

## QUESTIONS TO GOD

# Children's Moments

**Note:** In this series, each week's suggested Children's Moment takes the form of a conversation starting with a question. This series is all about how questions are okay and don't have to be resolved neatly or don't have one answer. Asking the children questions is a way to model that it is okay to have and ask questions. While these are "Children's Moments," they can be used for multigenerational engagement.



## Week 1

### Who is God? | 1 John 4:7-19

#### Lessons & Illustrations:

1) God is love. When you love, you are connected to God, and you know God.

#### Ideas to illustrate:

- Have a conversation about what love is. You may ask the questions: What do you think love is? When do you feel loved? Based on the answers, make connections between what love is like and who God is.
- Consider having a volunteer from the congregation act out a stereotype or misconception of what God is like (e.g., telling the kids arbitrary rules) and one volunteer act out a "loving God" (e.g., "I want you to be kind to people,"). Ask, which one do you think God is like? Reiterate that God came to earth as Jesus to show us what God was really like so we can look at Jesus to know what God is like (e.g., caring, helping the poor & sick).

#### Call to Action:

How can you show love like Jesus this week? Pick one person who you can show love to this week. What will you do to show them love?

#### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for loving us so much and for showing us how to love others. Help us to love with all of our hearts, just as Jesus loved us. Amen.

## Week 2

### Is the Bible Reliable? | Hebrews 4:12-14

### (Children's' version: What is the Bible?)



#### Lessons & Illustrations:

- 1) The Bible isn't just one thing. It tells us about who God is, what God has done, about who we are and how God made us. God teaches us lessons in the Bible. There are all different kinds of writing in the Bible too, for example poems, letters, stories, songs.

#### Ideas to illustrate:

- Have a conversation with the children: What do you think the Bible is?
- Bring different versions or formats of the Bible with you (e.g., a graphic novel style Bible, a children's Bible, a "pew" Bible, even pull it up on your phone). Are they all the Bible? Why? Even though it might be in different formats, the Bible still teaches us about God and ourselves.

#### Call to Action:

Read three different parts of the Bible this week. You might give suggestions – one psalm, one part of an epistle/letter, one story. Notice how different they all are. But they're all the Bible!

#### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for helping us to learn the lessons given to us in the Bible. Be with us as we grow in our understanding of what the Bible is and what it means to us. Amen.

## Week 3

### Why Should I Go to Church? | Psalm 100

#### Lessons & Illustrations:

- 1) We share the love of God through community. / Community (church) is a place where we experience God's love.

#### Ideas to illustrate:

- Ask the children what their favorite part of church is. You might ask an adult in the congregation to join in. If no one mentions that seeing each other, their church family, is their favorite part, you might mention it as one of your own favorite things about church. There are lots of things that we do at church that we can do by ourselves like pray, sing, read the Bible. But when we do it together, we learn and experience differently, and get to have fun too!
- Ask the children what other communities they are a part of (e.g., class at school, sports team, etc.). Connect what it means to be a part of those communities to what it means to be a part of a church community (similarities, differences).

#### Call to Action:

Try inviting a friend to church this week.

#### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for giving us the community that is our church family. Help us to grow our church community by bringing friends and telling others about Jesus. Amen.



## Week 4

### Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People? | Psalm 137:1-6 (secondary: John 11:23-25)

#### Lessons & Illustrations:

- 1) God is with us when we're hurt or upset. We can be with other people when they are hurt or upset too.

#### Ideas to illustrate:

- What do you do when someone is hurt or sad?
- Tell us about your week. What bad things happened to you this week or recently? Why do you think God lets these things happen? See what they say. This is such a hard question. No one really knows. Validate that grown-ups ask this question all the time too. But what we do know is that when something bad happens, God is with us. When we cry, God cries too. Tell about the Bible story when Mary and Martha's brother, Lazarus, died. They wanted to know why Jesus hadn't been there to help him. But Jesus was sad too. Jesus cried too.

#### Call to Action:

Be like Jesus for other people. When you see someone who is sad, go be with them and let them know it's okay to be sad. You don't have to fix it. It's okay to just be there with them.

#### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for being with us all the time, especially when we are hurting or upset. Help us to be present with our friends and family when they are hurting or upset. Thank you for your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.



## Week 5

### How and Why Do I Forgive? | Matthew 6:9-15

#### Lessons & Illustrations:

- 1) Forgiveness lets us let go of anger and sadness, so we don't have to feel that way anymore. God shows us how to forgive and gives us an example by forgiving us.

#### Ideas to illustrate:

- Does anybody know the Lord's Prayer? Can someone say it or let's say it together – join in the parts you know. Point out the part about forgiving. Why do you think that it is important to forgive others?
- Have the children make fists as tight as they can. Explain that is what it feels like inside of us when we hold onto anger/sadness. We might not see it, but we can feel it. The longer/harder you hold on, the more it hurts or is uncomfortable. Have the children release their fists. Explain that is what forgiveness is like – it's letting go of anger, so you don't have to hurt anymore.
- Who in the world loves you the most? Is there anything you could do that would make that person stop loving you/never forgive you? That's the way God loves us. (You might share the quote from William Young's *The Shack* where God says to each person, "I am especially fond of you." This is true for each one of us.)
- God forgives us and God also knows why we mess up or make mistakes. God knows what is in our hearts. What if we could see other people the way God does, knowing that everyone has their own troubles, and sometimes that is why we make mistakes or mess up.

#### Call to Action:

If someone upsets you this week, try forgiving them and see what it feels like.

#### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for forgiving us. Help us to let go of our hurt and anger and forgive the people who have hurt us. Thank you for your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.



## Week 6

### Why is Jesus Special? | Mark 11:1-11



#### Lessons & Illustrations:

- 1) Jesus is the only one who is both human and God. So, he can show us what God is like.
- 2) Jesus is special because Jesus uses love instead of force (you might frame as meanness, power, bullying/bossing around, as is appropriate for your context and children's comprehension level).

#### Ideas to illustrate:

- Ask the children, "Who is Jesus?" They might say, "the Son of God," or you might help with suggesting that. "Who else is Jesus?" By the end of this conversation, make sure the children know that Jesus is the Son of God and also one of us too (human beings). How can Jesus be two things at once? Are you a friend? Are you a daughter/son/child? You are two things at once too, but one doesn't cancel out the other! (Of course, this is not a perfect analogy, but it is a way into thinking about this very challenging idea).
- Ask the children, "What makes you special? What makes you different from others?" Jesus was a king, but he was special because he wasn't like the other kings, or the kind of king people expected. He loved people instead of being mean, bossing people around, bullying people, treating them unkindly, etc.

#### Call to Action:

When you get angry this week, ask yourself the question, "What would Jesus do?" How can you be special like Jesus was, by loving instead of hating or getting back at someone?

#### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus so that we can know what you are like. Help us to remember what Jesus would do when we are worried about what our next steps should be. Thank you so much for your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.

## Week 7

### Why Be A Christian? | Mark 16:1-8 (Secondary: Galatians 5:22-26)

### (Children's Version: What is a Christian?)



#### Lessons & Illustrations:

- 1) A Christian is someone who believes that Jesus died and rose again and that it matters for them.
- 2) A Christian is someone who follows the teachings of Jesus to love God and love one another.

#### Ideas to illustrate:

- Ask the children, "What do you think a Christian is?" As you have a conversation about what it means to be a Christian, encourage them to think both about what Jesus has done for us and what we do in response (e.g., Jesus brings us closer to God. To be a Christian is to be like Jesus to other people by serving and caring for them).

#### Call to Action:

This week, ask an adult in your life who is a Christian what it means to them (this could be a parent, grandparent, Sunday School teacher, pastor, etc.)

#### Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to show us how much you love us by how he lived, and by dying and being raised. Help us to keep growing to be more like him every day. Amen.