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***WEEK 3
TEACHING GUIDE***

BIBLE

Luke 24:44-53; 2 Timothy 3:16-17;

Hebrews 4:12

BIG IDEA

When you still have questions,

look to God's words.

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY **| Intergalactic Dodgeball**

* Welcome back to *Reasonable Doubt* and to outer space! This is your intergalactic dodgeball league and it's time to see if you've gotten any better at ducking, diving, and dodging your way out of uncertainty.
* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Use a room that can be completely dark to set up an intergalactic dodgeball universe. Buy or borrow* [*black lights*](https://growcurriculum.org/growstudents-reasonabledoubt-amazon/) *that can be used around the perimeter or above the playing area. Buy or borrow* [*neon soft foam dodgeballs*](https://growcurriculum.org/growstudents-reasonabledoubt-amazon/)*. Make a playing area with* [*neon blacklight reactive tape*](https://growcurriculum.org/growstudents-reasonabledoubt-amazon/)*. Use whatever dodgeball rules you want and have fun! We suggest playing a* [*dramatic song*](https://growcurriculum.org/ELOTimePrologueHDVinylRecording) *like "Time: Prologue" (ELO) or another like it to introduce your teams or team captains.*

ACTIVITY **| 3-Minute Meteorite Fight**

* When it comes to God, why does asking questions feel like such a bad thing sometimes? When we have a bunch of them they can make us feel like we're at war.
* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give everyone five sheets of paper. Have them write their biggest questions to God on each paper and then crumple their questions into meteorites. Make a line in the center of the room with neon tape. The challenge is to have the fewest number of question-meteorites on their side at the end of three minutes. As a teaching tool, play short clip clips from a video of* [*Star Wars space battles*](https://growcurriculum.org/StarWarsSpaceBattlesOnlyHD) *during the game.*
* Hopefully at this point in our series, you're starting to see our questions don't have to be battles we dread. They can actually lead us to something good.

QUESTIONS **| Out Of This World Questions**

* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Use a* [*random question generator*](https://growcurriculum.org/RandomQuestions) *to take turns answering questions, like . . .*
	+ **What's the strangest thing you've ever found?**
	+ **When was your last overreaction? Why did it happen?**
	+ **What's the worst purchase you've ever made?**
	+ **What's the story behind needing to replace your last phone?**
* Questions can be fun! They help us tell stories and also reveal what's true about people.
	+ **Who do you enjoy asking questions with?**
	+ **Where do you look when you're needing answers?**

DISCUSSION

* + **What's one question you wish you knew the answer to?**
	+ **What's a question you've asked (or Googled) recently that led you to learn something interesting or surprising?**

ACTIVITY **| Question the Question**

* None of us have all of the answers but all of us can ask better questions! Write down a big question you've always wanted to ask or get answered. It doesn't have to be super serious, but it can be!
* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you'll need a shoebox, index cards, pens, and wrapping paper. Before your teaching time, wrap the shoebox in two pieces so the lid can be removed and cut a hole in the top where index cards can be dropped in. Decorate the box with a ton of* [*question mark stickers*](https://growcurriculum.org/growstudents-reasonabledoubt-amazon/)*. On index cards, have students write down one big question and drop it into the box. Pick a few out of the box, then for each question, ask a deeper question for students to respond to. For example, if a student asked, “Why don’t I ever get invited to do things?" you could ask, "What does being included feel like?" Or if a student asked, “How did the universe get here?” you could ask, “What evidence is there that the universe was created by a God who loves us?”*
* Questions are great, but sometimes the questions beneath the questions are even more interesting. They might even lead us to the answers we’re really looking for.
* Have you ever questioned your questions before? Questioning your question could look like asking . . .
	+ Why am I so curious about this?
	+ What prompted me to ask this question?
	+ What emotions am I feeling when I think about this question?
	+ Do I have an even deeper question beneath this question?
* Sometimes, the initial question is just the beginning of finding the real feeling or purpose around the answers you're looking for.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

STORY **| Talk about a time you had a question that wasn’t clearly answered in the Bible.**

* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story from your own life (or ask a volunteer or student to tell a story) about a time you had a question that wasn’t clearly answered in the Bible. Your question might be about how the universe was created, how to make it through a tough break-up, or why God allowed something difficult to happen. Talk about the frustration you felt and the questions you had. But then share how the Bible did say something about your deeper questions. Use this format and example to get you started:*
	+ ***What was your question?*** *"How was the universe created?"*
	+ ***What was your deeper question?*** *"God, are you in control or was everything just an accident?"*
	+ ***What did God have to say about your deeper question?*** *"Yes, God is in control and everything (including me) was created on purpose and with love."*

DISCUSSION

* + **\* What's a question some people might have about God or faith that isn't clearly answered in the Bible? Why don't you think it's more clearly addressed in Scripture?**
	+ **\* What are some deeper questions that might be beneath those questions? What does the Bible say about those questions?**

SCRIPTURE **| Luke 24:44-53**

* Like we’ve been talking about, we’re not the only ones who’ve had questions for God that don’t seem to have satisfying answers. In the days before Jesus left earth, Jesus’ disciples definitely had some.
	+ Remember, the disciples would have experienced grief, sadness, and trauma watching Jesus go through his arrest, brutal pain, and then death. Then they got to see him again, which was of course a dream come true . . . but would have been pretty shocking too.
	+ That’s a pretty dramatic emotional roller coaster, right? And right when they thought the ride was over because Jesus was back from the dead, the floor dropped out from under them one more time.
	+ Jesus made it clear he wouldn’t be sticking around forever. Very soon, he would be leaving earth — for good.
* Jesus and the disciples had spent nearly three years together, but now everything would be changing. Imagine hanging out with your best friends your freshman, sophomore, and junior years. Then, you find out one of the besties is changing plans. Leaving. Ditching the daily hangs. The senior year you imagined starts to crumble.
* Jesus and those who followed him weren't experiencing the drama of high school but they were experiencing an immense amount of change that caused doubt and questions. Knowing how scary this would probably be for his friends, check out what Jesus said.
* **INSTRUCTIONS:***Read Luke 24:44-53.*
* Jesus was right there in the middle of his friends’ reasonable questions and concerns. He responded in two ways:
	+ He helped them remember the words God had already given them and how they had been proven true in the past.
	+ Then Jesus gave them some new words too.
* There were a lot of questions Jesus’ followers could have asked, like, “What day and time are you leaving? Where exactly are you going? How are you getting there? How does that work, scientifically? What’s going to happen when you’re gone? How do we get in touch with you? Are you sure this is the best plan?”
* But instead of answering those obvious questions, Jesus answered their deeper questions.
	+ He reminded them to look to him.
	+ He reminded them to look to his Spirit, who would be coming to them soon.
	+ And he pointed them back to God’s words, where answers could always be found.
* With those tools, the disciples had everything they needed to move forward and embrace their mission. And they did! They continued by spreading Jesus' message, which could help every person who was ever troubled, including people with big questions.

DISCUSSION

* + **\* Sometimes Jesus-followers don't agree about how Scripture answers some of our big questions. Why do you think that is?**
	+ **\* When Jesus-followers disagree about what God's words are saying, what do you think we should *not* do? What can we do instead?**

SCRIPTURE **| 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

* Letters. Have you ever mailed one? Written one? Received one? Letters are true relics these days, but they can be powerful forms of communication. Today, we have the benefit of satellites and instant access to people we care about through countless messaging options. But for those living around the time of Jesus' resurrection, letters were like a bridge between worlds.
	+ The apostle Paul wrote some of these letters to a younger leader named Timothy in the early church, hoping he'd hang them and pass them around (and he did). These words have crossed time and space to be something we can benefit from too.
	+ Here’s what Paul wanted Timothy to understand about God’s words.
* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17.*
* Paul knew something about life he wanted Timothy to know. He knew life would give Timothy (and future Jesus-followers) an endless stream of doubts and challenges. In those moments, he knew we’d need to know where to look for help.
* Paul described God's words as useful. But how? God's words can help us in a lot of ways. They can . . .
	+ Teach us things.
	+ Pull us up and place us where we need to be.
	+ Correct what we're thinking to get us back on track.
	+ Train us to be people who make things right.
* Paul says all Scripture is "God-breathed," meaning God gives those Scriptures life. That means we can trust it to reveal God's heart, character, and mission. In all of these ways, God gives us answers, even when we have more questions than we can count. So **when you still have questions, look to God's words.**

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

IMAGES **| Dark (and Not-So-Dark) Skies**

* Have you ever tried to count the stars? Sometimes they are tough to see. Clouds, light pollution, homes, and more keep us from seeing how many stars are really out there. Sometimes we simply forget to look up.
* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As you teach, show at least two images: one of a night sky with* [*no visible stars*](https://growcurriculum.org/NoVisableStars) *or* [*only faint stars*](https://growcurriculum.org/OnlyFaintStars)*, and one or more images with* [*many stars*](https://growcurriculum.org/ManyStars) *and* [*many colors*](https://growcurriculum.org/ColorfulStars) *visible.*
* But did you know there are places in the world called "dark sky reserves"? They've earned the title because they have almost no light pollution blocking your ability to see the stars. Stars, color, and texture seem to multiple by the millions there. The stars there are easier to see and so spectacular that these areas are protected.
	+ Sometimes, like those nights when we can't see many stars at all, we don't notice any questions or doubts we have about God.
	+ Sometimes, on nights when the sky is a little clearer, we think we have just a few big questions, like the ones we talked about earlier — the questions that frustrate us because Scripture doesn't really seem to talk about them.
	+ But sometimes, when we really strip away all the distractions, we can more easily see the questions beneath the questions. These are the questions God's words help us answer.

DISCUSSION

* + **Read Hebrews 4:12. Have God's words ever helped you better understand your own actions, thoughts, or feelings? If so, how did that help you grow?**
	+ **What challenges do you sometimes face when trying to get answers from God's words? What do you think might help?**

RESPONSE **| S.P.A.C.E Checklist**

* Trying to find answers to our questions through God's words can be intimidating. It might even feel impossible. But looking to Scripture for help doesn't have to be scary. It starts by exploring a little bit at a time and giving God the opportunity to speak to us as we grow.
* **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Invite students to write this checklist in their Bibles, a journal, or a note in their phones.*
* We've come up with an easy way to remember how to look to God's words when you have questions. When you have a question, make "space" for God's words by following this little checklist:
	+ **S:** **Say what you're wondering.** What are you wondering about? What question do you wish God would answer? Say it out loud, write it down, or just think it clearly in your mind.
	+ **P: Pray for help.** Let God know you have a question you're struggling to answer and you need help finding an answer in Scripture.
	+ **A: Ask for clarity.** Ask God to show you the questions beneath your question — the questions God's words can help answer. Are you wondering if God loves you? What your purpose is? How you can find a place to belong?
	+ **C: Capture your thoughts.** Capture all your questions and thoughts in a journal, in a voice memo, or in a note on your phone. When our thoughts only live in our minds, they can feel unclear. But when we capture our thoughts with words, it forces us to be clear about what we're thinking wondering — and it helps us remember it all later.
	+ **E: Explore God's answers.** Now it's time to explore what God's word says about the questions and struggles you've voiced. Bible reading plans, trusted friends and adults, pastors, mentors, books, devotionals, and word searches in Scripture are all good ways to get started.

**﻿**REFLECTION **| Gravity Prayers**

* Your questions might sometimes feel as uncountable as the stars, but in Scripture, God uses that same metaphor to talk about something else.
	+ Over and over again, Scripture connects God's trustworthiness and fulfilled promises with the stars in the sky.
	+ The birth of Jesus was announced with a bright shining star.
	+ The Bible says God spoke the stars (and everything else) into existence, just like God breathed life into Scripture.
* The same God who created those stars created the means for you to find answers to your deepest questions. So go ahead and write your questions in the sky. And, if you have answers God has already shown you, write those words in the sky too.
* Sometimes our questions are more than just a few and the gravity of them weighs heavily on us. But if our questions point us to God's words, then being a question-asker is a good thing. So **when you still have questions,** keep asking. **Look to God's words** for the answers you really need.

DISCUSSION

* + **What's one thing God has taught you through Scripture? How has it helped you grow?**
	+ **This week, what's one question you want to explore further? How will you do that?**