

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FROM DECEMBER 5, 2010

The logo consists of the word "REALLY?" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The question mark is a vibrant green color. The text is set against a solid black rectangular background.

BIG IDEA:

Junior High is the time when in a person's life when they transition from being a child to being a young adult. It's the time for them to make up their mind about who they really are and what their life is really going to be about. This series will challenge students to tackle the foundational questions about their identity and the Christian faith. This week's question: Am I really a Christian?

ICEBREAKERS:

1. Has anyone ever had a teacher that loved giving "pop quizzes"?
2. What is the worst grade you've ever gotten on a "pop quiz"?
3. What is the worst grade you've ever gotten on a test that you actually knew about ahead of time?

DISCUSSION:

1. Look up and read 2 Corinthians 13:5 together.

2 Corinthians 13:5

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you - unless, of course, you fail the test?"

2. Today's Small Group is going to be really different. We're going to take a "test" that will help us examine ourselves so that we can all understand how we can know for sure that we really have eternal life. I'm going to pass out a piece of paper to everyone. It has a series of Bible verses from the book of 1 John and 10 True/False questions about your own life. It is wise to regularly examine yourself to be reminded that your eternity is secure and to be strengthened with the confidence that you will remain in that security all of your life.

As a leader, you will need to print off copies of the "test" (see the following 2 pages) for everyone in your group. If you don't have the ability to print multiple pages or make copies, you may read the scriptures together and then read the questions out loud and have them write their answers on scrap paper. (Downloads available at: <http://watermarkstudentsresources.blogspot.com/>)

3. Once everyone's finished circling true or false to all 10 questions, take some time to discuss their responses in a group setting.

APPLICATION & SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

4. Encourage everyone in your group to read 1 John this week and to try to memorize 1 John 5:12. Take some time to thank God that he has given us a way to know for sure that we belong to Him.

1 John 5:12

12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life.

REALLY?

Am I Really a Christian? The Examination

2 Corinthians 13:5

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you - unless, of course, you fail the test?"

Test #1 - The Confession Test

1 John 1:8-10

8 If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. 9 But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts.

1 John 4:15

15 All who confess that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God.

"Confess" means to acknowledge truth to God or others. The two confessions mentioned in 1 John are confessing one's sins (acknowledging all the ways you have missed God's perfect standard) and confessing Jesus Christ as Lord (acknowledging that Jesus is the Savior and Leader of your life).

1. I have confessed my sins to God and admitted my need for Him.

True False

2. I have confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and is an acceptable sacrifice for my sins.

True False

3. I have confessed that Jesus Christ is the person whose leadership I should follow for all my life.

True False

Test #2 - The Priorities Test

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. 16 For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. 17 And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.

Some people use their lives to chase earthly things: lust, greed and pride. Others, realizing that there's more to life than temporary fulfillment or prestige, live with eternity in view. 1 John teaches us that our priorities are great indicators as to the reality of our faith.

4. I don't crave for things I see in this world

True False

5. I don't take pride in my worldly achievements and possessions.

True False

Test #3 - The Practice Test

1 John 3:7-9

7 Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. 8 But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. 9 Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God

The greatest basketball players have God given talents. Yet, they still work day in and day out perfecting their skill, practicing for the game. They may miss a shot here or there, but they keep practicing. Likewise, while human beings may "miss" once in a while, 1 John says that practicing righteousness is an evidence of true faith.

6. Overall, I am sinning less and less and practicing more and more righteousness

True False

Test #4 - The Love Test

1 John 3:14

14 If we love our Christian brothers and sisters, it proves that we have passed from death to life. But a person who has no love is still dead."

When asked about the most important commandment in God's Law, Jesus said that loving God and loving other people summed up "all the Law and the Prophets." Love is the most important thing to God and is the clearest evidence that someone is following the Way of Jesus.

7. People who know me would say that love for God is obvious in my life

True False

8. People that know me would say that love for other people is obvious in my life

True False

The Final Exam

1 John 5:11-13

11 And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life. 13 I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.

These are some of the most important words in the Bible. It all comes down to this...Whoever has the Son of God can rest assured that they have eternal life. If you know Jesus, these verses should remove all your fears and insecurities and give you magnificent confidence and hope.

9. I believe in the name of Jesus

True False

10. I have invited Jesus to be my Savior and the Leader of my life. He is in my life.

True False