

# HOW TO BE ALIVE

## Embracing Life

*God speaks to us in the depths of our being, not off the top of our heads. The depths of ourselves are not in our reasoning and ideas. If we are to find God, we must learn to listen to those depths, to the emotions and feelings which we experience in prayer and out of it, and use our minds and intelligence to help us understand what those emotions and feelings are saying to us.*

Gerard Hughes

*God is not so much interested in whether we are religious or not, but whether we are alive.*

John Taylor

“Finding God in all things” means first of all nourishing your capacity to notice what is going on in your life at present.

Noticing often requires courage- so Jesus says to us “Do not be afraid”.

The underlying reality is that there is “un-reconciled pain and unexhausted compassion, the history of men and women and the history of God with us”. (Rowan Williams)

We are invited to honour our everyday experience as the place of encounter with our God. Nothing we experience is alien to our God- not even our worst moment.

**Try and carve out a small block of time in your day and reflect on your life and your experience – with its joys and sorrows, its knowing and unknowing, its pain and its contradictions.**

**Listen to your reality of doubt, pain, confusion and at the same time stay with these words of Julian of Norwich:**

***God did not say: “You will not be troubled” or “You will not have bitter labour” or “You will have no discomfort”, but “You will not be overcome”. God wills that we pay attention to this truth and that we may be ever strong in faithful trust, in well-being and woe.***

**As you get in touch with your reality - remembering that if you want God to be real you must be real as well - though it will often feel like a poor place.**

**Yet - as Jesus shows us - it is the place of grace, love, and compassion.**

*My fall into inconsistency was nothing but the revelation of what I am. I am thrown into contradiction: to realize it is mercy, to accept it is love, to help others do the same is compassion.*

Thomas Merton

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*Knowledge of God without knowledge of our own poverty makes for pride.  
Knowledge of our own poverty without knowledge of God makes for despair.  
Knowledge of Jesus Christ lets us be present both to God and to our own poverty.*  
Blaise Pascal

***Love is the epiphany of God in our poverty.***  
Thomas Merton