

HOPE CYCLE 3: DEALING WITH DOUBT

How to have a student-led club:

- A student opens and closes in prayer
- A student explains the purpose of First Priority
- Students read verses and questions for the week

Memory Verse: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” **Joshua 1:9 (NIV)**

Week One: HELP

Throughout the Bible, there are many stories of people who struggled with their faith and doubted. The Bible teaches that God can handle our doubts and questions. There are varying degrees of doubt and the first type we will discuss is the proud skeptic; someone who relies on his/her own intelligence.

1. Read Psalm 14:1 and Proverbs 9:10-What do these verses say about rejecting God, and where does wisdom begin?
2. What do you think it means that “knowledge of the Holy One leads to understanding”?
3. Read Exodus 5:2 (ESV)- In this verse, Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, had enslaved the Israelites [God’s people] and Moses is telling Pharaoh to set the Israelites free, by God’s command. How would you describe Pharaoh, based on his response to Moses?
4. Would you say our culture values personal intellect over faith? Why or why not?
5. Read John 20:29-How does this verse HELP you to overcome doubt?

Challenge: Pray for two friends who need to know Jesus.

HELP Week Verses:

Psalm 10:4 (NIV) “The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are sinful and their actions are sinful. There is no one who does good.”

Proverbs 9:10 (ESV) “Wisdom begins with fear and respect for the LORD. Knowledge of the Holy One leads to understanding.”

Exodus 5:2 (ESV) “But Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD? Why should I obey him? Why should I let Israel go? I don’t even know who this LORD is, so I refuse to let Israel go.”

John 20:29 (NIV) “Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Week Two: OVERCOME

This week we will focus on the type of doubt that occurs in the midst of struggle. We will examine the Apostle Peter and how Jesus responds to Peter’s doubt.

1. Read Matthew 14:25-33-When Jesus walked out on the lake, how did the disciples react? What did they think Jesus was a ghost?
2. What happened to Peter when he focused on the wind and waves, instead of Jesus? What did Jesus do to help Peter?
3. What happens to us when we take our eyes off Jesus and focus on our problems and circumstances? Give examples.
4. Describe a time when you had doubts about Jesus? What should we do when we doubt?
5. Read Mark 9:24 – In this verse, what does the father ask from Jesus? How does this verse help you to OVERCOME your doubts?

Challenge: At the end of the meeting, gather in a circle and pray for each other.

OVERCOME Week Verses

Matthew 14:25-33 (NIV) “Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.²⁷ But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”²⁸ “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”²⁹ “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”³² And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

Mark 9:24 (MSG) “No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the father cried, “Then I believe. Help me with my doubts!”

Week Three: PREPARE

During this cycle, we have discussed doubt. As you PREPARE for Engage Week, consider how you have doubted and how God responded.

1. Read Psalm 13:1-2-In this verse David is questioning if God is there or if HE had forgotten David. Have you ever felt forgotten by God? If yes, describe the circumstances. How did you get through this experience?
2. Read Joshua 1:9-How does this verse encourage you?
3. Prepare your group for Engage Week: Is a student prepared to share a faith story and a student prepared to share the gospel/invitation?

Challenge: Invite two friends to next week's Engage Week meeting.

PREPARE Week Verses

Psalm 13:1-2 (ESV) “How long will you forget me, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you refuse to accept me? ²How long must I wonder if you have forgotten me? How long must I feel this sadness in my heart? How long will my enemy win against me?”

Joshua 1:9 (NIV) “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Week Four: ENGAGE

Use your faith story to **ENGAGE** your campus for Christ. Share the Gospel Message and Invitation [see below], and use the Student Response cards, which can be downloaded from the First Priority website. [www.firstprioritytampa.org]

Challenge: Invite two friends to your youth group or church this week.

Gospel Message (please read this out loud to your group):

[Romans 3:23](#), "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The Bible tells us that there is no one who is innocent.

[Romans 5:8](#) says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus' resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' death as the payment for our sins.

[Romans 10:13](#) "for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Salvation, the forgiveness of sins, is available to anyone who will trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

[Romans 5:1](#) tells us, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The Bible says that if we believe in Jesus, we will have peace with God. We can be reconnected to him.

[Pass out Student Response Cards here]

Invitation/Prayer (ask students to close their eyes and bow their heads):

If this message is speaking to you today, and you want to trust in Jesus as your Savior then pray this simple prayer to yourself: Dear Lord, I admit that I have sinned and this has separated me from you. But, I believe that through you I can be forgiven. Today, I pray that you will come into my life and help me to trust in you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Follow UP Plan:

Once you've shared the gospel and invitation, collect the Student Response Cards (can be downloaded from the First Priority website) and then follow these steps:

1. Student leaders commit to praying for and contacting any student who has made a decision for Christ and/or has questions.
2. When contacting these students, student leaders will want to:
 - Answer any questions they may have
 - Offer to pray for them
 - Invite them to the next week's HELP Week meeting
 - Invite them to your church, if they don't have one
3. Return all Student Response cards to the group president or teachers sponsor (Response cards or information on the cards must never be given to an outside adult or organization/ church)

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