



### How do I talk to God?

Recently I was reading one of the meditations of Anthony De Mello. He has a lovely story of a way we might talk to Jesus. He describes a man who was dying, and who had placed by his bedside a chair. When Tony asked him what the chair was for, he said that he imagined Jesus sitting there being with him, watching him and talking to him. Some days later the man's daughter called to say he had died. She said he had died while alone, but the family had been struck by two things when they found him, he had looked very peaceful, and he was lying with his head resting on the chair beside the bed.

This story really appeals to my own sense of how much God desires that we just spend time with him. Sometimes the people who come to see me and talk about their prayer lives are concerned about if they are praying the right way or doing it properly, as though prayer were an exercise to be marked. My own experience is that we are relational beings. We are created to love and be loved. It is in our ability to relate that we most reflect God, and God's desire is that we relate to him.

Below is an exercise you might like to try, of imagining yourself being with Jesus. At first you may want to spend only 5 to 10 mins doing this, but if you feel like it you could sit for up to an hour just being with Jesus. Read each of the questions slowly, allow yourself time to ponder them. If one question seems more helpful than the others, then stay with that question. (It may help the exercise to put an empty chair next to you and imagine Jesus sitting in it.)

Imagine sitting with Jesus...

Imagine him looking at you....

What is the expression in his eyes?...

Notice how you feel as he looks at you? ....

What do you imagine he feels as he looks at you?....

Is there anything you want to say to him, or ask him?....

Is there anything he wants to say to you?...

Imagine talking to him about what is going on in your life at the moment, what you are thinking about, worrying about, happy about...

Listen as he responds to you...

Spend time resting in his gaze.

At the end of the exercise, notice how you are feeling and contrast that with how you were feeling when you began. You may find it helpful to journal a few points about how you found this time of prayer.