

CONFIRMATION

Sponsor Session Can God handle my questions? GOD IS FAITHFUL

Instructions

Dear Confirmation Candidate and Sponsor, thank you for committing to growing closer to Christ together! These sponsor sessions are a great time for you to strengthen your relationship with each other and with God. Each session, you'll read some content, watch a short video, and engage in lots of discussion. For the reading portions, you can switch off reading each paragraph. Additionally, the discussion questions are for both of you to answer. I pray that these sponsor sessions will be transformative and fun for you both!

Overview

Read:

There are many questions in the human heart about God. One foundational question in our relationship with Jesus that we need to answer is "Can He handle my questions?" This session will unpack this question and see that there is no question too big for God to handle. All the questions we can have about God and His existence are important! It is beautiful to ask questions, but even more, it's important to bring them to God. Ultimately, we need to know who He is in relation to us. From there, we can see that He isn't afraid of any questions we may have.

Theme Scripture

1 CORINTHIANS 1:9

"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

CONNECT

1. Check-In

Discuss:

- What are your "highs and lows" of this week? (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)
- How are you? How is your heart? (Are you happy, sad, depressed, anxious, excited, etc., and why?)
- What are you looking forward to doing? What are you excited about?
- What have you been frustrated with lately? What are you anxious about? What are you sad about?
- How have you been spiritually? Do you feel on fire for God... distant from Him... somewhere in between? Why do you think you feel this way?
- Where have you seen God at work in the world and/or your life lately?
- How can I pray for you this week?

2. Opening Prayer

Begin your prayer with the theme verse. Then, share prayer requests. Lastly, end with this prayer or your own prayer:

"Jesus, You love us. Open our eyes to see your love more and more. Help us to see the ways You call us to know your love. Thank You, Jesus, for the gift of life with You."

DISCOVER

3. Video

Jot down 3 questions or things that stand out to you while watching the video.

Watch the "Can God Handle My Questions?" video. You can find it on the Confirmation page on mystelizabeth.com.

4. Reflection

Discuss:

- What is your first impression of the video? Did you like it or not? Was it clear or confusing? Why?
- What words or feelings come to mind?

Read:

Jesus gave His life for you. He willingly chose to suffer, to be humiliated in worldly terms, suffer, and die for **you**. We can trust Him because He is goodness itself.

We can have so many ideas about who God is and sometimes doubts too. God is not afraid of any question, doubt, or fear that we have.

Stories of the saints and from scripture are full of examples:

Mark 9 tells the story of a father seeking healing for his child and he says to Jesus, "I believe, help my unbelief!"

The apostle Thomas didn't believe that Jesus had really risen from the dead, and he said that he wouldn't believe unless he saw for himself. Jesus then appears to Thomas and lets him put his hand in his wounds (John 20).

After the resurrection, it says that his 11 disciples "worshipped him, but doubted" (Matthew 28:17). And these were the people who were closest to him.

St. Mother Teresa went through long periods of darkness and even wrote in her journal: "My God, I have no faith. I dare not utter the words and thoughts that crowd my heart, afraid to uncover them because of the blasphemy. If there be God, please forgive me. When I try to raise my thoughts to heaven, there is such convicting emptiness that those very thoughts return like sharp knives and hurt my very soul. I am told God loves me, and yet the reality of darkness and coldness and emptiness is so great, nothing touches my soul."

When it comes to God and His truth, people sometimes experience skepticism, doubts, questions, and difficulties. What matters most is that we are seeking answers to our questions and not just giving up.

Discuss:

- What 3 things did you write down during the video?
- What are some of the common ways that you hear God described by people not living out the Christian faith?
- At the beginning of the video, when God is described as a dictator or a neglectful master, what did you think?
- Can you relate to some of the questions the narrator has about who God is or not? Remember, there is nothing wrong with having questions. It is okay to acknowledge questions people have about God.
- Why do you think it is important to acknowledge the questions we might have about God?
- Where can we turn for answers about God? How can we find truth? Remember, we can always turn to the gift of Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the wisdom of those seeking Christ (trusted family, friends, or church staff and small group leaders). Ultimately, we can invite God to show us His Truth!
- In the video, the narrator comes to a point of recognizing that Jesus gave His life for him. How does that make you feel? How should knowing this impact our lives and relationship with Jesus?
- Discuss the importance and power of prayer and of taking time to specifically listen to God in the silence of prayer.
- In what other ways does God speak to us?
- Have you ever felt that God spoke to you through the wise words of another person?
- What does it mean to accept Jesus as one's Savior?

- Once people acknowledge Jesus as their Savior, what does it look like to LIVE like Jesus is their Savior? How should their lives change/how should your life look different from someone who is not a Christian?
- Take a moment to reflect on this quote from St. Augustine: “God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.” What does this mean to you?

Read:

Why is faith so important? Peter Kreeft says in his book *Catholic Christianity*, “Faith is the answer to fear. Deep down we are all afraid: of suffering, or of dying, or of God’s judgement, or of the unknown, or of weakness, or of our lives slipping out of control, or of not being understood and loved. We sin because we fear. We bully because we are cowards. Faith casts out fear as light casts out darkness. God has shone his light into our world, and it is stronger than darkness. That light is Jesus Christ.”

COMMIT

5. Closing

Read:

Jesus is not afraid of our questions. If we have questions, it's important to place them before Him and to acknowledge that He desires the best for us. He wants us to keep coming back to Him and to be in relationship with Him.

This week, you have 2 challenges.

The **first** is to write down and pray with the theme verse. Print it or write it out and put it somewhere you’ll look at it daily. Try to memorize it so that when you need a reminder of how much God loves you, you can recall the verse. Check in with each other in a week to see if you have memorized it yet.

The **second** is to continue to ask God to meet us in our questions or doubts. The prayer below is called the “Skeptic’s Prayer” and was written by the philosopher Peter Kreeft.

If you're currently struggling with doubts, read this reflection and prayer:

“Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.” (Matthew 7: 7-8)

This claim—that all seekers find—is testable by experience, by experiment. If you are an honest scientist, here is a way to find out whether Christianity is true or not. Perform the relevant experiment. To test the hypothesis that someone is behind the door, knock. To test the Christian hypothesis that Christ is behind the door, knock. How do you knock? Pray! Tell Christ you are seeking the truth,—seeking him, if he is the truth. Ask him to fulfill his promise that all who seek him find him. In his own time, of course. He promised that you would find, but he didn't promise a schedule. He's a lover, not a train. But you may reply "I don't know whether Christ is God. I don't even know whether there is a God." That's all right; you can pray the prayer of the skeptic:

God, I don't know whether you even exist. I'm a skeptic. I doubt. I think you may be only a myth. But I'm not certain (at least when I'm completely honest with myself). So, if you do exist, and if you really did promise to reward all seekers, you must be hearing me now. So I hereby declare myself a seeker, a seeker of truth, whatever it is. I want to know the truth and live the truth. If you are the truth, please help me.

Do you have specific struggles or doubts? Adjust the "Skeptic's Prayer" to fit your needs.

Pray:

End with a closing prayer. You can come up with your own closing prayer, pray the "Skeptic's Prayer" if you can relate to it, or come up with your own version of the "Skeptic's Prayer."