

- 6 *Hebrews 3 (as well as the 'activity')*
The author urges us to fix our thoughts on Jesus (v.1).
What are the things that distract you most from doing this?
- 7 *Hebrews 7*
According to the author of this letter, how exactly is Jesus qualified to be seen as the high priest?
Because of this identity, the argument continues, Jesus can make atonement for sins, and do so permanently.
Does understanding this help you believe more fully that your sins really can be forgiven? Permanently?
- 8 *Hebrews 10*
Has Jesus' death on the cross changed the nature of sin from being a crime against law to a crime against love?
Might this perspective help you to resist temptation?
- 9 *Hebrews 11*
The chapter catalogues some of the great heroes of faith.
From what you've read so far in SACRED, if you were to choose one biblical 'hero' from the Old Testament who has especially inspired you, and one from the New, (apart from Jesus himself), who would you choose and why?
- 10 *Psalms 143*
David's prayer incorporates all four aspects of the 'ACTS' framework for intercession. Is this a pattern you find helpful for your own prayers?

SACRED

Group Resources

Month 37

Closing

*Reflect on the things you've shared, and pray for God's help in addressing any specific matters that have arisen for you personally.
Close with the Lord's Prayer.*

Opening Prayer

While faith is with me, I am blest;
it turns my darkest night to day;
But, while I clasp it to my breast,
I often feel it slide away.

What shall I do if all my love,
my hopes, my toil, are cast away?
And if there be no God above
to hear and bless me when I pray?

Oh, help me, God! For thou alone
canst my distracted soul relieve.
Forsake it not: it is thine own,
though weak, yet longing to believe.

(Anne Bronte, 1820-1849)

General Question

- 1 Hebrews was the last of the New Testament letters you will read as part of the SACRED scheme. What have you found most helpful about this genre of literature within the Bible?
- 2 What has been your highlight of this month's readings?

Activity

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (*Hebrews 12:2*). In this month's activity, let's seek to do just that. Obtain a small collection of orthodox gospel 'icons' that portray Christ (perhaps some members of the group might already have a print of one, or one that's been mounted on wood or board.)

Light a candle, and allow 5 minutes to quietly fix your eyes on Jesus. Then, blow out the candle, and simply move on to the 'further ideas'.

Further Ideas

Once again, you shouldn't aim to cover all these questions but instead spend time on just some of them as the group decides.

- 1 *2 Chronicles 31*
The people bring their gifts in abundance. In some mega-churches 'gift days' have raised hundreds of thousands of pounds! Has it ever been like this in your own experience? Why not? Imagine what might be possible if such generosity characterised your own church's giving.
- 2 *2 Chronicles 35*
How does your church celebrate the major festivals? In what ways are they significant spiritually, personally, and communally? Could we do more in this regard?
- 3 *Psalms 139*
Do you find it easy to believe that the almighty, transcendent God lovingly knitted you together in your mother's womb (v.13), and that he doesn't make mistakes?

How does knowing this help you in your day-to-day walk with Jesus?
- 4 *Joel 1 (see also Psalm 137)*
Does the pattern of mourning, gathering, and praying in the wake of family or community tragedy fit with your own experience? Have you ever known a church-wide, corporate lament over something lost in the manner described here?
- 5 *Hebrews 2*
How do you answer those critics of Christianity who assert that allowing his Son to die on a cross merely showed God the Father to be a cruel and heartless tyrant?