

Being Human study guide



SESSION TWO

This is session two of Being Human. We are using the being human lens to help us explore the question: what does it mean to be human? We begin with the idea of the significance of human life – you matter.

AIMS

- To recognise how our culture helps form or deform our sense of significance.
- To realise that our significance comes from God whose image we bear, who knows us and invites us to know Him too.
- To respond by affirming others' significance and seeing it can be a way of talking to them about Jesus and the life He invites us to live with Him.

ICEBREAKER | 5 MINS

Q. Would you rather be rich, powerful, famous or good-looking? Why?

FOLLOW-UP | 5 MINS

Discuss as a group any questions or further thoughts that have arisen following last week's session. Discuss how you found doing the activation points throughout the week. What worked, what didn't go well and why?

WATCH | 15 MINS

Watch: Being Human: Significance

While watching this session, take notes, and if you find it helpful, consider the hits and the misses of the film (hits are what captures your imagination, gets you thinking or resonates as true, misses are what you don't understand, didn't agree with or didn't connect with you).

DISCUSSION | 20 MINS

Jo starts this video by saying, "you matter". Peter then goes on to explain how we're all searching for significance and how our underlying cultural stories impact this search. The Jenga tower is introduced and he names the bottom section of the tower secularism.

- How would you explain the secular story?
- Do you encounter doubt or scepticism much in your life?
- Can you think of any stories or examples of the secular story in the culture around you?

Peter explains that when we don't have God as our source of significance, we turn inward towards ourselves or outward to the affirmation of others to find our sense of significance. Jo then introduces two key cultural storylines. First, the "earn it" storyline, where our significance is based on achievement or the approval of others and second, the "be it" storyline, where what's important is how I feel, think about or define myself.

- How do you feel about the statement "you matter"? Is that something that you find challenging or easy to accept?
- Do you encounter the "earn it" or "be it" storyline most often with your friends, family or other relationships?

Jo and Peter then looked at Jesus, who at first glance didn't appear all that impressive or significant, but who lived the most significant and impactful life in all human history. By looking at Jesus we see what it is to live a truly, fully human life.

- What about the way Jesus lived and related to the Father challenges you when thinking about what it means to be significant?
- What difference do you think it would make if everybody knew that God knows them utterly and declares they are significant because they matter to Him?

BIBLE REFLECTION | 15 MINS

The video ends with a reading from Psalm 139. Read Psalm 139:1–6 and 13–18 together.

- What does the passage tell you about God and what it means to be human?
- King David, who wrote this Psalm, had plenty of ups and downs in his life. He committed both murder and adultery, but David did know what it was to be deeply and personally known by God. Does that change how you think about this Psalm?
- How do you reflect on your own significance as you reflect on the Psalmist's words?

PRAYER | 10 MINS

To start your prayer time, read this prayer aloud together and use it to lead into a time of prayer.

Abba, dear Father,
We thank you that we have been adopted into your
family.
We thank you that we are "in Christ".
We thank you for the communities you have placed us in.
We pray for opportunities to say "you matter" to others.
To call out their significance.
To invite them into a journey of relationship with you.
We thank you that we matter.
Because of you – O Lord, our God, how majestic is your name.

ACTIVATION | 5 MINS

How could the ideas you've explored today impact your life this week? Why not commit to putting into practice an idea or a habit that helps you live out and share the truth that you are an image-bearer of God?

Here are some suggestions to get you started; pick one or come up with your own.

- Reflect – Make Psalm 139 your meditation passage this week. As you recite and spend time reflecting on its words this week, consider what it reveals about who God is and who we are to Him.
- Respond – Many of our cultural stories are concerned with what we've earned or accomplished, but gratitude helps challenge this storyline. At the end of each day, write a list of ten things that you're thankful for and thank God for them.
- Project – Ask God for opportunities to remind someone of their significance this week, and then go for it! This could be done in many ways; a brief conversation with a stranger, writing a letter to a friend, praying for someone who's never been prayed for. How many ways can you tell people that they matter this week?