

Discussion questions December 2017: TAKE A MOMENT

Take a moment, this Christmas, to be.

The following discussion questions are designed to accompany the Take A Moment Resource Pack PDF to help adapt the material for small group work. These questions are just a guideline and there is no need to go through them all or in the following sequence, feel free to pick and choose what interests your group.

Part 1: Bread of Tears and Joy - thinking about community and society		
What makes you joyful?	What do you see in wider society that upsets you? <i>Examples could include homelessness, loneliness...</i>	How do you feel about the phrase 'bread of tears' in Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19? Think about the bread of tears in our society, where do we see sorrow?
What can we practically do about food poverty in our area? See (Matthew 25: 40)	Are there social issues we are concerned about that might make us consider writing to our MP/MSP/Councillor?	How can we spread joy this Christmas?

Part 2: Glory and Locusts... - thinking about lifestyle choices		
When did you last see something glorious?	What do you think your lifestyle choices (where you shop/what you eat/who you spend time with) says about you?	Consider the phrase 'righteousness and peace will kiss each other' from Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13. What would that look like in our home, in our community, in our society?
What is a positive lifestyle change we can make that would point to God's glory? It could be a small change in what we buy/wear/cook that will make a positive difference in the world. It might be choosing to do something, or choosing not to do something. (See Exodus 23:9-11)	Some people say they feel like they encounter glory in nature - is that true for you? Where is glorious for you?	How can we see the glory this Christmas?

Part 3: He has filled the hungry with good things - global outlook on restoration and peacemaking		
When do you feel peaceful?	<p>Take a moment to consider God's sympathy for the oppressed, for the underdog, "He has filled the hungry with good things - while the rich were sent away empty" Luke 1:46b-55</p> <p>How can we help fill the hungry with good things?</p>	<p>Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24</p> <p>People sometimes give thanks or 'say Grace' before or after eating. This is a short prayer, usually to thank God for the food.</p> <p>Do you say Grace? If so, how do you do it, do you always say the same thing or do you always say something different? Do you do it before, or after, eating?</p>
What are practical things we can do this advent to bring peace to our family, friendships, workplaces?	Where in the world do we particularly want to pray for peace?	How can we work for peace in the world this Christmas?

Part 4: An unexpected guest - how we treat our neighbours with love		
<p>Have you ever had an unexpected guest - for a meal or to stay the night? How did it make you feel?</p> <p>How would you feel if on Christmas day you got a call that told you would have to make room for an unexpected guest, one you were in no way prepared for?</p> <p>Spare a thought for Mary, who also got an unexpected call that told her there was going to be one more for Christmas this year...</p> <p>What can we learn from her openhearted response?</p>	<p>The "radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:1-12) chose to be born, not into luxury at the centre of things but in fragile and precarious circumstances.</p> <p>Does that change how we think about life lived on the fringes and the margins, without safety nets and home comforts?</p>	How can we be more hospitable in our homes, communities and neighbourhoods?
What are practical things we can do to help homeless people and refugees this December? (See Luke 1: 26-38)	Think of those this Christmas season in makeshift camps. How, as a society, can we be more caring to those experiencing such turmoil?	How can we increase the sum total of love in the world this Christmas?