

THE SEARCH

Pre-Confirmation Preparation

Family Discussion Guide

EP 1: WHAT DO YOU SEEK?



In our very first episode, we open hearts with a look at the question “what do you seek?” What is that deep longing in our hearts all about? We’re all living for something, and we all strive for that something out there that is ultimately going to make us happy. But what is it? For some, this question is on their minds every day. For others, life goes by in a flash without even asking the question.

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

Everyone should participate.

1. Think back to an experience or an event in your life where you felt truly happy. What happened?
2. Where do you find happiness in your life right now?
3. According to counselor Jim Owens, we can suffer from “destination addiction,” meaning that we don’t believe we can be happy until our circumstances change. Can you think of an example of “destination addiction” in your life?
4. Chris proposes a thought in the video: “What if we are throwing away religion because of what we think it is?” What does “religion” mean to you?

DISCUSS & WRITE:

5. What is one take-away for you from this episode?

EP 2: WHO ARE YOU?



To find clues as to the meaning of life, we first look at ourselves. Who am I? Is there more to me than matter? Is there more to us than meets the eye? We talk with neuroscientists, psychologists, composers, and artists to examine the mystery of you. If you're just a body, then satisfaction in life should come from tending to simple bodily needs. Fill your stomach, be comfortable. But there's more to you than that. You are material and immaterial. And that unseen part of you craves for so much more. As C. S. Lewis once said, "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

Everyone should participate.

1. What is your favorite piece of music and why?
2. What is your favorite piece of art and why?
3. What is your favorite book and why?
4. The famous painter Vincent van Gogh wrote in a letter to his brother, "I'm fairly sure that these canvases will tell you what I cannot say in words." Why do you think humans have the desire and ability to create things beyond mere tools for survival? (Google paintings by Vincent van Gogh.)

DISCUSS & WRITE:

5. What is one take-away for you from this episode?

EP 3: WHY A GOD?



Today we seem to think we've moved beyond the idea of God, but this secular view of life is a relatively new and unusual idea to humanity. All through human history man has looked to something outside himself for the answers to life. Why have we given up on God? Do we think science has disproven him? Do we think society is better off without him? We talk with astrophysicists, chemists, Harvard professors, and more to make the case that it's not only reasonable to believe in God—it's *essential* if you want to have a truly amazing life. Our souls seek their creator, and we'll never be truly happy unless we seek him out. As St. Augustine famously said, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

Everyone should participate.

1. What was your view of God when you were a child/when you were little?
2. Teens, tell your family: has your view of God changed in the past few years?
3. Parents, tell your family: did your view of God change as you became a teenager—that unique time in life when you began to question the assumptions of your childhood?
4. Parents, tell your family: how is your faith different now as an adult?

DISCUSS & WRITE:

5. What is one take-away for you from this episode?

EP 4: WHAT'S OUR STORY?



Your life is a story, and it's caught up in the great story of humanity. This great story, as we see in the Scriptures, shows us the amazing love story that is God's pursuit of man. The God that is love created us so we can ultimately be with his love. We were made to be with God. Union with God is so central to the purpose of life that we even see the afterlife in these terms. Our definition of Heaven is union with God, and Hell is the absence of him. Your life has a plot. Your life has purpose. Your life has value. We need to see how we fit into this big love story to begin to know why we exist. And that love of God isn't abstract—it has a face and name: Jesus.

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

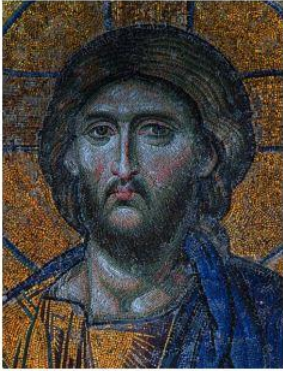
Everyone should participate.

1. Think of a family story that has been passed on to you by your parents or other relatives that you have shared with others. What makes it a story worth sharing?
2. Placing yourself in the story of salvation, who are the characters? What is the conflict? And, ultimately, what is the resolution?
3. A helpful parenting principle goes like this: rules without relationship leads to rebellion. How might this principle apply to Christianity? How might this apply to your own relationship with God?

DISCUSS & WRITE:

4. What is one take-away for you from this episode?

EP 5: WHO IS JESUS?



The most beautiful part of this story is that we can personally know God’s love. This is the person of Jesus. But how did this seemingly insignificant carpenter born into poverty in a dusty corner of the Roman Empire become the most pivotal figure in all of history? Christianity isn’t simply a philosophy for life—the center of Christianity is a person. We look at the life of Jesus and what he came to do. Ultimately, we need to decide if Jesus really was who he said he was. We can’t sit on the fence. Because if Jesus really was who he said he was, we need to make him the Lord of our lives, and when we do, everything changes.

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

Everyone should participate.

1. Who is an influencer in your life?
2. Who do you influence?
3. How would you describe living life to the full?
4. Are there any convincing arguments to suggest that Jesus was lying about his identity?
5. Are there any convincing arguments to suggest that Jesus was deluded about his identity?
6. If you are convinced that Jesus is who he claimed to be, what impact should that have on your day-to-day living?

DISCUSS & WRITE:

7. What is one take-away for you from this episode?

EP 6: AM I SAVED?



What Jesus did for us through his life, death, and resurrection was the greatest act of love in history. He saved us. He did this for each one of us. Personally. But some might feel unworthy of this gift of love. We may feel we have too much baggage. We may feel unlovable. But God didn't come to reveal himself to us on a pedestal—he came to enter into our messy human condition. To fix us from within. To transform us from the inside out. Some might be surprised by how generous the love of God really is. We don't deserve God's love, but that's the amazing reality of God's mercy. This relationship with God isn't all about our love for him. It's about his love for us that changes our lives forever.

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

Everyone should participate.

1. What is an accomplishment that you are proud of?
2. How do you define success?
3. How do you deal with failure?
4. Read Luke 15:11-32 (<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/15> - Scroll down to "The Parable of the Lost Son.")
 - The question "Am I Saved?" could be rephrased as "Will my father take me back?" In the original rabbinical (Jewish teaching) telling of the story, the father does not welcome the son back because he had dishonored the family. It was intended as a moral lesson to deter such behavior by children. But Jesus changed the story completely. Not only does the father welcome him home, but actually runs out to greet his returning child, embracing him and then throwing a great feast in his honor. How does the Father's love impact your view of salvation?
5. What do you think would happen if you gave your family permission to come to you privately and ask you for an apology if you have hurt them in some way?

DISCUSS & WRITE:

6. What is one take-away for you from this episode?

EP 7: WHY A CHURCH?



How do I access this man who lived 2,000 years ago? How do I live this call of love? We uniquely encounter the love of God in his Church. But really? The Church? There are so many negative views of the Church. It's out of touch. It's full of bad people. It's just too boring. Maybe when we say "the Church" we mean a little more. The Church is the family of God that's been lovingly gathered through our entire story. It's the place where we were meant to encounter his grace that prepares us for every step of life. The God that is love knows how we're made—material and spiritual—and we need tangible ways to live our faith. We can't be spiritual but not religious. This is where we'll find ultimate happiness in life. This is where the God that has been seeking humanity, who wrote the deepest desires onto our human hearts, encounters us. Jesus' first words to humanity in the Gospel of John are "what do you seek?" The one that asked the question not only knows the answer—he *is* the answer. The answers to everything. And you find him most profoundly here in his Church.

FAMILY DISCUSSION:

Everyone should participate.

1. What is the most beautiful church you have ever visited?
2. What is a meaningful memory you have related to the Church?
3. If you met the Pope, what question would you ask him?

DISCUSS & WRITE:

4. What is one take-away for you from this episode?

5. At your Confirmation Mass, when you come up with your Sponsor, the Bishop will use Chrism oil to make the sign of the cross on your forehead, then he will say, "[Name], be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." And you will respond, "Amen," which means "I believe." You can believe and still have questions about God and Faith. What questions do you have about God, Faith, and being Catholic?
