Dwelling in the Word

* Listen to the passage read in silence, asking how the Holy Spirit may be speaking to you through it, where your mind and heart alight on a specific phrase or word or what question this raises for you.
* Find a person in the group you do not know or know less well, a ‘reasonably friendly-looking stranger’.
* Listen to that person as he or she tells you what they heard in the passage. They may mention something they’d never heard before, something odd or something comforting, or something about which they’d like to ask a Bible scholar. Then share with them what arose for you. Remember this is not a general conversation but a careful listening to one another.
* Listen well, because your job will be to report to the rest of the group (or in 4’s) what your partner has said, not what you yourself said. Some people take notes to help them focus and remember.

**A prayer as we Dwell in the Word**

Loving God,

Though our destination is not yet clear,

May we trust in Your graceful promises;

Though we are uncertain of ourselves,

May we be rooted in Your loving regard;

Though our attention is inclined to wander,

May we hear the things You are saying;

Though we often neglect Your influence,

May we be convicted of Your power to change,

In Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Romans 12**

12I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, 5so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. 6We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; 8the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

9 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; 10love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. 11Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. 13Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. 17Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 18If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ 20No, ‘if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.’ 21Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.