



ATTENTIVENESS TO GOD

Creating Space for Him

Genesis 28:10-22

Luke 10:38-42

SJSM Church

12 & 13 Oct 2024

ATTENTIVENESS

Struggle & Challenge

- Busy & fast-paced life
 - Stillness?
 - Time?
 - Fully present?



COME AWAY WITH ME
Contemplative Retreat @Lifesprings
13th to 15th January 2023
Retreat Director: Stanley Tay



come with me
by yourselves
to a quiet place
and get some rest.

mark 6:31



COME AWAY WITH ME
Contemplative Retreat @SDFC
3rd to 5th March 2023
Retreat Director: Stanley Tay



come with me
by yourselves
to a quiet place
and get some rest.

mark 6:31



COME AWAY WITH ME
Contemplative Retreat @Montfort
19th to 21st July 2024
Retreat Director: Stanley Tay



come with me
by yourselves
to a quiet place
and get some rest.

mark 6:31



COME AWAY WITH ME
Contemplative Retreat @OCC
28th to 30th July 2024
Retreat Director: Stanley Tay



come with me
by yourselves
to a quiet place
and get some rest.

mark 6:31



CONTEMPLATIVE RETREATS 2023-24

ATTENTIVENESS TO GOD

Creating Space for Him

Genesis 28:10-22

Luke 10:38-42

- **Recognising Our Inattentiveness**
- **Noticing God's Presence**
- **Creating Sacred Spaces**



RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

the invisible gorilla



And Other Ways Our Intuitions Deceive Us

Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons

RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Invisible Gorilla Test

- Study by D. Simons & C. Chabris

the invisible **gorilla**



And Other Ways Our Intuitions Deceive Us

Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons

RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Invisible Gorilla Test

- Study by D. Simons & C. Chabris
- Inattentional Blindness

the invisible **gorilla**



And Other Ways Our Intuitions Deceive Us

Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons

RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Spiritual Inattentiveness

- When we are so distracted by other things that we fail to notice the presence of God

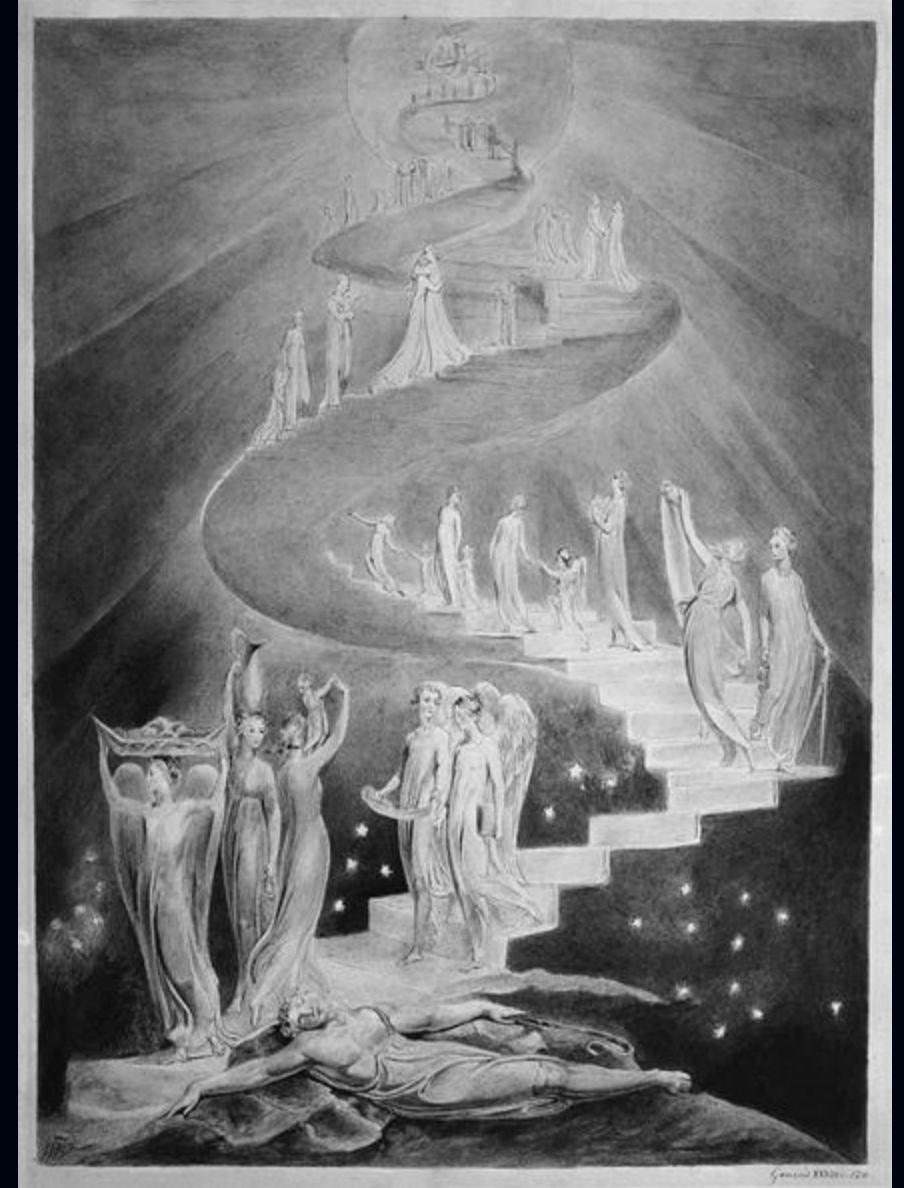


RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Spiritual Inattentiveness

- Jacob

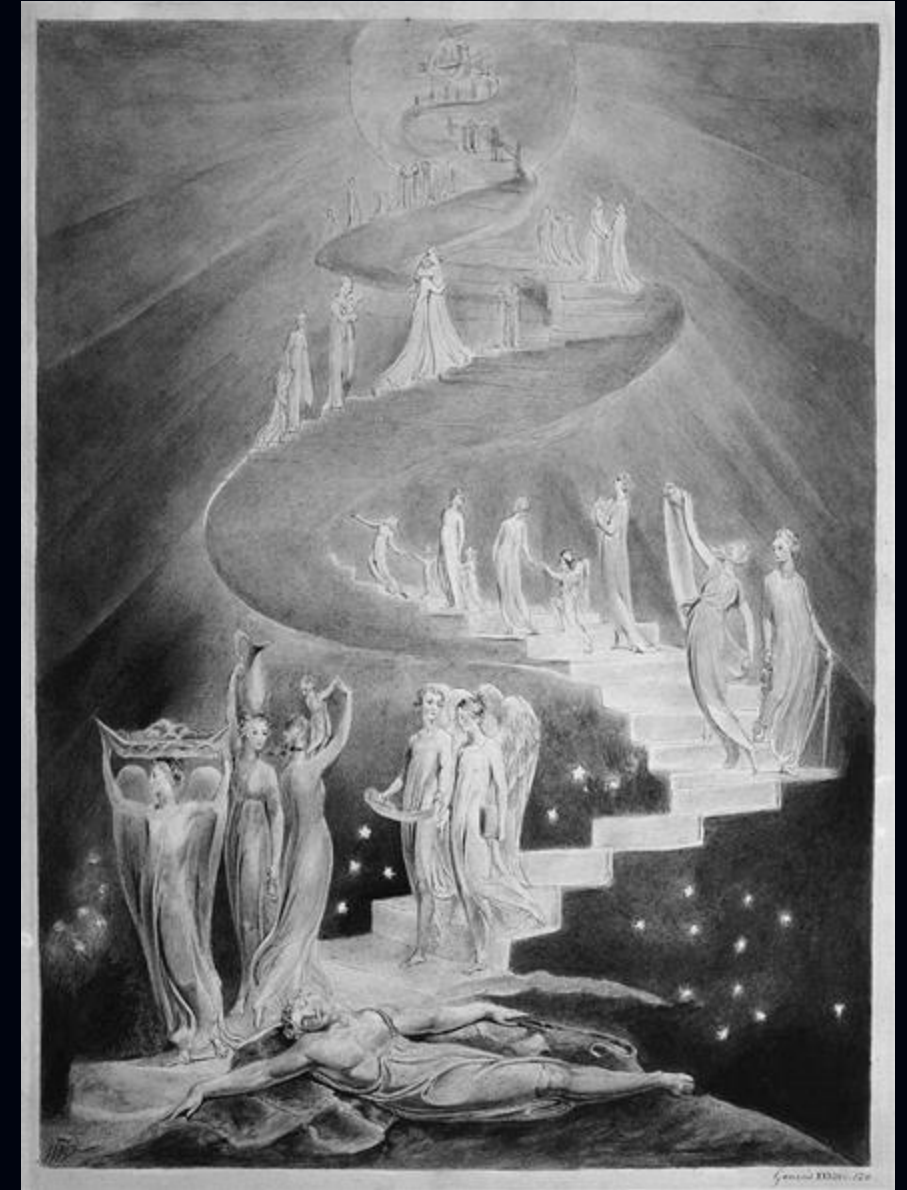
*“Surely the LORD is in this place,
and I did not know/realise it.”*
(Gen 28:16)



RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Spiritual Inattentiveness

- Jacob
 - Stolen Esau's blessing: Esau hated him & wanted to kill him (Gen 27:41)
 - Running for his life: stopped at Bethel on his way to Haran (Gen 28:10-11)



RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Spiritual Inattentiveness

- Jacob
 - At Bethel: feeling lonely, fearful, uncertain, apprehensive, etc.
 - God was with Jacob: but Jacob was pre-occupied and inattentive



Jacob was preoccupied with his own concerns... His mind and his emotions were absorbed by the conflict with his brother... The very word “pre-occupied” reminds us that where a space is occupied already, there is little room for anyone or anything else. **Jacob’s mind was crowded, and his heart congested; there was no space for God.** We have all experienced moments of self-absorption when it seems impossible to think about anything other than our particular concerns. Such self-absorption works against our knowing God more deeply.

Tony Horsfall



RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Spiritual Inattentiveness

- You & Me

What are the distractions that have kept you from being attentive to what God may be saying to you or to what He's doing in your life?



RECOGNISING OUR INATTENTIVENESS

Lord, You know it comes the very moment I wake up each morning. All my wishes, hopes and distractions rush at me like wild animals. Help me Lord, for each morning, to shove them all back. I want to listen to Your voice; I want to hear Your point of view. And I want to let Your larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in, all day long.

(Modified from CS Lewis)



NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

Attentiveness to God

- Jacob

*God was definitely in this place,
and yet I wasn't aware of His
presence, and somehow, I couldn't
see that He was here! (cf. Gen 28:16)*



NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

Attentiveness to God

- Jennifer (story by Margaret Silf)



Shortly before the end of the gathering, Jennifer shared this with us: “I have read this passage so often,” she said, “but until today I had never realised that it’s not just about Jacob, but also about me. I know that lonely place where Jacob spent the night. I know the stony ground and the hard pillow. But I also know those angels moving up and down the ladder to support me. It’s the story of the last few years of my life. But today I’ve come to recognise that **however stony the road may be, the Lord is in this place, and I never knew it, until now.**”



NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

Finding God in All Things

- St. Ignatius of Loyola



NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

Practise the seeking of God's presence in all things; in your conversations, your walks, in all that you see, taste, hear, understand, in all your actions; since His Divine Majesty is truly in all things, by His presence, power and essence.

St. Ignatius



NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

Finding God in All Things

- We are blind and oblivious
- We have eyes but cannot see
(cf. Matt 13:10-17)



NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

Finding God in All Things

- That we may become
“Noticers” & “Beholders”
- To see Him in our daily
activities & interactions with
others



NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

Finding God in All Things

- Behold Him in His creations
- Psalm 8





*When I look at your heavens,
the work of your fingers,*

***the moon and the stars,
which you have
set in place,***

*what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?*

PSALM 8:3-4

CREATING SACRED SPACES

Spiritual Disciplines/Practices

- Space for God



CREATING SACRED SPACES

Spiritual Disciplines/Practices

- Space for God
 - Tools through which we create a sacred space for communing with God
 - Fully present to God & undivided attention for Him
 - For the Spirit's work in us



CREATING SACRED SPACES

Spiritual Disciplines/Practices

- Contemplative Disciplines
 - Mary sitting at Jesus' feet, listening to Him & gazing at Him
 - Giving God our loving attention (Francis de Sales)



CREATING SACRED SPACES

Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving... Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion..."

Luke 10:38-42



CREATING SACRED SPACES

Mary & Martha

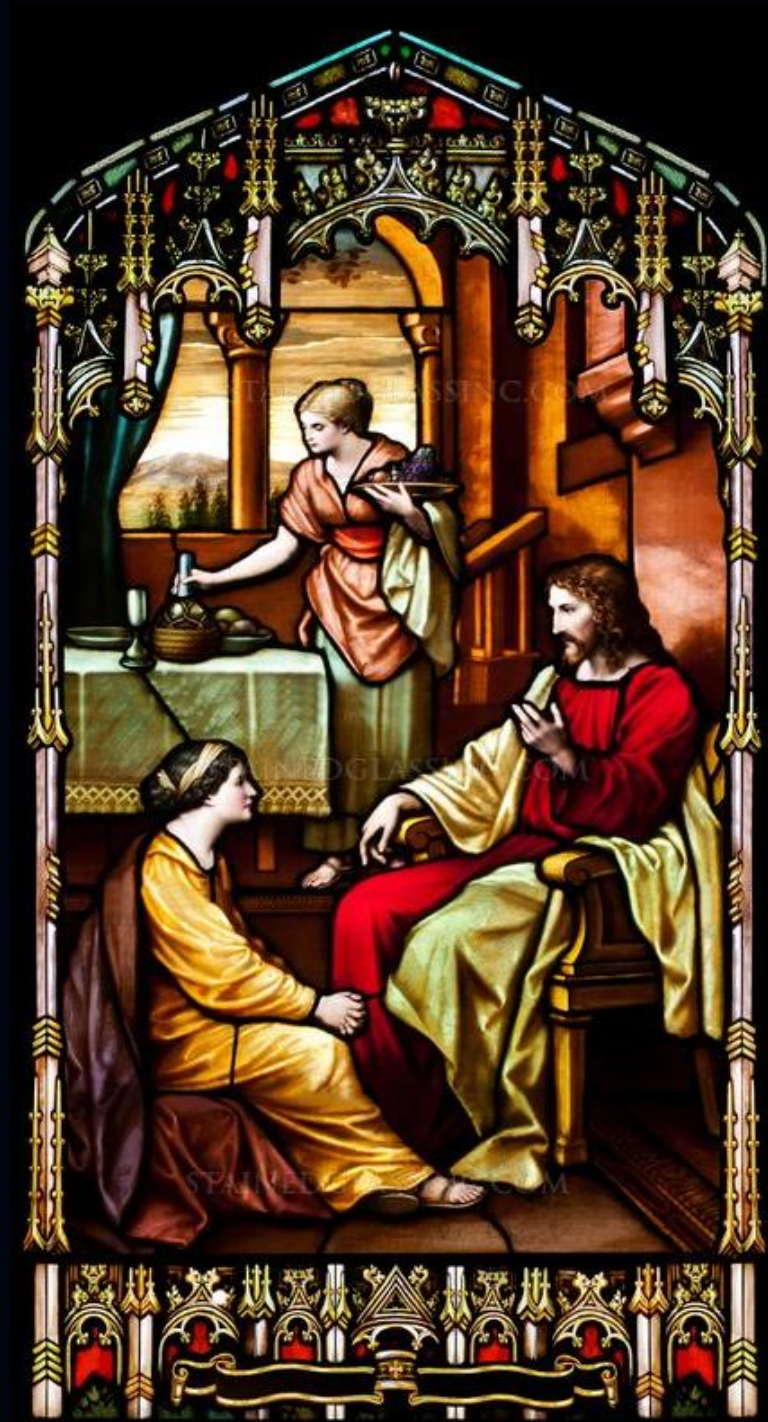
- Don't be like Martha, be like Mary??
- Not a call to enter the monastery



CREATING SACRED SPACES

Mary & Martha

- Don't become so busy and engrossed that you neglect creating a sacred space for Jesus!
- Don't forget to take some time to sit in His presence and give Him your loving attention!



There are times when we need to be busy because life has to carry on, and there are times when we need to simply be, because it is in the quiet of the 'being' that we find the inner resources for all our 'doing'. Jesus was certainly a man of action, but He drew His strength from those quiet withdrawals to be with God in solitude and prayer. Our inner Martha has a loud, insistent voice, forever prodding us into action [all the time]. Our inner Mary [however] sits quietly and listens.

Margaret Silf



CREATING SACRED SPACES

Practise Loving Contemplation

- 2 Stories
 - John Vianney & villager
 - Mother Teresa

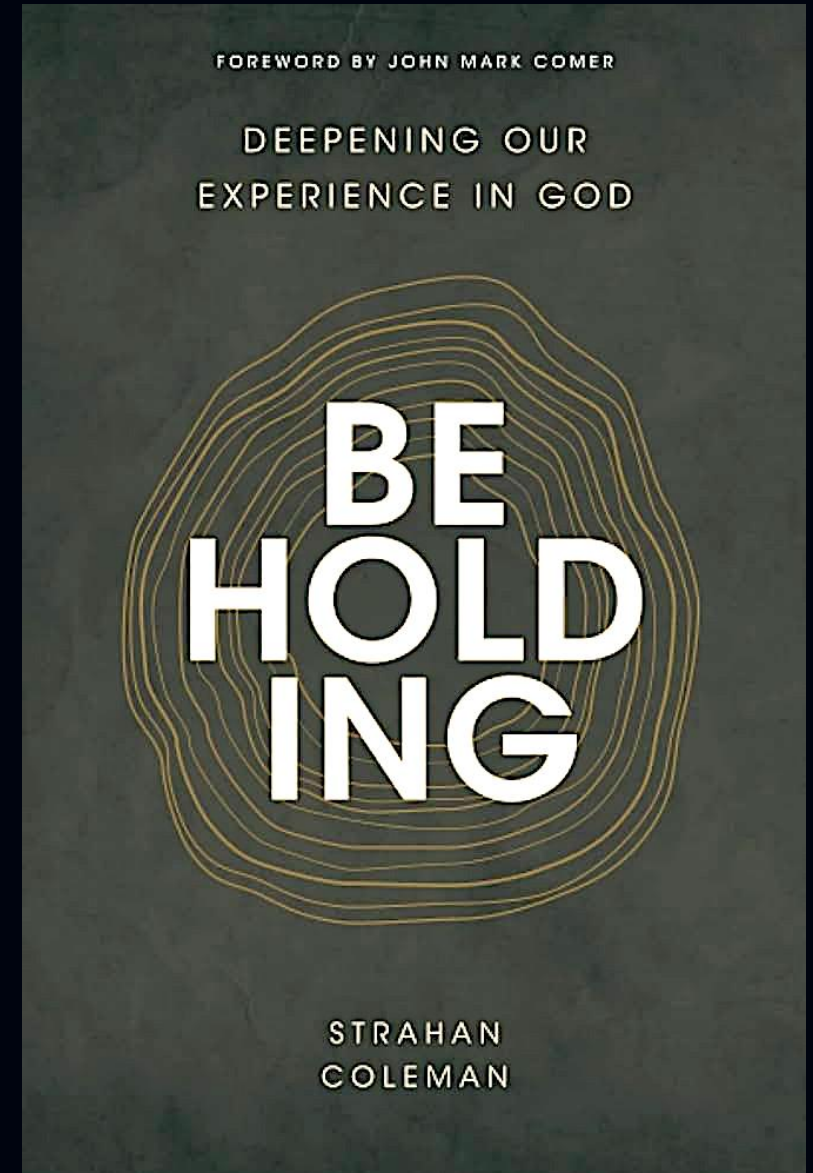


CREATING SACRED SPACES

Practise Loving Contemplation

*Beholding [or contemplation] is our creating space daily to awaken our awareness to His Presence and to invite His gaze to be seen by ours. **It's us, gazing at God, gazing at us.***

Strahan Coleman



HIS INVITATION

Come commune with Me
Come into this sacred space
And just sit here with Me
and just be still before Me

Enjoy My presence
And enjoy our friendship
Let's talk together face to face
And let's share heart to heart



HIS INVITATION

Lift up your face
And let Me look at you
Even as I invite you
To gaze upon My face

Know that I am listening to you
My child, even as I invite you
To hear My voice whispering to you
All that is in My heart



OUR RESPONSE

I want to sit at Your feet
Drink from the cup in Your hand
Lay back against You and breathe
Feel Your heartbeat

This love is so deep
It's more than I can stand
I melt in Your peace
It's overwhelming

There's nothing like Your Presence

