

Thought for the week: Are you listening?

Most of us enjoy our home comforts, our TV shows and our hobbies. Recent research showed that an average person in the UK watches four hours a day of TV and video content (including videos on a phone or computer). Advertisers compete to place their adverts during the most-watched TV shows (30 seconds during *Coronation Street* can cost around £350,000) because they know that this is where our attention is focused.

Jacob has an intense encounter with God at the point where he has left his home and is travelling with next to nothing. He fears for his life and is unsure what the future holds – he needs to hear from God. Many of us who come to church express a desire to hear from God, but perhaps we don't need him to speak to us in the way Jacob did. When we are comfortable and our attention is elsewhere, it can be difficult to be aware of God. Perhaps, if we were to fast from some of our entertainment, turning off our TV and phone for a while, we might be more likely to hear God's voice. Suppose we deliberately avoid distracting ourselves from the situations that play on our minds. Might we be more open to hearing God reminding us of his promises and directing us in where we should go next?

Why not choose an evening this week and deliberately fast from television, web browsing and phone scrolling? Instead, you could read some Bible verses or use a spiritual practice such as the examen. Tell God what you are thinking about and take time to write down the thoughts that come to mind in the space that follows. You could also take paper and pen to bed and write down any dreams that speak into your prayers as you wake up. God meets us when we seek him.