

FOLLOW ME

Why are you here?



AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE
TRANSFORMING CATHOLICS FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

Welcome to your first YDisciple group! We are honored to be joining you in helping your teen grow closer to God and become the incredible person He created him or her to be. God has a beautiful plan for you and your teen through this process. He will be working to draw you closer to each other and to Himself. In this study, we're simply extending Jesus' invitation to your teen.

The CONNECT section of the parent sheet connects you with the information that was presented to your teen in their last small discipleship group. The discuss section contains questions that you can use to start meaningful discussion on the topic covered and how it relates to their life. The commit section explains to you the commitment or challenge that your teen committed to as a way to grow in their faith.



DISCUSS

All humans ask themselves the same questions: *Why do I exist? Do I really matter? What's life all about? What happens when I die? What's the meaning of life? What's really going to make me happy?* And, of course, so many more.

It is important that we help teens think through these questions. The clinical observations of developmental psychologist Erik Erikson demonstrated that when adolescents find nothing to dedicate themselves to, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to acquire motivating belief systems later in life. The result is purposelessness, which commonly leads to self-absorption and a host of personal problems.

In this session, the discipleship group got to know one another and we began to pose these thought-provoking questions.

We weren't necessarily seeking to answer those questions just yet, but rather we were searching to provide context for the purpose of the discipleship group.



PARENT TIP: You have access to ydisciple.org and can view the videos from our first session: Follow Me—Why are you here? They are located under the "Studies" tab. You will also find a download of the talk "What's So Great About Being Catholic?" by Jason Evert. Jason's sense of humor and inspiring message can be a wonderful catalyst for conversation with your teen.



“By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples...I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.”

—John 15:8, 11



CONNECT

Maybe your teen is already excited about this group, maybe he/she's very resistant to it, or maybe he/she's somewhere in between. Maybe you don't know where your teen stands. But whatever the case, you are one of the most important parts of your teen's journey. This study is only meant to help you, because no matter what your teen shows you on the outside, there's actually no one he/she would rather hear this from. You are the parent, given by God for a real and beautiful purpose, and you have an irreplaceable role to play in the life of your teen. So don't be afraid to start a conversation about what he or she is learning.

Here are some conversation starters to help you out. And remember to share your perspectives as well.

- » Here are a couple of questions from the small group that might be fun for you to discuss.
 - Would you rather go back in time and meet your ancestors or go into the future and meet your great grandchildren?
 - Would you rather live in an ordinary home in an extraordinary place or an extraordinary home in an ordinary place? What would that home or place look like?
- » I understand you talked about some scientific reasons to believe in God. What reasons stood out to you?
- » What do you think keeps people from taking Christianity seriously?



RECOMMENDED ACTIVITY: Search “The Four Big Bangs” by Frank Pastore on the Internet for a fascinating five-minute video on the improbability of life happening by chance. This could be a great conversation starter for you and your teen.

 **COMMIT**

This week, your teen was asked to commit to praying one Hail Mary every day to Mary, the perfect disciple. They were also asked to pray that they would make a commitment to the process of discipleship and open your heart to her Son.

This doesn't just have to be an experience for your teen that you're watching from the sidelines. This can be a very real encounter with God for you as well. After all, you are also a human being who was made by God and for God, and you ask yourself those same deep life questions. If you feel like you've never really found any answers, could it be that God might actually have them? Isn't it worth finding out?

If you want, spend some time reflecting on your own life and how you have sought to answer these questions. *Where have I found meaning and purpose? Am I truly happy? Am I the person I dreamed I would be when I was my teen's age?*

If you're still looking for answers, then maybe it's time to give God a chance. Believe it or not, He's not just inviting your teen to be His disciple—He's inviting you.