

6 Questions Your Teenager Has About Being a Christian

Recently I began a Bible study with my oldest daughter and a few of her friends. At our first meeting, all I had were Bibles and notebooks for the girls but no Bible study book or even a topic.

My prayer going into this study was that God would reveal what these girls most need to build their faith, to understand that they are daughters of the King and what it means to have God as their heavenly Father.

After our breakfast of pancakes, we took our PJ-clad selves to the sofa. I began by saying, "I'd like this study to be more than just about the length of your skirts and dealing with boys. I'd like to really grapple with Scripture together. I'd like to grow in our faith together. So what do y'all want to study?"

Their answers blessed me. They said they wanted to understand:

- Trust because they struggle with it
- What it means to be a quiet and gentle spirit
- Modesty—not clothing, but how it relates to their heart
- Respect for themselves and others
- Words and how we handle our mouths being a reflection of what is in our hearts
- Value—how to measure it, because weren't they worth something?

Yes! Aren't we all trying to determine our worth?

As I begin to ponder our value in God's eyes, I'm astounded

how loved we are. I know I shouldn't be, really, because I know the God I serve and love, but I am nonetheless taken aback by His tremendous love for me.

Today I kept thinking about the fact that God knows my name. The Creator of the universe, the Maker of all things, knows my name by heart. It is written on the palm of His hand.

"Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands" (Is. 49:15-16, ESV).

Not only does He know my name, but He also knows the number of hairs on my head—even as they collect on my shower floor.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:29-31).

He knows everything, absolutely everything, about me and loves me still.

The amazing fact that Jesus was willing to die for me while I was still a lost sinner is enough to confirm to me I'm valuable. Worth enough to die for.

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6-8).

The conversations I've had with these precious girls has revealed a deep need in their hearts for real answers—for the ability to ask deep questions and seek difficult but honest answers. Each girl comes from a different life experience and

situation. Each girl is different in her personality, her approach and her needs. I'm ready for that. God has softened my heart through adversity. I understand more what it means to suffer, what it means to doubt and what it means to struggle. I also understand the beauty of peace in the midst of challenges, joy in the midst of suffering, and hope in the midst of heartbreak.

My prayer is that God will speak through me, that He will open their hearts to the healing and hope that only Christ can offer. I'm so flawed—my poor daughter knows that intimately—and such a mess. Yesterday was our third meeting, and my youngest daughters were just plain awful. I ended up dealing with them upstairs while the teenage girls waited downstairs. I was in tears, mostly frustrated and sad that my hopes for the morning were quickly deteriorating into a mess. But as is always the case, God redeemed the time.

They were gracious as I tried to pull things together.

Again, I was reminded that, no matter what, God has the situation under His control. It might look terribly chaotic and hopeless to me, but some way or another He always makes delicious lemonade out of my lemons. Maybe that will be what I offer for drinks next time—lemonade, to remind me to share that God does indeed always make good out of the difficult.

I'm honored to be able to go on this journey with these girls. How blessed to know that the waters run deep in their hearts. That they desire deeper knowledge and deeper faith. I'm excited to dive deep into the Word and into their worlds. I pray God will speak through me. That these girls will understand that they are worth far more than any costly jewel, that they are precious and the apple of their Father's eye.

"Wondrously show your steadfast love, O Savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand. Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings"

(Ps. 17:7-8).

And I'm thankful that as I seek out answers to their questions, God will be revealing Himself to me as my Husband and Father as well.

"For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called" (Is. 54:5).

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