

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FROM DECEMBER 12, 2010



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: Is Jesus really the only way?

ICEBREAKER:

If you have time, put together your own "guess the number of _____ in the jar" contest. The jar and its contents can be the prize.

DISCUSSION:

Look up and read 2 Timothy 4:3-5 together.

Work through the following challenging questions and objections in your Small Group. Give them a chance to discuss how they would respond to it. For the older/more mature kids, play devil's advocate and challenge them a little more.

Resources:

<http://www.persecution.net/download/onlyway.pdf>

<http://www.carm.org/objections.htm>

1. What about people who never hear about Christ? That isn't fair.

There is really a much more difficult question beneath this challenge: Will God be God on His terms or ours? God knows what he is doing and we have to trust that he is indeed both loving and just in all his dealings with humanity. We see the clearest picture of how God deals with those who have never heard the name Jesus in Romans chapter 1.

Verses to look up & discuss: Romans 1:18-22

2. All people are good deep down. It should be possible to know God without knowing Jesus.

While it is true that man was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), it is also true that we have all made the decision to sin and turn away from the perfection of the one in whose image we were made. We have turned away from goodness and done evil. There is good deep down but it is covered by our sin. We need someone to take away our sins.

Verses to look up & discuss: Romans 3:10-12, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:1-3

3. Thinking you know the truth is arrogant and intolerant.

If you were about to eat an undercooked chicken breast with salmonella and I told you that it contained salmonella and was dangerous to eat, would that be arrogant or intolerant of me to tell you the truth? If there was a jar of gumballs and I claimed it contained 100 gumballs, would I be arrogant or intolerant if I could back up my claim with evidence? Would you give me a chance to provide evidence for the truth I claim?

You are only arrogant if you don't carry and communicate truth with gentleness and respect. Never be cocky, proud, or rude about the understanding that you possess. You're only intolerant if you hold firmly to a truth without offering any evidence to support your position.

Verses to look up & discuss: 1 Peter 3:15-16

4. Truth is whatever you sincerely believe...Truth is whatever works for you. Truth for me may be different.

Can you make something true just by believing it? If I were to have a jar full of gumballs could you make the number of gumballs be 200 if you really, really believed that it was 200? No. No matter how much you believed, the number would still actually be 100 gumballs. You cannot change reality with strong beliefs. If you truly believed you were a Diet Coke, would that make you a Diet Coke?

If you believe that there are many ways to God and I believe Jesus is the only way, how could we both be right? One is right and one is wrong...Or we're both wrong...But we can't both be right. Finally, what if someone sincerely believed that stealing or killing were right? Would that make killing okay for them?

5. The important thing in life isn't having truth...it's searching for it.

Is it better to itch than to scratch? Is it better to be hungry than to eat? Is it better to be exhausted than to sleep? Why would the desire for truth be greater than the discovery of truth.

APPLICATION:

Spend some time thinking about this question. Do I believe Jesus is the only way to God? You need to know what you believe and why you believe it.