



JANUARY THEME

ILLUMINATE YOUR BRAIN

BIBLE STORY

Matthew 11:1-6 + James 1:5

Ask Away | John the Baptist in Prison

BOTTOM LINE

When you don't know what God says, ask

MEMORY VERSE

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

Psalm 119:105, NIV

LIFE APP

Knowledge | learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **KNOWLEDGE** and God's character, as shown through God's big story

This WEEK: We end our month on knowledge in **Matthew 11** where we find John the Baptist in prison. John wondered if Jesus was truly the Savior that God had promised and goes right to the Source to find out. Jesus responded with love and reassured John that all of God's promises are coming true.

Bottom Line: When you don't know what God says, ask. Even when you know God's Word, you may have questions about what God is doing in your life. We want kids to know that no question is too big for God. We pray that churches are creating environments where kids feel safe to ask hard questions about their faith. Let kids know that God will respond to their questions with love.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray that you would be an open source of wisdom and godly knowledge for your few to turn to when they face hard things. Ask God to continually prepare your heart to be open to your kids as they learn more about who God is and how to follow God.

•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

What You Need: "Question" color sheet, crayons

What You Do:

- As kids are coloring, talk about what kinds of things they might ask:
 - their mom
 - their dad
 - a teacher
 - a coach
 - a doctor
 - a zookeeper

•• 20 QUESTIONS

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Play a game of I Spy/20 Questions with your group. Tell your group that you are thinking about one of the kids in your group. They should ask questions to guess who you are thinking about.



- Help them get started with some good questions to ask such as: Is the person a girl? Is the person wearing red?, etc.
- Play several rounds using kids in the group as your object.
- To keep the game going, you can switch to thinking about something in your small group space or allow someone else in the group to take over, thinking of someone in the group/something in the area while you join in with the group asking questions.

What You Say: “You guys are smart thinkers! You asked some really good questions! **[Transition] Today in Large Group Worship/WOW Family Worship we’ll hear/we heard about someone who had a very important question for Jesus.**”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Large Group Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

- **HOT + COLD** (*application activity / review the Bible story*)

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Say: “Sometimes we have questions, don’t we? Sometimes we don’t know what to do or how to do something. Or maybe we need help finding something. What do we do when that happens? We ask for help, don’t we? It’s fun to get someone else’s help sometimes! Think back to this morning. What is one question you asked your family? (*Pause for answers*) Who did you ask? (*Pause for answers*) That was helpful, wasn’t it?”

In our Bible story for today John the Baptist is wondering if Jesus is the Savior they’ve been waiting for or if they should be looking for someone else. Instead of just wondering about it, he asked the question. And Jesus was glad he did! Just like your mom and dad are probably glad when you ask them questions...because they want to help you, don’t they?”

What You Do:

- Lead the kids in a game of ‘Hot and Cold’ where one person is “it” and closes their eyes.
- Keeping your hands on their shoulders to guide them, the person should ask “Am I getting warmer?” each time they take a few steps.
- The group should be ready to answer their “Am I getting warmer?” question with answers that will help guide them to the preselected spot.

“John the Baptist had plenty of reasons to know who Jesus was. But when tough times came, he started to have questions. Instead of keeping them in, he chose to ask Jesus. And Jesus was so glad John asked because then he could help him, just like you helped each other get to the end of the game!

“Just like Jesus was happy to help John the Baptist, Jesus is happy to answer your questions, too. You probably won’t hear a voice from heaven, but Jesus can help you find your answer in the Bible or by asking people who love him. So remember: **[Bottom Line] When you don’t know what God says, ask.**”

- **I HAVE THE BALL!** (*memory verse activity*)

What You Need: Ball pit ball

What You Do:

- Invite your group to sit in a circle.
- Pass the ball to the person on your right as you say this month’s memory verse.



- Every once in a while, stop and ask, “What comes next?” then figure it out together as a group.
- Keep passing the ball until you finish saying the verse. Then, reverse directions and say the verse again.
- Keep the game going by saying the verse in different voices, i.e. high voice, low voice, quiet voice, singing voice

What You Say: “Sometimes we forgot what was coming next and we needed help finishing the verse. Our memory verse reminds us that God’s Word is like a light or a lamp...it help us find things. So, when we have questions or when we’re confused or don’t know what to do, that’s one way we can ask God for help...we can read the Bible! So **[Bottom Line] when you don’t know what God says, ask.** You can pray and ask God for wisdom. You can ask me! Or you can ask an older family member or a sibling’s friend who follows God. And read your Bible or have someone read it to you! There are lots of ways to find out what God says.”

•• **ASK GOD** (*application activity*)

What You Need: Paper, crayons

What You Do:

- As a group, brainstorm some questions you might ask on any given day. It could be a question about anything, i.e. “How do I tie my shoes?” or “Why is the sky blue?” or “How do flowers grow?” or “How do I write my name?”
- Explain that we can go to God with questions about anything! Give each child a piece of paper and invite them to draw a picture of a question they have for God. Some will copy an exact idea from the brainstorming session, and some will come up with their own question. Either way is fine, as long as they participate in some way.

What You Say: “It’s ALWAYS okay to ask God questions. God loves you and wants to help you! There’s a verse in the book of James that says it this way: *If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. God will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone and doesn’t find fault (James 1:5 NIV).* What that verse means is that if you’re confused or don’t understand something, ask God. God is happy to help you find the answer.

[Make It Personal] (*Tell kids about a time you asked God to help you understand something, and God answered you through God’s Word or through someone who loves and knows God.*)

“So remember: **[Bottom Line] When you don’t know what God says, ask.**”

PRAY AND SEND

What You Need: Kids’ papers from “Ask God”

What You Do:

- Guide the kids to gather around you and hold their “Ask God” papers.
- Lead the kids in prayer...

What You Say: “Dear God, thank you that it’s ALWAYS okay to ask you questions. Thank you that you’re glad to help us when we’re confused or don’t understand something. Thank you, God, that you WILL help us because your Word says that you will. We love you very much. Amen.”

[Apply] Give each parent a Faith Five Family Tools as they come to pick up their child and remind them to use it as a family devotional tool this week.

Guide kids to tell their parents the Bottom Line: **[Bottom Line] When you don’t know what God says, ask.** Encourage kids to tell their parents/guardians about their “Ask God” papers.