

Walking alongside those facing the menopause

Discipleship questions

So, your 1-to-1 Bible reading partner / small group member or close friend is experiencing some perimenopausal symptoms and you've agreed to walk alongside them. What kind of questions might you ask? There is no one-size-fits-all. As with all pastoral conversations, it is important to know the person in front of you (and what they do – and don't - want to talk about) not just work through a pre-prepared list of questions, but some of these ideas might be fruitful avenues to pursue.

1. How have your symptoms been this week? Are you noticing anything new?
2. What encouragements in how you are handling these symptoms have you seen recently? How are you growing in this season? What are you grateful for?
3. What impact are these symptoms having on your relationship with the Lord? Are you seeing him differently? Are you interacting with him differently? Are you happy with those changes – or are there things in those changes that concern you?
4. What impact are these symptoms having on your relationship with others? Are you spotting any increased love or increased tension? Can you give an example of when it's been hard? What has the ongoing legacy of that interaction been?
5. What impact are these symptoms having on your view of yourself? To what extent are you feeling like a chosen child of the living God – loved, secure and forgiven? How are your symptoms making it hard to see yourself as God does?
6. What would you like to say to the Lord about this season of perimenopause? Would you like to say that to him now? What Psalm might help you lament the things that are hard today?
7. What metaphor of God provides you with hope when life is hard? What does it mean for God to be your Rock/ Refuge / Stronghold / Shepherd / King? What aspects of his character and work, that are embodied in this image, impact you most?
8. Are there other people (friends or professionals) whose support might be useful? Are there any resources or coping strategies that you would like to discuss?
9. What shall we ask the Lord for? How would you like him to nurture your heart?
10. What one thing might you try to do differently this week? (In terms of how you pray, what you read, how you relate to those around you or how you take care of yourself)