

## *Essentials of Discipleship 6: Hearing the Word of God*

### *Part 1: Sharing about Hearing God*

- Can you think of a time when a passage in the Bible really spoke to you? How did it happen? What impact did it make?

There are many ways to learn from the Bible. Here are four important ones:

- Just **reading it through** in large chunks - What does it say?
  - Studying it** - What does it mean?
  - Meditating on it** - How does its message impact me deep down?
  - Reading it devotionally** - What does it mean *to me*?
- Which way to you find it easiest to use the Bible? Which do you think you could gain from doing more of?

### *Part 2: Thinking about Scripture*

Here are three passages to discuss quickly, which all deal with how Scripture has an impact on our lives:

Read Psalm 1.

- What is the alternative to meditating on God's law?
- What part of the image in verse 3 is a picture of Scripture? What effect does Scripture have on the righteous person?

Read Hebrews 4.12-13

- What image of the message of Scripture is being used here? What is the effect of the word of God?
- Does anyone have an example how Scripture has worked in this way?

Read Matthew 7.24-27.

- What is the difference in attitude of the two builders to Jesus' words? •How does Jesus expect us to respond to his teaching in Scripture?

These three images are pictures of Scripture as nourishment, as bringing judgement and as a call to obedience respectively.

- In what other ways does Scripture speak to us?
- Do particular parts speak in particular ways?

(Reading 2 Timothy 3.16 might help after a few minutes...!)

### *Part 3: An Exercise in Sharing from Scripture*

The object of this section is to get us to stop and drink deeply of a small portion of Scripture. Usually this is the kind of exercise that is done alone. As a group exercise it is cross between meditation and devotional reading - sharing what the passage says to you.

The passage we will use is 1 Peter 1.3-9

Explain the following so that people know what to expect:

Have it read through once quickly so that people can get used to what they're hearing. Then invite people to settle themselves down comfortably and read it again slowly so that they can settle back and soak in what God is saying to them through it. They can focus on just one phrase, repeating it over and over again, or a small clause - it's not meant to be a logical investigation of the whole section! After about five minutes (time this as it's hard to judge time when your waiting for time to pass!) read the passage again meditatively.

After another five minutes ask people to 'come to' (!) And to share what they picked out and what the passage was saying to them.

### *Part 4: For Further Study: The Authority of the Bible*

Read 2 Timothy 3.16

- What does it mean to say that the Bible is inspired by God? Do some bits seem less inspired than others?
- What would we say to a believer who said 'it's inspired because it inspires me?' or 'I don't find it inspiring'?