

Questions of Faith for Youth Series II

VHS #2640; DVD #2649

Study Guide

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of this video series is to stimulate thoughtful discussion among youth about issues and faith questions. Nineteen high-school and college students from across the country were interviewed on camera. Their comments were edited to create a montage of reflections on each topic.

Their responses are offered not as answers, but as food for thought. This guide includes suggestions about Scripture, but you and your group are encouraged to identify other passages you consider helpful as the various issues are discussed. You may want to suggest that your group view the tape with several questions in mind. For instance:

1. What new or different insights are raised for me?
2. What statements are made that match or clarify my own positions?
3. With what statements do I disagree?
4. Why do I think youth with whom I disagree believe what they do?
5. Why do I think the way I do?

How This Guide Is Organized

This guide is arranged so that you can copy parts of it for handouts:

- A. For Handing Out Before Viewing
On pages 3-4, the programs are listed with some suggested Bible references
- B. For Handing Out After Viewing
Pages 5-16 contain material to aid discussion. It is strongly suggested that these pages be distributed only after the group has viewed the program in question, so as not to limit viewer reaction. For each program, there is an outline to assist in recalling who said what.

Pages 17-18 contain suggested questions for discussion for all six programs.

A Suggested Procedure for the Sessions

1. View the tape all the way through. Discuss.
2. Or view the tape twice, stopping the second time for discussion or reflection when the responses show the subject has shifted. Many groups that have used the earlier *Questions of Faith* series say they found taking time for a second viewing to be very helpful. Some groups even spent their next session on a second viewing and further discussion.
3. Either way, you may want, after the program has been viewed, to hand out the outline for the program you have just viewed.

The questions to stimulate reflection or discussion are suggestions only. Use them if they're helpful. People discovered while using the *Questions of Faith* series that they didn't need a half-dozen questions to stimulate discussion. They also discovered that a very helpful way to begin is simply to ask members to share what struck them most.

A Word About Preparation and Equipment

For a smooth and effective showing, these steps are recommended:

1. Preview each program.
2. Adjust the VCR and the TV set for sharp picture and clear sound in advance.
3. Cue up the tape in advance so the opening titles appear when you turn on the machine.
4. Adjust the room light for comfortable viewing.
5. Rearrange seating for discussion if necessary, and if possible, after viewing. A circle or oval so members can make eye contact is ideal.

THE PROGRAMS

NOTE: This page may be copied and distributed in advance to help in preparation for viewing.

To get at aspects of the title questions, additional questions were asked. The responses generally reveal which question has been asked. The questions will give you a quick preview of the content of each session.

The Bible references will help in locating passages referred to by participants and other relevant scripture. You may want to read these passages before viewing.

WHY PRAY?

What's the value of praying? Do you think God answers prayer? What do you pray for? What do you think God does when opposing sides pray to win?

Biblical References: Matthew 6:1-13
Matthew 7:7-12
Luke 11:1-15
Romans 8:26

WHO DO YOU WANT TO BECOME?

What's your idea of a good person? Who do you look up to? Is there any way you want to change? Does religion have anything to do with that?

Biblical References: Mark 10:17-22
Luke 10:25-37
Micah 6:8

HOW MUCH STUFF DO YOU NEED?

Does money cause you problems? How important is having the right clothes? What's money good for? Does your faith have anything to say about money and things?

Biblical References: Matthew 6:19-34; 19:16-26
1 Timothy 6:6-11

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT?

How do you make choices? If you say your best friend cheating, would you tell? Is there increasing pressure on youth to break the law? What tempts you the most? Does your faith help?

Biblical References: Exodus 20:1-17
Matthew 5,6,7; 22:34-40

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT VIOLENCE?

Is violence a problem in your school or neighborhood? Have you been the victim of violence or had violent urges? What can people your age do about it?

Biblical References: Isaiah 2:1-4
 Jeremiah 6:13-15
 Matthew 5:1-12; 5:21-24; 6:38-48

IS LOVING YOURSELF EASY?

Do you have to be accepted by others to feel OK about yourself? Do you know youth who are depressed or suicidal? Can a person have too much self-esteem? Do you believe God loves you?

Biblical References: John 3:16
 Genesis 1:26-31
 John 15:9
 Romans 8:38-39
 1 John 4:19

Suggestions to Aid Discussion

1. View actively (For example, look for conflicting views or note questions that occur to you while viewing).
2. During discussion, the leader need not be alarmed if there are pauses in the discussion. Wait 30 seconds before saying something to stimulate a response.
3. Look for ways to include less talkative group members, but remember that members should be allowed to participate at the level that is comfortable for them.

WHY PRAY?

(To be handed out after the group has viewed this program.)

OUTLINE

As a discussion aid, listed below are the persons who speak in this program, in order of appearance, with a few key words to assist in recalling their thoughts.

Sarah	...when I pray I think, Is anyone listening to me?
Dana	...You can talk to him anytime you want.
Nse	...a time for myself.
Rebecca	...it's so easy to get into...now I lay me down to sleep...
Toiya	...I just see it as communicating...simple little things...
David	...as a Native American person...
Tyhisha	...I don't ask God for anything.
Laiandrea	It's a time when you can admit that you're not the greatest.
Jon	Trying to improve myself, I guess, was what I used prayer for.
Holly	...a way to kind of sort things out...
Steve	...should be asking him for stuff that's really gonna count...
Tyhisha	Well, God let me tell you...
Bob	...I pray for the things I want...
Tom	I pray for people that are in need.
David	...prayers that my ancestors prayed...
Stephanie	...if you agree, God agrees with you.
Holly	...you want God to know you're willing to change...
Sarah	I don't think life is one big video game.
Michelle	God is very sad when his creatures are in conflict...
Julie	I've never seen a tie in a war...yes to one; no to another.
Holly	I would probably just sit there and cry.

Rebecca ...prayers aren't answered...leaves me with more questions.

Holly ...really silly. I say, "within two days I need to know..."

Jennifer ...song by Garth Brooks...

Nse Prayer is not just a one way street.

Laiandrea ...Praying for goodness to happen...

Rich I really don't feel that my prayers are not answered.

Stephanie ...brother who just cut a rap record.

Rebecca I think it's more subtle than that.

Nse I don't feel that you can say, "God, if you love me you'll do this for me."

Steve ...my grandma was in the hospital...

Tom ...lose that connection with God.

Michelle ...prayer...very scary because you're having to let your whole soul out...

Stephanie ...pyramids of human bodies...

WHO DO YOU WANT TO BECOME?

(To be handed out after the group has viewed this program.)

OUTLINE

Tome	...genuine with their feelings and with their actions...
Nse	I don't like fake people.
Steve	...a follower of Christ.
Dana	It doesn't matter with religion...
Rebecca	...try to understand others and help.
Tyhisha	...walk the walk and talk the talk...
Holly	...a servant rather than a serve...
Stephanie	... a person who loves people...
Sarah	My parents used to be my big role models...
Tom	Jesus Christ...the perfect role model.
Nse	...my grandmother on my father's side.
Jon	I look up to my father...
Tyhisha	My hero is my cousin Charlene.
Michelle	Martin Luther King, Jr. is one.
Sarah	I just think, "Wow. I'm really bad.
Jon	...trying to have as little impact on the earth as possible...
Laiandrea	I wanta be a giving person.
Dana	...someone who gives everyone a fair chance...
Bob	They know that they can trust me.
Tyhisha	And I don't want to be self centered.
Julie	I think living your life is much more important than what you say.
Nse	I would like to be real.
Rebecca	There are a lot of things I'd like to change in myself actually.

Bob I can change if I just keep walking...

Dana I feel myself not being fair...

Sarah ...able to think about what I say before I say it.

Nse ...I tend to hold things in...

Jon ...motor vehicles really bother me.

Toiya I'm very possessive...

Michelle ...I wish I didn't put such an emphasis on how must I eat...

Tom ...my faith comes and goes...

Holly I have God to depend on...

Rebecca I do believe in taking everything in from what religion says...

Laiandrea Whenever you can give back, do...

Nse ...you can just leave your religion hanging. You have to exercise it.

HOW MUCH STUFF DO YOU NEED?

(To be handed out after the group has viewed this program.)

OUTLINE

- Bob Both having money and not having money cause a problem...
- Tom ...focus on money quite a bit...
- Jon ...really bummed, but life goes on.
- Tyhisha If I don't have enough money I'm sad.
- Laiandrea ...difficult to live in a big city without money.
- Dana What matters is if I can't buy what I need...
- Nse I see my father as a very material type of person...
- Julie ...we are very rich.
- Sarah ...get our wants and our needs confused.
- Stephanie I'm overwhelmed by the shopping experience in America.
- Tyhisha When I can't buy what I want I'm like a baby.
- Holly When money is the most important thing...it's dangerous.
- Rebecca ...I take 2 hours to decide...
- Tyhisha ...shoes gotta be name brand...
- Sarah ...I dated this guy...who would only buy some expensive label...
- Steve ...get shot or stabbed for a hundred [dollar] pair of sneakers...
- Holly If you don't feel like you look good...may not feel good...
- Dana It's not real important to have the right clothes...just to have some.
- Sarah I do think that you are judged by how you look.
- Rebecca ...money is...teaching kids these days that that's what counts.
- David ...forget about things such...family, friends...the simple things in life.
- Rich ...money doesn't bring happiness.
- Laiandrea I hate the whole system of money.

Stephanie ...money causes pain and wars and griefs and murders, and its' evil.

Steve Money makes people greedy...

Julie ...money can be a good thing if you share it...

Rebecca ...faith does say a lot about greed...

David ...having a give away.

Holly ...if you feel guilt for having something, then maybe you shouldn't have bought it.

Bob ...all a matter of what you do with the money...

Sarah Nothing I could have on earth could even measure up, to what I can have in heaven.

Holy ...if you're doing something good for someone else then God's gonna provide for you.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT?

(To be handed out after the group has viewed this program.)

OUTLINE

- Steve ...adults know what's better.
- Sarah ...your conscience plays a big part...
- Toiya ...read in the Bible...
- Jon ...I try to be independent...
- Jennifer ...your heart basically knows...
- Tom ...your instincts or it could be God...
- Stephanie I believe that we all have God within...
- Julie ...Bible to tell me what's right...
- Sarah ...father...stepmother...not Christians.
- Rebecca ...parents' role in making decisions is more important than anyone else's...
- Rich ...parents suggest things I don't see.
- Stephanie You have to trust your parents...
- Sarah ...friend whose parents smoke pot.
- Dana My whole English class was cheating...
- Julie I've seen people cheating...
- Rebecca ...allegiance first to my friends...
- Rich ...I would not report...him...
- Dana ...great pressure on teenagers today to break the law...
- Julie ...they drive after night and that is breaking the law.
- Stephanie You prove that you have guts by the kind of character that you have.
- Rebecca ...lifted these from the mall...
- Toiya Who says...increasing pressures to break the law?
- Bob ...temptations to go with their feelings...

Tom ...opposite sex, I get so tempted.

Tyhisha My greatest temptation is drinking.

Rebecca ...biggest problem would be drugs.

Jon ...the power to manipulate certain powerful objects...

Dana ...biggest temptation would be money.

Sarah ...tempting to downplay my Christianity...

Tom ...peer pressure is one of the biggest temptations ever...

Rebecca ...tempting to want to not pay attention to what's going on around you...

Bob ...church could help...but it's also...it's two ways, you know.

Dana ...got youth programs more on track.

Tyhisha My church is a sometime church.

Tom ...church...really something good...

Toiya ...what the church is for is to help people sort out their problems.

Stephanie You have to be there for your friend.

Sarah It's easier when you stick together.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT VIOLENCE?

(To be handed out after the group has viewed this program.)

OUTLINE

Rebecca	...we're only hurting ourselves.
David	...child abuse, spouse abuse...
Tom	...people being thrown into lockers...
Rich	...she was at an ATM...they shot her twice.
Tyhisha	...watching my back every day...
Laiandrea	I see people referring to each other with curse words and hate words...
Sarah	...my brother beats me up.
Rebecca	...chased brother around the house...
Nse	...a friend of mine was shot and killed...
Steve	He got junked just because of his jacket...
Michelle	...gang violence is a reaction to lack of family.
David	...people's inability to cope with society...
Jennifer	I have friends who have parents who could care less about them...
Sarah	...we'd get spanked...
Tyhisha	...if I beat you up, then I'm the stud of the neighborhood.
Bob	society brings up people to want more...
Jon	...evil villain...big hero, but both of them are violent.
Stephanie	The country grew through violence.
Holly	Anger is...so deep-seated...
Dana	I'm constantly afraid of someone hitting me.
Julie	...not afraid...probably should be but I'm not.
Laiandrea	...it's even worse for the person who's always expecting it to be so bad...
Rebecca	I don't walk around in fear and I think it's important not to...

Tyhisha My brother had got shot in the face...

Tom ...turn the other cheek...

Rich I think we basically...fell helpless.

Rebecca ...people don't know how to deal with things anymore...

Julie ...decrease, if people paid attention to those who end up being violent.

Stephanie ...young people need to be more vocal...

Holly a lot of it has to do with people not caring.

Tom ...the anger wells up in me and I'm not real sure how to control it...

Rebecca The important thing to do is take a step back and say, Wait a minute. What am I saying here?

IS LOVING YOURSELF EASY?

(To be handed out after the group has viewed this program.)

OUTLINE

Tyhisha	...I love me. I like the way I look...
Jon	...not gonna put on false facts.
Tom	...hard to love myself sometimes...
Sarah	...you know everything that you've thought...said...done
Jennifer	It's neither hard nor easy to love myself.
Rebecca	...Gosh, I need to be 5 lbs lighter...
Stephanie	My own love and acceptance is most important to me.
Julie	I'm a perfectionist...doesn't cause me not to like myself.
Dana	...if I keep doing 'em wrong, then how can I love myself...
Steve	...only person...I have to be accepted by is God.
Michelle	...love...is that of my little sister.
Julie	...my parents love and acceptance is most important...
Holly	...I need to be accepted by others.
Rich	...it depends on what you are trying to get accepted into.
Tyhisha	...I didn't come into this world for anybody to love me.
Nse	If you don't like me, tough.
Jon	I think certainly someone can have too much self-esteem
Dana	...too much self-esteem is a contradiction in words.
Toiya	...when...you think...you're better...that's too much self-esteem.
Julie	...people...ego problems aren't people with too much self-esteem.
Jennifer	...tried to commit suicide because they don't like themselves.
Tyhisha	...she was dark but that's not a reason to hate yourself or anything like that.
Nse	Suicide, eating disorders...ways that people try to escape.

Jon ...we...all got together...worked at it and finally she got better.

Sarah I think you need at least one person to tell you that you're o.k. to believe it.

Jodi ...didn't feel like I would be accepted without doing the things that I did...

Jon ...I feel loved by the earth.

Tom ...God loves everyone.

Nse ...I've been given the same gift of life as any murderers...

Rebecca I believe God loves me. Sometimes I don't know why.

Stephanie God looked at us and said "these are exquisite beings."

Dana ...God loves everything he made...

Laiandrea ...It's given to you...God loves you.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why Pray?

1. What comment touched you the most?
2. In what ways is prayer valuable to you?
3. Do you agree that God knows what you need?
4. Do you agree that prayer should be for things that really count? What are those things?
5. Do you think prayer changes God's mind?
6. Is there anything you'd never pray for?

Who Do You Want to Become?

1. What comment touched you the most?
2. What would you add to the definition of a good person?
3. Do you have Biblical heroes? other heroes?
4. From whom did you get your idea of what a good person is?
5. How important are cheerfulness & cleanliness?
6. How has religion influenced your ideas about who you'd like to be?
7. What would you change in yourself? In your best friend? In your least favorite person?

How Much Stuff Do You Need?

1. What comment struck you the most?
2. Does money burn a hole in your pocket?
3. How good are you at distinguishing between wants and needs? What do your parents think?
4. Do you need expensive things?
5. Should teenagers have jobs?
6. What is causing people to want things they don't need?
7. How do you reconcile taking responsibility for yourself and trusting God to provide?

How Do You Know What is Right?

1. What comment touched you the most?
2. How hard do you think it is to know what's right?
3. When you do know what's right, is it hard to do right?
4. Do you trust your feelings about right and wrong?
5. Does God work through your instincts?
6. To whom do you look for advice?
7. Is cheating a problem you have to deal with?
8. What do you think are the greatest temptations?

What Can You Do About Violence?

1. What comment touched you the most?
2. Do you think violence is a problem?
3. What kinds of violence do you see when you look around your school or neighborhood?
4. Is wanting things the cause of violence, or is it deeper than that?
5. Are parents responsible? Teachers? Who?
6. What do you think are the causes of violence?

7. Are you afraid of violence? Should you be? Are your parents afraid?
8. What would make you act violently?

Is Loving Yourself Easy?

1. What comment touched you the most?
2. The youth on the tape didn't agree about whether loving yourself was hard or easy? What do you think?
3. What do you want or need to do in order to be more acceptable?
4. Is wanting acceptance from your little sister the same as wanting it from friends? or parents?
5. What are you willing to do to be accepted?
6. Is it easy to know God loves you? Does it matter? How do you know?