

# I WONDER

**KICKOFF:** It is normal and healthy for teenagers to doubt and question what they believe. Most are searching to find who they are and what they believe. They're looking for answers and deal with tough questions. It's important they're able to discuss these doubts and questions with an adult like our leaders. Today we aren't trying to answer all of your questions and doubts, but will help you understand that having doubts is normal, even among adults.

**OPEN IT UP:** Make a list of the kids 10 biggest mysteries or doubts –right now—things they are wondering about.

Discuss possible solutions or answers for each one. How will they find the answers if they can? What baffles them so about these mysteries and doubts?

Ask the kids to role-play situations in which they must defend their beliefs. Split them into two teams and have one is the pro and the other is the con.

## SCRIPTURE

Psalm 73 [The Message]

A psalm of Asaph.

*<sup>1-5</sup> No doubt about it! God is good— good to good people, good to the good-hearted.*

*But I nearly missed it,  
missed seeing his goodness.  
I was looking the other way,  
looking up to the people  
At the top,  
envying the wicked who have it made,  
Who have nothing to worry about,  
not a care in the whole wide world.*

*<sup>6-10</sup> Pretentious with arrogance,  
they wear the latest fashions in violence,  
Pampered and overfed,  
decked out in silk bows of silliness.  
They jeer, using words to kill;  
they bully their way with words.  
They're full of hot air,  
loudmouths disturbing the peace.  
People actually listen to them—can you believe it?  
Like thirsty puppies, they lap up their words.*

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*11-14 What's going on here? Is God out to lunch?  
Nobody's tending the store.  
The wicked get by with everything;  
they have it made, piling up riches.  
I've been stupid to play by the rules;  
what has it gotten me?  
A long run of bad luck, that's what—  
a slap in the face every time I walk out the door.*

*15-20 If I'd have given in and talked like this,  
I would have betrayed your dear children.  
Still, when I tried to figure it out,  
all I got was a splitting headache . . .  
Until I entered the sanctuary of God.  
Then I saw the whole picture:  
The slippery road you've put them on,  
with a final crash in a ditch of delusions.  
In the blink of an eye, disaster!  
A blind curve in the dark, and—nightmare!  
We wake up and rub our eyes....Nothing.  
There's nothing to them. And there never was.*

*21-24 When I was beleaguered and bitter,  
totally consumed by envy,  
I was totally ignorant, a dumb ox  
in your very presence.  
I'm still in your presence,  
but you've taken my hand.  
You wisely and tenderly lead me,  
and then you bless me.*

*25-28 You're all I want in heaven!  
You're all I want on earth!  
When my skin sags and my bones get brittle,  
GOD is rock-firm and faithful.  
Look! Those who left you are falling apart!  
Deserters, they'll never be heard from again.  
But I'm in the very presence of GOD—  
oh, how refreshing it is!  
I've made Lord GOD my home.  
GOD, I'm telling the world what you do!*

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## SMALL GROUPS

1. Ask your group to share what they have doubts about. What statement created the most doubt? What do your kids want to know more about? Be careful not to eliminate their doubts with quick spiritual comebacks. Give them room to discuss with each other.
2. How do your group members handle doubt? What is the most common answer? Some may not want to share—that's okay. Ask them what the most common reaction of teenagers is.
3. Doubt is almost a prerequisite for developing a strong faith—no faith is required if you are absolutely sure about something. What were their answers? Take some time to talk about concerns that they may have about dealing with doubts.

**BRING IT BACK TOGETHER:** Doubt is normal—having doubt doesn't mean the loss of faith or that the doubter has sinned.

Frederick Buecher said, "Doubt is the ants in the pants of faith; it keeps it alive and moving." Doubt stimulates closer growth toward God. The challenge is to search for a deeper, more meaningful faith and you should be encouraged to talk to people who trust and care about you. Talking with responsible mature Christians can strengthen, and deepen your faith in Jesus Christ.

Save your big doubts for God Himself, because they may never be answered here in this life. We may not have all the answers, but God does. As it says in *1 Corinthians 13:12*—"*Now we see things imperfectly as in a cloudy mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity! All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.*"

God will reveal all truth to us one day in heaven.

## CLOSE IN PRAYER

# I WONDER

## 1 DER

### 1. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT?

The existence of God	The value of prayer
The resurrection of Jesus Christ	The virgin birth of Christ
The story of Jonah and the whale	The possibility of miracles
The existence of Heaven	The Genesis account of creation
The truth of the Bible	The reality of Hell
The love of God	The idea that Jesus was/is God

### 2. WHEN YOU HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT YOUR FAITH, WHICH 3 OF THE FOLLOWING REACTIONS ARE TYPICAL FOR YOU?

Feel Guilty	Share my doubt w/non-Christians
Blame my doubt on the Devil	Ignore them
Share them with a Christian friend	Get others to doubt the same thing
Assume your own ignorance	Talk to God about it
Ask honest, sincere questions searching for an answer	
Other- (make your own)	

### 3. WHAT DO YOU THINK? (CHOOSE 1)

Doubts about God are normal.
When I doubt God, He loves me less.
Hank never has doubts about God.
God understands and accepts my doubts.
Doubting means a person is losing faith.
If you have doubts, then you have no faith.
If left alone and unrecognized, doubt becomes disbelief.