

PRAXiS

Can  
I ask  
that?

PRAXiS

## HOW TO USE

This discussion guide is designed for you, leaders, to guide your group through this Praxis video series. This series is structured as a conversation based around engaging questions intended to promote thought-provoking discussion throughout each episode. When these questions pop up on the screen, hit pause and turn the question to the group. **Each episode includes the following:**

### BIG IDEA

We highlight the big idea behind the episode, emphasizing key scriptures or quotes, to give you and your group an idea of what will be covered in the video. Feel free to share this before pressing play, or after to summarize what was taught into a concise thought.

### SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

If the video question does not invite participation, use these questions to promote further interest. These questions are simply reworded to present the idea in a different way. We invite you to be creative and present the questions in a way that engages your group.

### DISCUSS

The video questions are created to encourage conversation and to allow the formation of thoughts and ideas – inviting participants to wrestle with and begin sharing their beliefs and experiences. This is just the beginning. The discussion questions exist to go deeper and to invite more intimate and transformational conversation.

## CONTEXT

### IN A CHURCH OR LARGE GROUP SETTING

This guide is designed to be used by a leader, so begin by identifying those leaders and getting a guide into each of their hands. If you are watching the episodes with more than 20 people, we would advise identifying multiple leaders and having them focus on a section of the group. When the video questions arise, have them turn to their “small group” and discuss the questions openly. Time dependent, ask each smaller group to share with the larger group what was shared. This invites more people to share without the intimidation of a large group setting. Whether you keep these groups consistent from week to week, or you mix it up, remaining the same for the discussion portion of each episode will allow for greater depth and increased transparency.

### IN A SMALL GROUP SETTING

Every leader in the room should have one of these guides prior to beginning the video. It can be helpful to identify one leader as the facilitator, and others as helpers. The facilitator can guide the video question time, with helpers stepping in as needed based on the direction of conversation. Come discussion time, gathering into small groups where one or two leaders oversee a small group can invite quieter participants to engage and allow for greater depth of conversation.

### AS AN INDIVIDUAL

While this discussion guide is designed with group participation in mind, the content is something we believe is valuable for every individual. We advise watching these episodes with a pen in hand and paper before you. Have your Bible handy and get ready to pause the video. You get to take this at your pace! When Scripture is referenced, open your Bible and read along – when questions are asked, hit pause and write out your answer. If questions arise in your mind that you are unable to answer, write them down to ask later.

## GET READY

Take a breath, the pressure is off. We are not asking you to teach, or to have the answer to every question. Your role is to guide, facilitate, but most importantly to **listen** and **invite**.

### **Invite questions. Invite conversation.**

This discussion guide was created to provide direction for the conversation, but not to limit or harness the group. During the video, listen to what the participants say. Do not feel the need to answer the question yourself. Be comfortable with silence. Give it fifteen seconds before you use a supporting question. Let them think.

“When will I know when to press play again?” Trust me, you’ll know. Conversation will end, or you may even have to re-focus the group if they go down a rabbit trail. If a valuable question or topic is sparked during the video, write it down and say you will return as a group to it during the discussion time.

When it comes time for discussion, follow the pace of the group. Let them naturally guide the conversation around what content stuck out from the video, or what questions were sparked for them. You are not confined to the questions in this guide. Pick the ones that stand out to you or add your own. This time will look different for each group and that’s intentional.

### **Listen and Invite.**

# CAN I ASK THAT?

FOUR EPISODES | PRAXIS SERIES 1

## BIG IDEA

We all have questions we are hesitant to ask. Questions, that if unaddressed, can lead to confusion and doubt.

In this four-part series, we create a space for dialogue around four of these questions' teens are hesitant to ask. As we unpack evidence of God's existence, and how we can know His will for us, we begin to learn more about who God is. Likewise, we equip youth with the knowledge of God's goodness, and our identity in Him, amidst a world full of pain and confusion around who we are, and our sexuality.



# CAN I ASK THAT?

EPISODE 1 | HOW CAN I PROVE GOD IS REAL?

## BIG IDEA

It's not our responsibility to prove God's existence. He's already done that. We show others God, by loving like Jesus.

## KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

It's not our responsibility to prove God's existence. He's already done that. In fact, there is evidence of God's existence all around us.

1. Macro Creation - mountains and oceans.
2. Micro Creation - the intricate way we are designed.
3. Jesus is the perfect, and clearest proof of God.  
He is the personification of God's love.

**Philippians 1:6:** And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

**Luke 9:23:** "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."

## SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **Do you know a story that people have a hard time believing?**
  - What about it was so unbelievable?
  - Why is it that we love sharing stories like these?
- **Do you believe God exists? What has influenced your conclusion?**
  - What reasons do people give for believing in God? What about for not believing in God?
  - What doubts lead you to question God's existence?

- **In what ways do you see evidence of God in your day to day life?**
  - Where in creation do you see God?
  - Where in your life do you see God working? What about in the lives of others?
- **How is your relationship with God changing you? How does your life show off God?**
  - What were you like before you began your relationship with God, what are you like now? What is different? *If you don't follow Jesus, think of someone who does - what evidence of change have you seen in their life?*
  - What do you do in your day to day life to show Christ?

## DISCUSS

- **Imagine someone asks you to prove God's existence. What type of things would you share in this conversation? Would you focus on facts, or on stories about Jesus from your own life? Why?**
  - **What has been more influential in your own faith journey - facts or experience? Why?**
  - **Do you agree that we can show God's existence best by loving like Jesus? Why or why not?**
  - **Reflect on Luke 9:23. What habits and brokenness are you clinging to that you need to "die to" in order to live for Christ?**
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## NEXT STEPS

Can you reflect on how your life is better today because of your hope and trust in Jesus Christ? How? And if not, what are you going to do about it?

# CAN I ASK THAT?

## EPISODE 2 | WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN?

### BIG IDEA

God has not abandoned you. He's there with you in and through bad things.

### KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

**John 16:33:** “I have you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”

**Revelations 21:3-4:** I heard a loud shout from the throne saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will love with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

**Romans 8:22-23:** For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

**Hebrews 12:2:** ...keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne.

**Hebrews 13:5b:** I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.

**Psalms 46:1:** God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.



## SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **Take a moment to share why you think bad things happen.**
  - When something bad happened to you or someone you love did you find yourself blaming someone/something else?
  - How do you normally respond when bad things happen? Why?
- **Share one thing you saw today that helped you see God.**
  - In what situations do you find yourself experiencing God the greatest?
  - Why is it important to acknowledge God's goodness every day?
- **How can we trust God and support each other when bad things happen?**
  - What is your most natural, perhaps immediate, response when bad things happen? How can you turn that response into trust in God?
  - How can you support others when they are struggling or facing hard times?

## DISCUSS

- **Our news feeds are constantly filled with articles about global tragedies. What can we do to not become desensitized, but also to not become overwhelmed?**
  - **We are free to make our own choices, including the choice to hurt ourselves and others. Imagine if God chose the alternative, made us robots with no freedom – how would this impact your life? What about the world?**
  - **How was God's decision to give us free will an act of love?**
  - **During a hard time in your life, have you experienced evidence of God's presence and peace? Share.**
  - **What does it look like to trust God in the middle of a bad situation?**
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## NEXT STEPS

Think of your current hardship and share if comfortable. What can you do to keep your eyes on Jesus, rather than focusing on your pain? Pray for one another.

# CAN I ASK THAT?

## EPISODE 3 | YOU AND YOUR SEXUALITY

### BIG IDEA

You are not a sexual being having a spiritual experience, you are a spiritual being who may or may not have a sexual experience.

### KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

The pursuit of pleasure is **never** satisfied, and that chasing thrills is an empty way to live. **Proverbs 21:17:** Those who love pleasure become poor; those who love wine and luxury will never be rich.

**Genesis 1:27:** So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

**Matthew 16:25:** “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.”

**Video quote - Brody Jespersen:** “But sex wasn’t designed to *fulfill* you. So what did God create sex for? The obvious answer is to make babies, but there’s more to it than that. Sex was created to be special... to bring us pleasure... to glorify God... to create intimacy... To have sex, two people have to make themselves completely vulnerable. It’s the physical equivalent of sharing your deepest secrets with someone. It creates a closeness that can be impossible to achieve in any other way. Now, within a marriage, this is great!”

**Video quote - Brody Jespersen:** “You are not a sexual being having a spiritual experience, you are a spiritual being who may or may not have a sexual experience. And the only way to live into this, is to stop living for the world’s overrated and oversold version of existence, and to start living the way Jesus intended us to: with purpose and intimacy with God.”

## SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **Tell us about a time your expectations were so low, that you were blown away by an experience.**
  - Have you ever had something undersold to you that you then really enjoyed? What was it?
  - Do you believe having expectations for certain experiences is healthy? Or unhealthy? Why?
- **What is the message our culture sends about sex?**
  - How has culture influenced our view on sex?
  - What message does music, movies, advertisements, social media, fashion etc. send about sex?
- **If we aren't defined by sex, what does define us?**
  - What are some of the things that define you?
  - Who does God say you are?

## DISCUSS

- **In your experience, what has the message about sex been from the church? How has it influenced you? Is there something you wish someone had talked to you about?**
  - **What can we do to intentionally live our lives in such a way that culture's message about sex does not becoming more enticing than Christ's?**
  - **What role does accountability (*community support, intentional relationships*) play in resisting temptation?**
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## NEXT STEPS

Whatever your story is, past or present, there is forgiveness and healing in Christ. Don't be afraid to reach out, talk to someone you trust.

# CAN I ASK THAT?

EPISODE 4 | HOW CAN I KNOW GOD'S WILL?

## BIG IDEA

Maybe the point isn't so much knowing God's will, as it is trusting Him enough to move forward.

## KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

### The Story of Joseph

- **The beloved son sold into slavery (Genesis 36)**
- **Falsely accused and imprisoned (Genesis 39)**
- **Released and empowered (Genesis 41)**
- **Brothers seek help (Genesis 42)**
- **Making himself known (Genesis 45)**

### Saul's Conversion Acts 9

**Genesis 1:27:** So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

**Video quote - Brody Jespersen:** “What if - it were true, that God didn't care where you go to school or what you did for a living, but instead that you found what you liked to do, and you did it - and you remained faithful in it, and served others through it?”

**Video quote - Brody Jespersen:** “What if - it were true, that God didn't care what car you drove, or what clothes you were supposed to wear, because at his core, he was concerned about your heart, about who you were becoming, rather than what you were doing. And that whatever choice you made, you allowed him to shape and form you through it to become more and more like Him. Maybe the point isn't so much knowing God's will, as it is trusting Him enough to move forward.”

## SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **What decisions really stress you out?**
  - Compare the types of decisions that stress you out, versus the ones that are easier – what is the difference? (*ex. where to go for supper, vs. what you want to be when you grow up*)
  - What are you currently stressed or anxious about?
- **If you were Joseph, how do you think you would have responded to the unfair situation he found himself in?**
  - Joseph's faithfulness led to imprisonment for two years – how would you respond if that happened to you?
  - Joseph helped his brothers when they came asking for help, not immediately revealing his identity. Put yourself in his shoes – what would you be tempted to do?
- **If God is really in control, how can you move forward when you need to make a decision?**
  - What should our decision-making process be, keeping in mind God is in control?
  - If God is in control, what is our role in decision making?

## DISCUSS

- **Why is it generally easier to know what our parents, teachers, and society wants from us, but not God?**
  - **What are your biggest questions about God's will?**
  - **Because of his belief, Joseph chose to be part of what God was doing, rather than fight against it. What does this practically look like for you? Have you experienced this in your own life?**
  - **What if the point is not so much about what God wants you to do, as much as it is about who He wants you to become? How would that affect your need to know God's will?**
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## NEXT STEPS

What could it look like for you to start to live with greater confidence that God is in control, even when we don't see the whole picture? How can you trust God more today?