

“A Meditation - Meeting Jesus on The Beach”

Now that the Coronavirus restrictions have shut all the coastal car parks, few of us can go to the beach. But we can go to a beach in our imagination with a faith-centred meditation.

Begin by becoming aware of your breathing. Feel the touch of the air flowing into your nose or mouth.... How does the air feel as it flows into your lungs?.... Notice how your lungs feel getting larger as they fill with air... and then how they feel getting smaller as the air is gently breathed away. Now let your breathing help you to slow down, by taking a little longer to breathe out..... Feel your breathing slowing down. Be aware of a sense of peace as the river of life gently flows through you.

Now, in your imagination, leave the room where you are and go on a journey to a deserted beach. It may be a long journey to a beach far away or a short one to a beach nearby.

Now, here you are at the beach, and you find you're the only person here. The day is sunny and warm, with very little wind. You stand looking around you, and take in all the main features of this lovely beach. Notice what details make this such a good place to be. As you stand looking, listen to the sounds of your beach. Which sounds are coming to you most clearly?

You walk down to the water's edge.... As you walk, you feel the rough sand, stones or pebbles under your feet, the warmth of the sun on your back, and the gentle breeze keeping your skin cool. You are now at the water's edge. You sit down on the smooth sand, close to where the little waves are breaking on the shore. You feel peaceful and comfortable. Look around you, and notice again the sights, sounds and smells that make this such a good place to be.

Sitting there at the water's edge, you look down, and with one finger you write your name in the sand by the water's edge.... Notice how it feels shaping each letter, and then how your name looks once it's written in the sand.

A wave that's a little bigger than the others gently runs up the sand and covers over your name. As the water runs back, you see your name dissolving into the sand. This makes you feel good, because it's as if this lovely place has taken your name into itself, so that you and this place are in perfect harmony.

You decide to stay here for a while.... enjoying the sights and sounds.... and feeling at one with everything around you. Notice the thoughts and feelings this place has to give you.

You look up.... and see a figure walking along the beach towards you. You realise that it's Jesus. You get up and go to meet him. You give each other a warm greeting. You agree to walk together for a while along the beach.

It's so good to be together in this way. Maybe there are things you want to say to Jesus or something you want to ask him... and you can do this now as you walk together.... What does he say to you in reply? Or maybe all you want to do is to spend this lovely time together in silence, enjoying each other's company without words.

Now you know it's time for you to return.... You take a few moments to say your farewells. Jesus says he has something to give you. He reaches into a pocket and gives you a wrapped gift. He tells you to go back to the place where you first sat on the sand and open it there. What do you say to Jesus? ... What does He say to you?

As Jesus continues along the beach, you make your way back to the place where you wrote your name in the sand. You sit down and open the gift Jesus gave you. What is it? Do you understand why he gave it to you? You thank God for this meeting with Jesus and what it means to you.

Then, you walk back up the beach to the place where you first arrived. You take a last look around you at your beach, thanking God for all it has given you and storing away all the details in your memory, so that you can come back here whenever you wish.

Now, you're beginning to make your journey to come back.... It may be a long journey or it may be a short one.... but you're making your way back now.

Here you are once again, back in this room, sitting in this chair. Begin to take more control of your body again; perhaps by feeling your toes moving inside your shoes, and letting your fingers begin to move. Sit a bit taller in your chair.... And you may like to breathe a little more deeply to refresh your lungs.... Only when you feel quite ready, become aware again of everything around you.

You might like to write down your experience on the beach. What it meant for you to meet Jesus there and to receive the gift He gave you.