

- 6 *Micah 5*  
How did you respond to reading the prophecy of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem? Did reading it in its original context feel differently to hearing it as an isolated reading at Christmas?
- 7 *Micah 6*  
“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (v.8). Have you learnt this verse yet? Which of the three is the most challenging for you personally?
- 8 *1 John 1 & 2*  
John encourages us to walk in the light. What does this actually mean for you? How do you ensure you remain ‘in the light’?
- 9 *1 John 5*  
“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may *know* that you have eternal life” (v.13, italics added). Do you *know* that you have eternal life?
- 10 *3 John*  
The notes on the final chapter of Volume 2 of SACRED suggest that there's no place quite like the local church. Do you agree? How can those outside the church, who are perhaps a little suspicious of it, come to appreciate what it is (or should be) like?

### **Closing**

*Light a candle, silently watch the flame flicker, reflect on the discussion you have had, and pray for God's help in addressing any specific matters that have arisen for you personally.*

*After a few minutes, close by saying together the Grace.*

# SACRED

## Group Resources

## Month 12

## Opening Prayer

Bless our beautiful land, O Lord,  
with its wonderful variety of people, races, cultures and languages.

May we be a nation of laughter and joy,  
of justice and reconciliation, of peace and unity,  
of compassion, caring and sharing.

We pray this prayer for a true patriotism,  
in the powerful name of Jesus our Lord.  
Amen.

*(Archbishop Desmond Tutu)*

## Review of Volume 2

1 Well done! You've finished the second volume of SACRED. That means you've now read 360 chapters of the Bible – you're almost a third of the way through. I hope that you've found things to inspire you, move you, challenge you, and encourage you in your day-to-day walk with Jesus.

In the group resources following the end of volume 1 I asked asked which two books you'd enjoyed the most. How would you answer the same question for the books in volume 2?

2 Two important themes have been a recurrent feature of the second Volume of SACRED: 'Word' and 'Spirit'.

As a group, spend some time thinking of some specific ways in which the two themes have come to the surface.

## General Question

1 As usual, share with the group anything that has particularly stood out for you in the current month's readings.

## Further Ideas

*Once again, the intention is not necessarily to work through all of these ideas, just to take on some of them as the group chooses.*

1 *Ecclesiastes 1*  
“Meaningless! Meaningless! Everything is meaningless!” (v.2). Has *Ecclesiastes* been a little depressing to read, or has it galvanized you into shaping your life more deliberately?

Ultimately what *does* give meaning and purpose to your life? What will live on as your legacy a few generations down the line?

2 *Ecclesiastes 3*  
God has “set eternity in the hearts of men and women?” (v.11). What does this mean? What does the poem on ‘time’ (vv.1-8) have to teach us regarding our own use of time?

3 *Ecclesiastes 8*  
“I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man than to eat, drink and be merry” (v.15). Is the author suggesting we should ignore injustices in the world around us, and focus on satisfying our own needs? How does this square with, for example, Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan?

4 *Psalms 42*  
The psalmist thirsts for more of God, knowing that only his presence can lift his spirits. Have there been times when you've felt like this? What did you do?

5 *Micah 4*  
What would your perfect picture of peace look like?