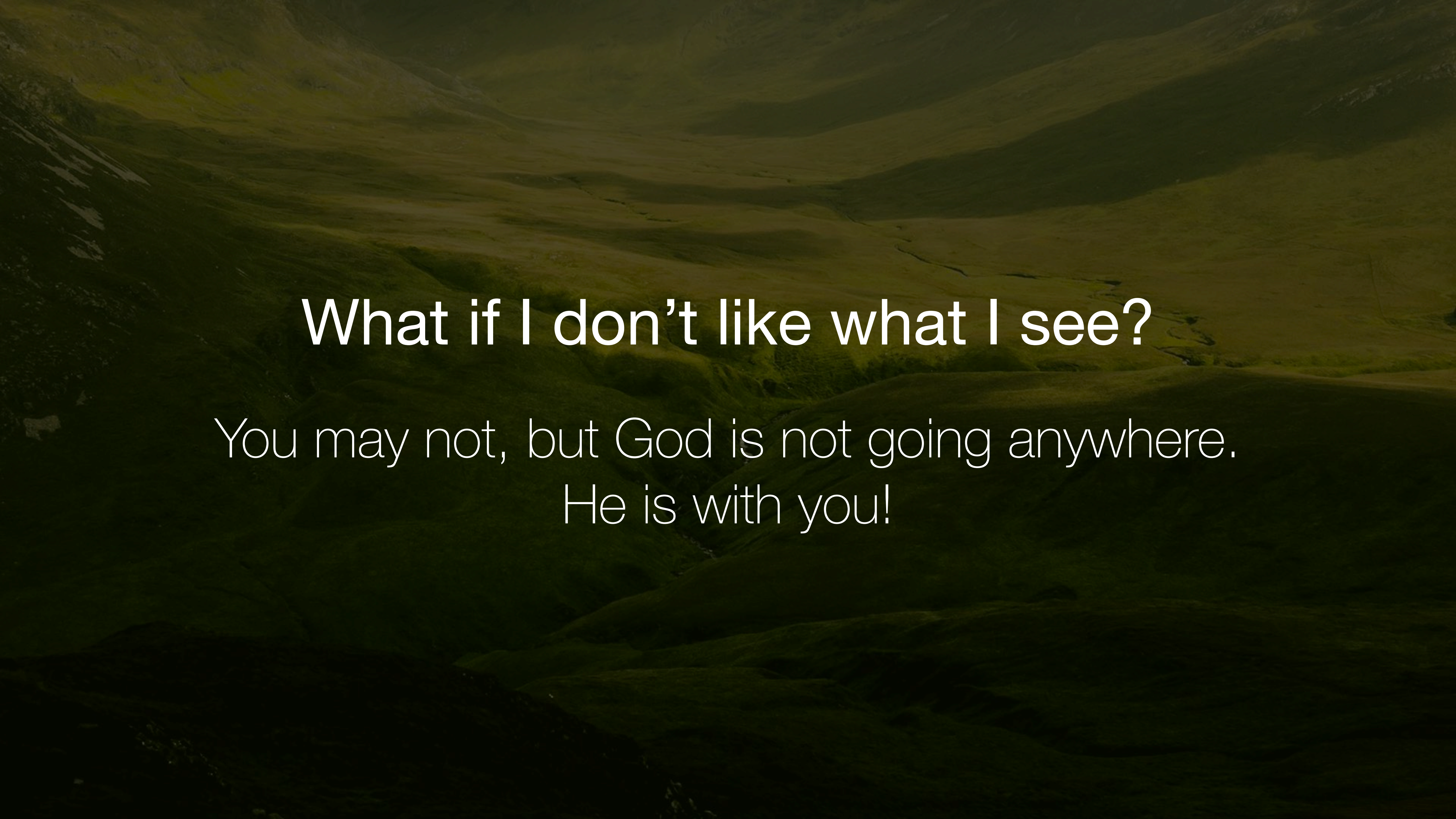
What do you want?



You are the one who created my innermost parts.
You knit me together...in my mother's womb.

I give thanks to you that I was marvelously set apart.
Your works are wonderful—I know that very well.

...on your scroll everyday was written
before any one of them had yet happened.



What if I don't like what I see?

You may not, but God is not going anywhere.
He is with you!



What if they don't like what they see?

They may not, but they are not your
keeper and restorer. God is!



What if God doesn't like what he sees?

He sees all of it, and he stays because he loves you and created you in his image, marvelously set apart.

God's Creation is Good

What do you feel?

What do you believe?

What do you notice?

What do you need?

Examine me, God! Look at my heart!
Put me to the test! Know my anxious thoughts!

Look to see if there is any idolatrous way in me,
then lead me on the eternal path!

“Many avoid the path of self-knowledge because they are afraid of being swallowed up in their own abysses. But Christians have confidence that Christ has lived through all the abysses of human life and that he goes with us when we dare to engage in sincere confrontation with ourselves. Because God loves us unconditionally—along with our dark sides—we don’t need to dodge ourselves. In light of this love the pain of self-knowledge can be at the same time the beginning of our healing.”

-Andreas Ebert



Some wisdom to take home...

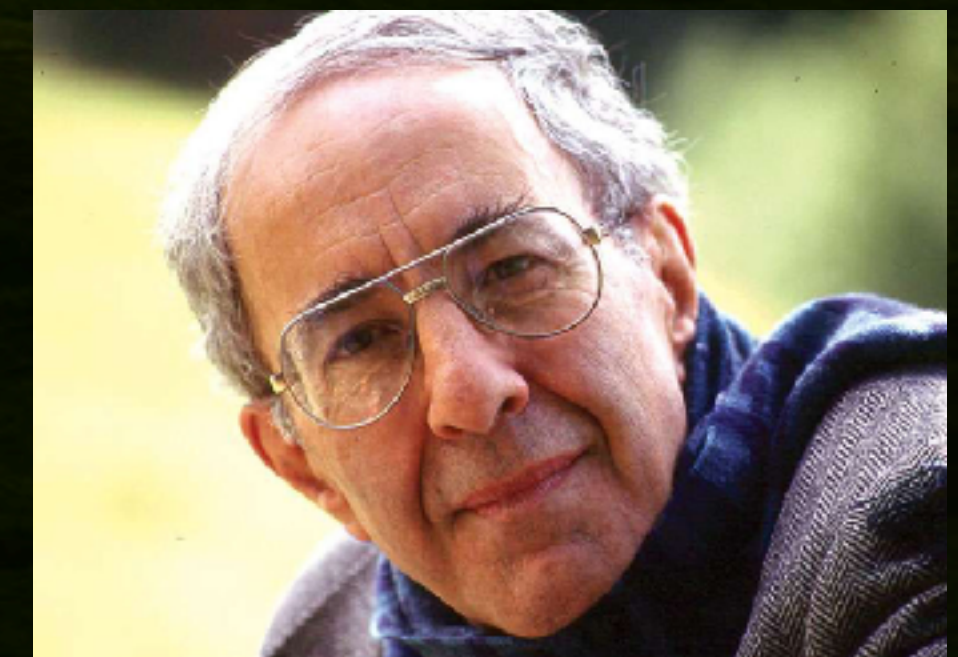
- 1) Pray informed by God's Word
- 2) Participate in a trusted community

Pray informed by God's Word

Let's invite God's examination. And as he speaks, let's pray and listen informed by who he says we are: continually in his Presence, from high to low, from side to side, from dark to light...and marvelously set apart as his good creation.

“In our utilitarian culture, where we suffer from a collective compulsion to do something practical, helpful, or useful, and where we feel compelled to make a contribution that can give us a sense of worth, contemplative prayer is a form of radical criticism. It is not useful or practical. It is simply to waste time for and with God. It cuts a hole in our busyness and reminds us and others that it is God and not we who creates and sustains the world.”

-Henri Nouwmen



Two are better than one because they have a good return for their hard work. If either should fall, one can pick up the other. But how miserable are those who fall and don't have a companion to help them up! Also, if two lie down together, they can stay warm. But how can anyone stay warm alone? Also, one can be overpowered, but two together can put up resistance. A three-ply cord doesn't easily snap.



Examination

God's Reliable Presence

God's Good Creation

Examination

God, what is your invitation to me today?