

Suggestions for Further Reflection and Action

Personally

If you are in a tough place at the moment take a little time to pray, being honest with God as to what you are thinking and feeling. Pray that as you come to consider the holy habits they may be a renewed means of grace for you and that you will see how these ancient practices can be a source of blessing for you afresh.

If life is good at the moment pray for those who are suffering or struggling. Does the Spirit bring a particular person to mind? If so, what could you do practically this week to help, encourage or support them?

Locally

How might your church partner with or support those who are suffering in your local community? Is there a hospice or refugee centre or victim support group that you could partner with or offer hospitality to?

What space is there in your gatherings for worship or fellowship to bring the needs of those who suffer to God? How balanced are your choices of songs? Are they all praise or worship or are there times of lament too? In what ways might the broken bread of Holy Communion be offered as a prayer for those who suffer and how could it be taken as a gift to them?

Globally

Individually or collectively get involved with an organisation which campaigns on behalf of those who suffer cruelty, persecution or injustice. Open Doors and Amnesty International are two well-known first-class examples but there are many others.

Seek out and befriend those who have fled their own countries as a result of violent suffering and persecution.

A Biblical Passage to Reflect On

- Matthew 16:24–26

What do you notice in this passage?

What will you do or change in the light of what you have read and noticed?