

Coaching Points for Life's Big Questions (Week 1): Is there a God?

Key Concept:

Is there a God?¹

Bible Study:

Read Mark 1-4

Coaching Points

1. We encourage you not to ask your friend to commit for 6 weeks up front--just ask for one week. Tell them the second week is completely up to them. If they perceive that an additional week will add more value to their life, then you can go through the second of Life's Big Questions..
2. Help your friend download the YouVersion Bible app on their phone. It's free and less awkward if they want to reference it in a restaurant. Typically you need to show the person how to use the Bible app because it is set to use the default translation of King James. In most cases, we recommend using the New International Version for a combination of accuracy and readability, though you may use any translation you prefer. Also show them how to access the first four chapters.
3. If you are wondering how to invite a friend into a journey of learning with you through addressing Life's Big Questions, here is a recommended approach:
 - a. Pray specifically that your friend will experience the love of Jesus Christ
 - b. Invite your friend to lunch/coffee
 - c. While at lunch ask them to share their story. Christians have testimonies--people have stories, so ask for their story, not their testimony.
 - d. In most cases, your friend will leave out anything about God from their story. If they share openly about their faith, hope, and love in Jesus, then praise God!! Your friend may be actively following Christ, which great. You should not, however, be concerned about whether someone calls themselves a "Christian" or not. The point isn't whether or not they consider themselves a Christian. The point is whether they are actively following Jesus and living out His call to mentor others (or make disciples). If they are already actively mentoring others (making disciples), praise God. If not, then maybe you can encourage them toward the mentoring process if they aren't being mentored and/or mentoring others.

¹ We are greatly indebted to the Christianity Explored Material and have incorporated the shell of the outline that follows for the next 6 weeks from Christianity Explored.

- e. If your friend leaves out anything about God in their story, then say, “I”m convinced we’re all on a journey that has many different aspects. There is an intellectual aspect to our journey that is shaped by school. There is a health and fitness part of our journey that is shaped by sports and working out and eating. What about the spiritual aspect of your journey? Did you go to church growing up? From here, you’ll find out their spiritual past.
 - i. KEY PT: Bridge the past into the present by asking, “Tell me how your upbringing shapes your spiritual journey now? Do you feel close to God or far from God right now?”
 - ii. Based on their answers, you can invite them into a mentoring group or to walk through the Life’s Big Questions Journey with you over lunch or coffee.
 - iii. If you are inviting them to journey with you through Life’s Big Questions, make sure you do so humbly, as a learner. You don’t come with all the answers. Rather, you come as one ready to learn yourself. Your friend has been through life experiences you haven’t. They have learned things you have not and have thoughts and questions that will greatly help you if you come in as one who is *always* on a journey of learning from everyone around you. Make sure they see and hear a humble approach to a journey of learning, together..
4. At the end of this document, you will find a one page outline, which you may or may not need. Once you have a friend to take through this, one option is to have your friend read the material on Life’s Big Questions in advance and then you simply talk through it with them over lunch. Alternatively, you may prefer to have the discussion be more free flowing and not as tied to the material. In that event, simply have them read the chapters in Mark in advance of your time with your friend and you can steer the discussion as much or as little as you like toward the content provided.
5. If at all possible, have them read the word of God themselves in Mark. In rare cases, people will object, and that is fine. You can journey together without the book of Mark, but it is preferable if they will read Mark because of the power of the word of God to transform lives.
6. Think of struggles that you have had in relating to God and share those when you are at lunch as a way of connecting with your friend when you begin.
7. For the Bono analogy, if your friend hasn’t read the material in advance, feel free to pick any really famous person that you like.
8. Move Through Exhibits A-C fairly quickly. If you don’t cover one, don’t worry about it. Make sure, however, that you cover Exhibit D on Jesus Power and Authority to Forgive Sins. Exhibit D is critical.
 - a. When you are discussing Exhibit D (wth the story of the paralytic), ask your friend to think of ways that he/she has built his/her life around things other than God? Share ways that you have done so.

ONE PAGE OUTLINE

1. Underlying questions
 - a. Is there a God?
 - b. If so, how I relate to he, she, or it?
2. Problems People Have in Relating to God
 - a. Boring Church (ergo: boring God)
 - b. Hypocrites who are Christians
 - c. Irrelevant & culturally regressive book
 - d. End of Reason/Science
 - e. Guilt
3. God's answer to the problems
 - a. Mark 1:1 (Gospel--good news)
 - b. Col. 1:15 the visible image of the invisible God
 - c. Bono
 - d. Mark 1:1 Christ...Not Last Name
 - i. Martyr-Mark drug to pieces
 - ii. Paschal-throats cut
4. Big Question: Who Was Jesus?
 - a. Answer: God
 - i. Exhibit A: The power and authority with which Jesus teaches
 1. What gives the authority to teach in our culture?
 2. Good Will Hunting
 3. Mark 1:21-22
 - ii. Exhibit B: His Power and Authority over Sickness
 1. 1:29-31 (sickness)
 2. 1:34 (whole crowds healed)
 3. 1:40 (leprosy-ebola)
 4. Paralytic, Josephus
 - iii. Exhibit C: His Power and Authority Over Nature
 1. Mark 4:35-41 Storm on the Lake
 - iv. Exhibit D Power and Authority to Forgive Sins
 1. Only God can forgive sin
 2. Definition of sin
 3. Chariots of Fire
 4. Ask how your friend has built his or her life around something other than God & share how you have
 - v. Summarize
 1. So we've seen at least two things:
 - a. Jesus was both a man and God
 - b. As men and women, we each have a problem--a sin problem