

# Being Human study guide



## SESSION FOUR

Session four of Being Human is all about presence. To be human is to be embodied in a particular time and place – being here now matters.

## AIMS

- To recognise that our postmodern culture deconstructs and destabilises by claiming that truth is unknowable.
- To reflect on being human as being embodied in a particular time and place, and that the people and places that have formed us matter.
- To respond to Jesus who is fully present with us and invites us to be present in and to the world around us.

## ICEBREAKER | 5 MINS

Q. Where do you feel most at home?

## 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: Presence**

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

The video starts with Jo and Peter talking about how the time, place and culture we find ourselves in is significant.

- Where were you raised and what are some of the different places and cultures that have shaped you?
- Which generation are you a part of and how do you think that affects how you live compared to people of different generations?

The Jenga blocks are back and this time we are looking at the idea of postmodernism which argues that you can't get to truth except via your own perspective. So, truth becomes subjective and personal.

- Where do you see the postmodern storyline outworked around you? Do you have any specific stories of this?
- What impact does postmodernism have on society and our lives?

Jo then explains how God has come as near as he possibly can – fully God, fully human, fully present. There is a physicality to the gospels. Jesus is the new humanity that we are invited to join. He invites us to experience eternal life now with transformed imaginations now and transformed bodies in the new creation.

- What were the specific historical, cultural, geographical, economic and political circumstances of Jesus' life on earth? Why do they matter?
- How do you experience Jesus' invitation to experience eternal life now?

## **BIBLE REFLECTION | 15 MINS**

Read Psalm 27 together.

- Why does God being near help us when we feel afraid?
- When have you experienced the nearness or closeness of God's presence before?
- What gets in the way of wanting to be near God?
- When has God felt distant? How did that affect your relationship with Him?

## **PRAYER | 10 MINS**

Choose a verse each from Psalm 27 to meditate on in silence for a few minutes. Then pray and ask God to show you when, where and who you can be more present with and then pray for each other.

## **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.

- Act – Digital devices are very good at getting our attention so we must be intentional in guarding and creating healthy time free from distractions and temptations. This week practise digital abstinence; choose specific times each day to intentionally disengage with screens, or even try going a whole day without screens. While doing this, think through how you can be present in the relationships around you.

- Reflect – Use the Examen as a way of reflecting on your day, focusing on memories of the day as a way of recognising God’s presence. At the end of each day this week choose a list of questions to ask yourself. Try the following or create your own.

- o Where did you know God’s presence today?
- o When did you feel distant from God today?
- o When did you feel most loved?
- o When did you show love to someone?
- o When did you feel the most alive?
- o When did you feel the most drained?

Use the questions as a prayer starter to discuss your day with God.

- Remember – Choose a verse from Psalm 27 to be your memory verse for the week. As you recite and remember it throughout the week, consider what this reveals about who God is and how we are invited to carry His presence out into the world.