



GROUP MATERIAL
TERM 3 PART 1 | 2024

*How do we respond
to big questions in
our life?*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

At the start of each session, acknowledge the Country and traditional owners of the land your group is gathering. Below is a template you could use.

“Today we meet on _____ Country.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters from which we've all come or crossed over to arrive here today. We commit ourselves to being voices of reconciliation.



LIFE LABS 1

*What do we do when
we have questions
about faith?*



INTRODUCTION



There are lots of different philosophies and beliefs in the world. Some people grow up religious; others choose to be part of a religion. Some people are spiritual but not religious, while others think there's nothing spiritual about life. When people have ideas different from ours, they might question or even criticise our beliefs. When we're challenged about our beliefs, we might feel like we don't have the right answers. Our beliefs can also be challenged when we go through difficult times in life. We might start to wonder if what we believe is true. All these experiences can leave us with questions about our faith. While it's normal to have questions about our faith, if we can't find answers, we can feel lost and confused.

What do we do when we have questions about faith?

PLAY THE '20 QUESTIONS' GAME



How did you go with the game? Did you find it difficult or easy to come up with questions? Have you ever had questions about what you believe but did not know how to ask them?

DO THE 'TRIVIA CHALLENGE' ACTIVITY



READ THE SCRIPTURE

²⁴ Thomas (called Didymus) was one of the twelve, but he was not with the other followers when Jesus came. ²⁵ They told him, “We saw the Lord.” Thomas said, “That’s hard to believe. I will have to see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side. Only then will I believe it.”

²⁶ A week later the followers were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them. He said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Put your hand here in my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

²⁸ Thomas said to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Jesus said to him, “You believe because you see me. Great blessings belong to the people who believe without seeing me!”

John 20:24-29 (ERV)



Write down 3
people who you feel
comfortable asking
questions about faith.

1.

2.

3.

CONCLUSION



There are many different philosophies and beliefs in the world. When others criticise us or we go through tough times, we can have questions about our faith. The Good News is that asking questions about our faith is normal. Just like Thomas, we can turn to Jesus and his followers for support when we have questions about our faith, and they can help us find the answers we're looking for.



LIFE LABS 2

*What do we do
when we're struggling
with our faith?*



INTRODUCTION



Sometimes, we can wonder if faith makes sense in our lives. We might learn about new ideas, struggle with religious rules, or feel different from our friends and others in society because of our beliefs. We might look at others around us who seem to belong at church and feel lost because we don't feel the same way. This can leave us wondering if faith is for us, if we can fit in at church, or if faith will be a part of our lives in the future. We know that faith can be meaningful in our lives, but what do we do when we're struggling with it?

PLAY THE 'MAGIC SHAPE' GAME



How did you go with the game? How did you feel when you struggled to work out the riddle? What do you do when you're struggling to work something out in your life?

DO THE 'FAITH CHALLENGES' ACTIVITY

Write down 2 supports that you have found helpful in the past

1. _____

2. _____

Write down 2 new supports that you would like to try

1. _____

2. _____

READ THE SCRIPTURE

JESUS PRAYS ALONE

³⁶ Then Jesus went with his followers to a place called Gethsemane. He said to them, “Sit here while I go there and pray.” ³⁷ He told Peter and the two sons of Zebedee to come with him. Then he began to be very sad and troubled. ³⁸ Jesus said to Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, “My heart is so heavy with grief, I feel as if I am dying. Wait here and stay awake with me.”

³⁹ Then Jesus went on a little farther away from them. He fell to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, don’t make me drink from this cup.[a] But do what you want, not what I want.”

⁴⁰ Then he went back to his followers and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Could you men not stay awake with me for one hour? ⁴¹ Stay awake and pray for strength against temptation. Your spirit wants to do what is right, but your body is weak.”

⁴² Then Jesus went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if I must do this[b] and it is not possible for me to escape it, then I pray that what you want will be done.”

⁴³ Then he went back to the followers. Again he found them sleeping. They could not stay awake. ⁴⁴ So he left them and went away one more time and prayed. This third time he prayed, he said the same thing.

⁴⁵ Then Jesus went back to the followers and said, “Are you still sleeping and resting? The time has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the control of sinful men. ⁴⁶ Stand up! We must go. Here comes the one who will hand me over.”

Matthew 26:36–56 (ERV)

CONCLUSION



Sometimes we can wonder if faith makes sense in our lives. This can leave us wondering if faith is for us, if we can fit in at church, or if faith will be a part of our lives in the future. The Good News is that when we struggle with our faith, we can turn to Jesus and people like Him for support. While our faith might be challenged, these times are an opportunity to grow, try new practices, and better understand what we believe.



LIFE LABS 3

*How do I work out
what I believe?*





INTRODUCTION



As we grow, we develop a set of beliefs. These beliefs shape what we think and how we act. Some of these beliefs come from our parents, while others can come from our peers or faith community. Our beliefs are also shaped by our culture and society. But what do we do when we hear new ideas that challenge our beliefs? Without a strong understanding of our values and beliefs, we can feel lost and confused about what to trust. We need firm beliefs to guide us, but how do we figure that out?

How do I work out what I believe?

PLAY THE ‘BELIEFS WALK’ GAME



How did you go with the game? Were there any answers that you felt strongly about? Why do you believe that?



HOW TO DO THE 'MY VALUES PART 1' ACTIVITY

COMMON VALUES:

<i>Loyalty</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Stability</i>	<i>Achievement</i>
<i>Family</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Openness</i>	<i>Influence</i>	<i>Justice</i>
<i>Creativity</i>	<i>Integrity</i>	<i>Success</i>	<i>Wealthy</i>	<i>Recognition</i>
<i>Peace</i>	<i>Courage</i>	<i>Boldness</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Leadership</i>
<i>Fairness</i>	<i>Honesty</i>	<i>Compassion</i>	<i>Faith</i>	<i>Contribution</i>
<i>Adventure</i>	<i>Beauty</i>	<i>Wisdom</i>	<i>Kindness</i>	<i>Determination</i>
<i>Reputation</i>	<i>Growth</i>	<i>Learning</i>	<i>Optimism</i>	<i>Community</i>
<i>Security</i>	<i>Fame</i>	<i>Respect</i>	<i>Intelligence</i>	<i>Service</i>
<i>Harmony</i>	<i>Curiosity</i>	<i>Happiness</i>	<i>Fun</i>	

List your top 3 values from the list, or think of your own:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why are these values important to you?

What may have influenced your values (people, places, experiences, etc.)

How are these values connected to what you believe?

How do your values affect your thoughts and behaviour?

How have your values changed or stayed the same throughout your life?

READ THE SCRIPTURE

THE VINE AND THE FRUIT

15 Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that does not produce fruit. He also trims every branch that produces fruit to prepare it to produce even more. ³ You have already been prepared to produce more fruit by the teaching I have given you.

⁴ Stay joined to me and I will stay joined to you. No branch can produce fruit alone. It must stay connected to the vine. It is the same with you. You cannot produce fruit alone. You must stay joined to me. ⁵ “I am the vine, and you are the branches. If you stay joined to me, and I to you, you will produce plenty of fruit. But separated from me you won’t be able to do anything.

John 15:1-5 (ERV)

²² But the fruit that the Spirit produces in a person’s life is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these kinds of things.

Galatians 5:22-23 (ERV)



CONCLUSION



Sometimes we can wonder if faith makes sense in our lives. This can leave us wondering if faith is for us, if we can fit in at church, or if faith will be a part of our lives in the future. The Good News is that when we struggle with our faith, we can turn to Jesus and people like Him for support. While our faith might be challenged, these times are an opportunity to grow, try new practices, and better understand what we believe.



LIFE LABS 4

*What do we do when
others have questions
about faith?*



INTRODUCTION



Have your friends ever asked you questions about faith? They might have asked you why you believe in Jesus, question whether God is real, or wonder what their life means. Sometimes, it can be tricky to answer these questions. We might feel like we don't have the right answer, feel uncomfortable talking about our faith, or not want to push ideas on others. When our friends want to talk about faith but we don't know how to respond, we might struggle to help them find their way.

What do we do when others have questions about faith?

PLAY THE 'CHARADES' GAME



How did you go with the game? How did it feel to know the answer but only be able to communicate by acting? Can you think of a time when you knew something but felt stuck about how to share your opinion?

DO THE 'MY VALUES PART 2' ACTIVITY

In this activity you will share your answers from last week with a partner. You can ask whatever questions you like to get to know what their values are. Below are some questions to help you if you get stuck

Questions to ask your pair:



Where have your values come from? Why are these values important to you?

Who or what may have influenced your values?

How are our values similar and different from one another?

Why did you think _____ was one of my values?

What things have you heard me say which may have been influenced by my values?

READ THE SCRIPTURE

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He met Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴ Philip was from the town of Bethsaida, the same as Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the man that Moses wrote about in the law. The prophets wrote about him too. He is Jesus, the son of Joseph. He is from Nazareth.”

⁴⁶ But Nathanael said to Philip, “Nazareth! Can anything good come from Nazareth?”

Philip answered, “Come and see.”

⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said, “This man coming is a true Israelite, one you can trust.”

⁴⁸ Nathanael asked, “How do you know me?”

Jesus answered, “I saw you when you were under the fig tree, before Philip told you about me.”

⁴⁹ Then Nathanael said, “Teacher, you are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel.”

John 1:43-49 (ERV)



CONCLUSION



Have your friends ever asked you questions about faith? Sometimes it can be tricky to answer these questions. When our friends want to talk about faith but we don't know how to respond, we might struggle to help them find their way. The Good News is that we can be a guide for others and help them find their place with Jesus. When we ask questions to understand where they are coming from and show them how Jesus cares for them, we can help them find their way.



NOTES

*Give us
feedback*





Contact Us

salvationarmy.org.au/youth-ya
equileaders.com.au

