

Life, Faith, and Jesus in the Open Generation



Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to address preconceived notions, clarify basic Gospel truths, and get students engaged in Spiritual Conversations.

Objectives

Students will be able to ...

1. Define a Spiritual Conversation;
2. Answer the core questions, “Why do Christians have Spiritual Conversations?” and “What is so good about the Good News?”;
3. Identify common obstacles to engaging in Spiritual Conversations.

Instructions:

Organize students into groups of 4. Ask the Kickstarter Question. Feel free to ask and lead in a way that works best for your group. You can ask them to discuss in groups, or you can ask the entire class, or some combination of the two. But only devote 2-3 minutes in total for these Kickstarter Questions.

What to Print:

- Lesson 1 Handouts:
1 / person
- Lesson 1 Exit Ticket:
1 / person

Kickstarter Question:

What would you say is the difference between a “friend” and an “influencer”?

Part 1: Video + Group Activities

Play Video: “Course Introduction”

Spiritual Conversations Activities

1. As a whole class, reinforce what a Spiritual Conversation is.
 - a. Ask students, “What comes to mind when you hear ‘Spiritual Conversations’? Allow for some feedback.
 - b. Then write the following on the board: “It’s any conversation that has anything to do with spirituality, faith, non-faith, religion, God, Jesus, etc. So, it’s not necessarily about sharing the Gospel or even talking about God; it’s just talking about anything spirituality related.”

2. Predictions: Nationwide research of people who regularly have Spiritual Conversations with non-Christians were asked what they experienced during a typical conversation. Give students a moment to choose which three were their top responses from the choices below:
 - a. Peace, Laughter, Joy, Exhilaration, Stress, Annoyance, Confusion, Shame, Anger (SC p.46)
 - b. Answer: Peace, Laughter, Joy
3. Ask the students: How did you guess? What do you think of these responses?

Part 2: Spiritual Conversations Trivia

What Does the Research Say?

Instructions:



1. Refer to the handout.
2. Students should work in teams (the group they are sitting with).
3. Groups will work together to answer all of the questions before seeing the answers.
4. When groups are done answering all of the questions, reveal answers one at a time.
5. Use the discussion questions below to lead a summary reflection discussion.
6. Have fun!

Trivia Questions:

- a. How many Spiritual Conversations does the average Christian have in a year?

Answer: Less than 10

- b. Who is someone most people will likely engage in a Spiritual Conversation with?

Answer: Friend

- c. What is the most known fact known about Jesus for Open Gen?

Answer: Crucified

- d. What percent of teens around the world today own a Bible?

Answer: 59%

- e. What percent of Christians today believe that “when you die you will go to heaven because you confessed your sins and have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior”?

Answer: 49%

- f. More Christian teens than non-Christian teens believe they can make a positive impact on the world.

Answer: True, Christian (65%), Other Faiths (59%), No Faith (47%)

- g. What percent of Christians believe it is their responsibility to share the faith?

Answer: 64% of Christians believe it is their responsibility to share the faith

Discussion Questions:



Which answer is the most surprising to you? Which is the least surprising to you? (Answer in groups and/or with the whole class.)

Part 3: Bible + Group Discussion

What Does the Bible Say About Having Spiritual Conversations?

The purpose of this activity is to use Scripture to answer the foundational question: “Why do Christians have Spiritual Conversations in the first place?” Get students interacting with the Bible and with one another in a safe space in which they have the freedom to come to their own nuanced conclusions.



Instructions:

- 1. This is a small group activity.
- 2. Students will read each core question, then read/discuss the Bible verses, writing a brief summary of each verse.
- 3. Then they will synthesize the verses by writing a summary answer to the core question. Do this for both core questions.
- 4. When each small group is done with both core questions, discuss each group’s summary answer to both core questions as a whole group.
- 5. Finish the exercise by collectively viewing and reacting to the data graphic provided.



Why Do Christians Have Spiritual Conversations (Faith, Doubt, God, Jesus, Spiritual Things)?



Instructions:

In small groups, read each verse and discuss how they each partially answer the question: “Why do Christians have Spiritual Conversations?” Write a brief explanation of each verse. In the end, write your own one-sentence answer to the question.

Scripture Passages:

Matthew 22:36-40
Matthew 28:19-20
Deuteronomy 11:18-19
Romans 1:18
2 Corinthians 5:20

Possible One-Sentence Answers to the Core Question:

- We’re called to share our hope in God.
- We recognize that people (and the world) are broken and need help.
- Loving our neighbors involves sharing God’s love with them.
- This is how we can change the world, one Spiritual Conversation at a time.

Instructions:



In small groups, read each verse and discuss how they each partially answer the question: "What is so good about the Good News?" In the end, put all of them together into one sentence.

Scripture Passages:

John 3:16
John 14:6
1 Peter 3:15
John 10:10
Matthew 4:24

Possible One-Sentence Answers:

- First and foremost, God loves the world and all people.
- Jesus is God's remedy to a broken world.
- God offers good news to a world in desperate need.
- The Gospel is the greatest gift a person can share with another!
- The invitation is to all people as a gracious gift.

Take a Look at the Data Graphic

Instructions:

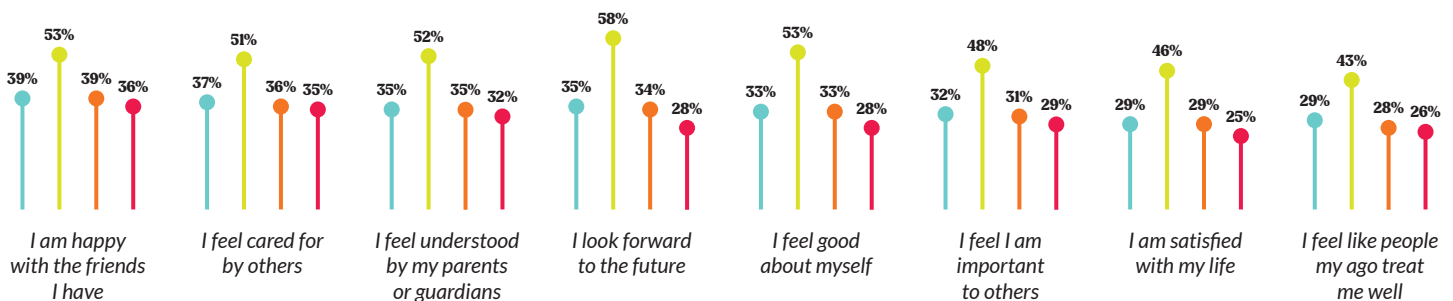


Collectively view the following data graphic and discuss as a class. What does or does not surprise you about this data?

Data Graphic: Christian teens' vs. non-Christian teens' view of life

A Place in the World

● All teens ● Bible engaged ● Bible open ● Bible unengaged



n=24,870 teens ages 13 to 17, July 21-August 24, 2021.

Ask: "What does or doesn't surprise you about this data?"

Part 4: Wrap-Up Video



Play Video: "Lesson 1 Wrap-Up"

Exit Ticket

Exit Tickets give students a chance to share their honest thoughts in a confidential manner with the teacher.

Instructions:



Distribute this lesson's Exit Ticket at the end of class and ask them to fill out the information individually. Then collect them as the class concludes. If time permits, the class can discuss the question after students have been given time to fill out the Ticket.

Exit Question:



Given that these conversations are so positive, why do you think Christians don't have Spiritual Conversations more often?