

# DISCUSSING THE BIBLE READINGS

**After the Bible reading, you might sense people would like to discuss it. If that's the case, you may want to include or adapt some of the questions below.**

## Bible Talk

- If the story happened today, what would it look like?
- What is it showing or telling me?
- Could it make a difference to my life? How?
- In the next session: Did it make a difference? How?

**Note:** If time is short, you could dwell in the same passage over four sessions and discuss one question each time.

## Bite, Chew, Savour and Digest

This is based on lectio divina, a traditional Christian practice of scripture reading:

- What word, phrase or image in the story are you most drawn to today? (Bite)
- As you stay with your particular word, image, or phrase, what else does it bring to mind? (Chew)
- Prayerfully wonder: why are you drawn to it? (Savour)
- How could it make a difference to your life? (Digest)

## Deep Talk

- What do you like best about the story?
- Where are you in the story?
- What would you like to change in the story?

## Kingdom questions

- What's the passage saying that would make life more God-like?
- Where can we see signs of this God-like living around us?
- What could we do individually or as a group to increase this?
- In the next session: What have we done and what were the results?

## Difficult questions

What if someone asks a difficult question? You don't have to answer! If it's a factual question, suggest the group Google it.

If the question is about a matter of opinion, ask the group:

"From what you know about Jesus so far, what do you think he would say?"

Don't worry if they get the "wrong" answer. Our place in eternity does not depend on right answers.

For 1,800 years the church got the wrong answer about slavery. But that doesn't mean St Augustine, Martin Luther and other heroes of the faith won't be in heaven.

We're saved by faith, not by right answers.

So don't worry about the answers you hear. Focus on the priority, which is to help people learn the most important spiritual practice of all – the habit of relating their thoughts to Jesus.

Not answering questions is an important principle. Jesus asked 183 questions but gave straight answers to just eight! He left room for the Spirit and empowered the other person.

Don't criticise people's responses. Make "encouragement" your motto! (1 Thessalonians 5.14).

## Handling disagreement

Worried that people will disagree with each other (and with you)?

If the disagreement becomes heated, remind the group that the church is full of disagreements. Indeed, it could be said that the church is 2000 years of argument!

Ask, "If God was listening to us, what might he say?" Invite people to be quiet and then take turns to respond if they wish.

Next, suggest another silence. Ask where people saw Godly love in each other's contributions. Was it the expression on someone's face? A person leaning forward to listen? A tone of voice? What was actually said?

Invite people to share their observations, and then move on.