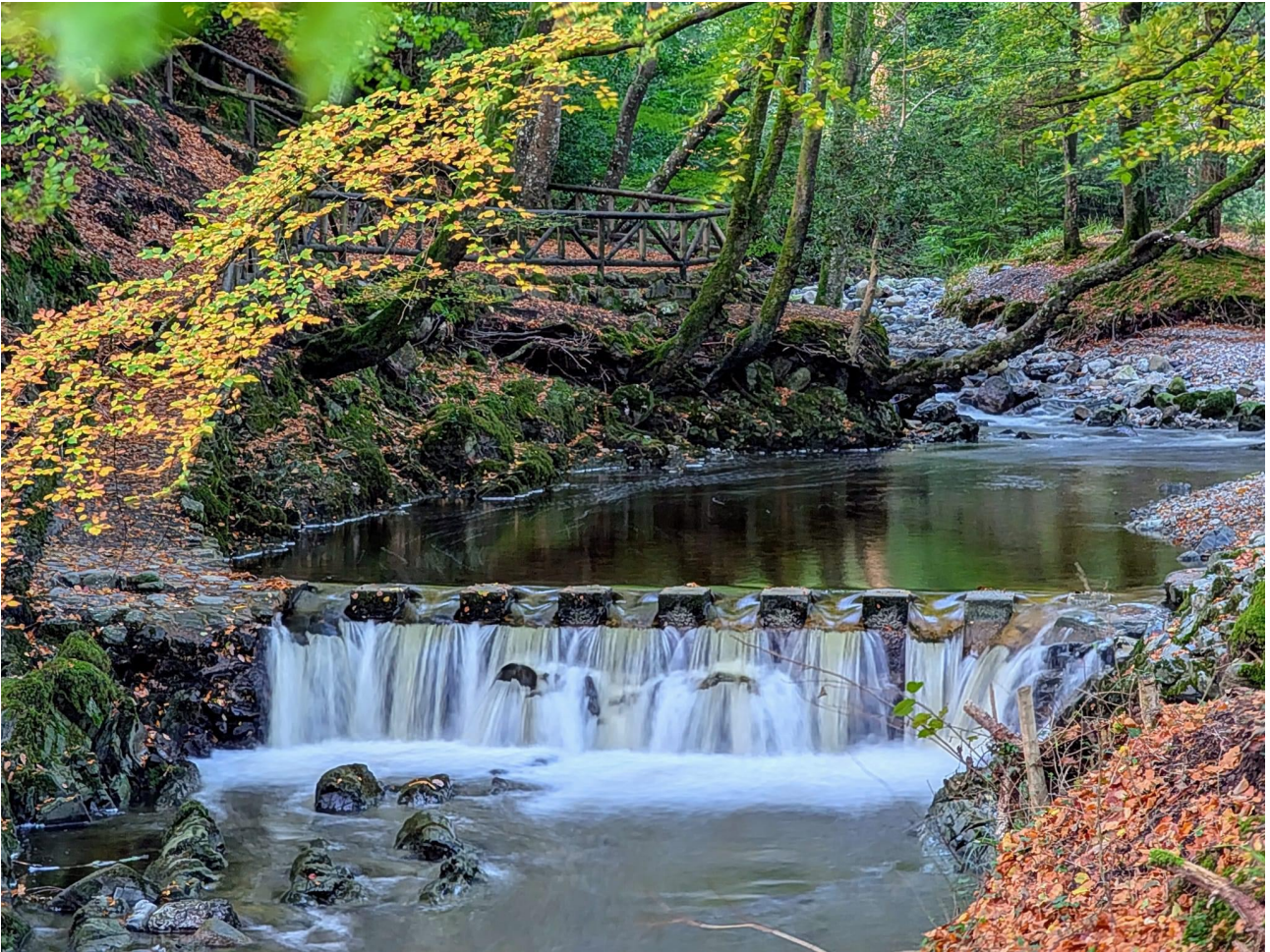


# Speaking to the soul



## Time with God

After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone.  
Matthew 14:23

Finally, at the end of an exhausting day that had seen more than 5,000 people miraculously fed, Jesus had time to be alone with his Father. There's no doubt that he had planned for this to have happened some hours earlier but now, at last, the time had come. It's interesting to see how important such times were for Jesus. Because he was the perfect Son of God one might have thought that he didn't need such times, but clearly these moments of intimacy were crucial for him.

If Jesus needed to spend time alone with his Father, clearly we do as well. It's good to be busy doing God's work, and enriching to spend time in fellowship with his people, but we all need to have time when we are alone with God. That relationship will only develop if we spend time with him. It's a principle that is true of all relationships. There is no way in which a relationship can be strong and resilient unless it is given time. I like the expression 'quality time', which refers to unhurried time. Time that is set apart for the relationship and which is protected from all distractions.

I don't believe that there should be rules as to what this time should look like for us. Some people set apart time at the beginning or end of the day. I have heard many people say that their time alone with God is when they are walking the dog. Others have a special place in their home where they sit in a particular chair to meditate on the Bible and listen to God. What matters is not the time or place, but that we set aside times to nourish our relationship with God. Times to stand back from life and to hear what he has to say. However busy we are, those times need to be guarded carefully if we are to be the people that God wants us to be.

## **QUESTION**

When do you find the time to be alone with God?

## **PRAYER**

Loving Father, help me to guard my time with you, however busy life may be, so that my relationship with you is constantly growing stronger. Amen