

# DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTIONS

## IMAGE OF GOD

Read *Genesis 1:24-31*

1. How significant is it that the Old Testament operates without the language of 'the image of God' after the opening chapters of Genesis?
2. What sort of light do you think is shed by reading Genesis against the background of its ancient near Eastern context?
3. Do you agree with Walter Brueggemann's suggestion that the Old Testament has little interest in the question of 'what it means to be human?' but a great deal of interest in what it means to live for the God of Israel, and what might follow from this?

## THE STATUS OF THE EMBRYO AND STEM CELL RESEARCH

Read *Philippians 2:3-4, Luke 14:12-14, Mark 12:28-31*

1. The bible doesn't have much to say about stem cell research, but how can it help us when making ethical decisions on new technologies?
2. What are the motivations for stem cell research? Do you think the motivations justify the risks and the moral issues involved?

**Cybrid embryos** – embryos made using an animal egg with its nucleus removed as the host for a human cell nucleus which is reprogrammed to start growing as an embryo

**Hybrid embryos** – embryos formed when an animal egg and human sperm (or vice versa) are united *in vitro*

3. Should Christians oppose the formation of cybrid embryos? Is the formation of true hybrid embryos more or less acceptable than the formation of cybrids?

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HUMAN?

Read *Psalms 8*

1. What does it mean to be human?
2. What doesn't being human mean?
3. What distinguishes humans from the rest of creation, theologically and scientifically? What rights/responsibilities come with being human and what is it that gives us those rights/responsibilities? Under what circumstances should those rights be extended to other animals, artificial intelligence, alien life forms?

CAN YOU COME UP WITH A GROUP QUESTION TO ASK THE PANEL?

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