

HOW
DO
I
KNOW
GOD
EXISTS?

Consider & Prepare

Below is a meeting resource to use while children and adults are together in the meeting.

Questions to ask as you plan this are:

Can everybody do it? (optional joining-in is key to this, that people can do it IF they want to.)

Can everybody sit through it? (keep each part of the meeting 5-7 minutes long for those with shorter attention spans.)

Can everybody understand it? (is the language pitched so everyone has a good chance of understanding what is being said, demonstrated or sung or prayed?)

Can everyone learn from it? (are the teaching points presented for a variety of learning styles; body, visual kinetic; and are they suited to a range of personality types and levels of introversion/extroversion.)

Is everyone connecting with it? (are there enough connections to current life and local community,

daily issues that people can see the sense in this?)

This is a special service that can be lead by a team, or all the members of a family, a Junior Soldiers group etc. There are a variety of activities listed to allow for interaction during the service, as well as quiet reflection and response.

Purpose

The purpose of this service is to challenge everyone to think about the existence of God. It is important to allow room for questions and doubt, and to give all participants an opportunity to share their assurance and to comfort each other in their doubts and questions.

There are probably three main groups of thought about this at a Corps meeting.

1. I am certain that God exists.
2. I'm unsure that God exists and would like to wrestle with the idea to find out more.
3. I don't think God exists and I



am just here for a friend/family member.

Key Scripture

God's eternal power and character cannot be seen. But from the beginning of creation, God has shown what these are like by all He has made. That's why those people don't have any excuse. Romans 1:20 (CEV)

Read: Psalm 19:1 - 4a (CEV)

The heavens keep telling the wonders of God, and the skies declare what He has done. Each day informs the following day; each night announces to the next. They don't speak a word, and there is never the sound of a voice. Yet their message reaches all the earth, and it travels around the world.

Reflect

George Barna has recommended that for discipling children there are a series of questions that children should be asked, and allowed to ask.

The first one is: Does God exist?

As this is a HUGE question to put out there, sit with this question, explore all the possibilities and attempt to answer. The question that we will ask in this worship meeting will be: *How do I know God exists?*

Choose Songs

Choose any songs that speak of God's character and who He is. For example:

I believe in God the Father (SASB)

Our God is a great big God (Vineyard)

Stronger (Hillsong)

The heavens shall declare (Geoff Bullock)

Indescribable (Laura Story)

What you will need

1. Two coins
2. Louis Giglio clip – Indescribable (*link in the text*)
3. PowerPoint of different people from the Bible and how they encountered God (*attached*).
4. Interactive "prayer stations" for the different ways

to encounter God. (*See the specific instructions for each prayer station.*)

5. Find 9 people to each deliver a small portion of the message. They can use the script provided or use their own words in one or two sentences. As there are 9 sections it is important that each one is brief. Ask each of these people to supervise the corresponding prayer station. This will involve helping people to understand how to interact with each prayer activity and being willing to pray with them if required.
6. Isaiah 40 video clip <http://www.max7.org/resource/Isaiah40>
7. For the prayer stations:
 - ❖ 9 tables
 - ❖ candles and matches or battery operated tea lights
 - ❖ cushions/ bean bags/ comfy chairs
 - ❖ items from nature such as flowers, leaves, sand, shells, rocks, sticks etc
 - ❖ postcard sized photographs of elements of creation
 - ❖ two large pieces of cardboard or a whiteboard
 - ❖ white board markers or textas
 - ❖ small gift boxes containing gifts (e.g., a chocolate)
 - ❖ ribbons or ropes to tie the gift boxes
 - ❖ a pair of scissors
 - ❖ a cross
 - ❖ more candles and matches
 - ❖ flat stones
 - ❖ a permanent marker
 - ❖ large bowl or tub of water
 - ❖ dominoes
 - ❖ jigsaw puzzle of a scene from nature or a portrait (at least 100 pieces)
 - ❖ child's shaping sorting toys or peg boards with different shaped holes
 - ❖ tray of sand

OUTLINE

Introduction	Game – Heads or Tails
Link	How can I know God exists?
Sharing	Why do you believe God exists?
Prayer	
Small Group Discussions	
Link	
Song	
PowerPoint	Encounters with God from the Bible
Prayer	
Scripture Reading	Psalm 19:1 - 4a; Romans 1:20; 1 John 4:8, 13 - 16; Hebrews 11:1, 6
The Main Thing	<i>Louis Giglio clip</i> OR <i>Speakers</i>
Time to Reflect	
Prayer Stations	
YouTube Clip	Isaiah40
Benediction	

Notes

Introduction: Game – Heads or Tails

For this you will need 2 coins you will be flipping both coins at once to determine if you have 2 heads, 2 tails or 1 head and 1 tail.

Explain the rules

Everyone needs to choose what the coins will turn up, will it be heads? [*2 hands on heads*]

Will it be 2 tails [*2 hands on your bottom*]

Or will it be 1 head 1 tail [*put a hand on each*]

Play a few practice rounds and then play for elimination from the game. Use 2 people to toss coins as it is far more fun and suspense when people are waiting to hear what both answers are. It's also

much easier to catch just one coin that you flip.

Link

For many people when they think about the existence of God, it's a bit like a guessing game – like a game of heads or tails where we come out looking silly for putting our hands on our bottoms in front of everyone, and it turns out we are WRONG! No matter how we guess in the game we only have one chance in 3 of being right, and 2 chances in 3 of being wrong. And then we are out of the game!

For us today, we are looking at the question: *How do I know that God exists?* This is not a game for us, or a game for God. The Bible says that God will reveal Himself to those who earnestly seek Him. And there are lots of people here today who believe that is true.

Think for a minute about why you believe that God exists?

Sharing

Interview a few people about the main reason they

believe that God does exist.

Start with people who you have asked prior to the meeting so that they have time to think of a short answer.

Encourage people to keep it to a few sentences.

Expect a range of responses above and beyond this list:

- ❖ Personal experience of God – vision, voice, dream.
- ❖ Science – wonder of creation and order through physics, astronomy, biology, medicine etc.
- ❖ History – God's plans, purposes and prophecies being linked up with key moments that do show His purpose and plan working out.
- ❖ Struggling/wrestling with doubt about God's existence
- ❖ Relationship – the people of God being Jesus to others.
- ❖ Miracles – Healing, resurrection and other miraculous signs and wonders.
- ❖ Mystery – receiving God's peace, comfort from His word, filling with the Holy Spirit etc.
- ❖ Logic – The Bible makes sense to me.
- ❖ Lifelong belief – there has never been a time when I haven't believed.

Prayer: (2min)

Invite a member to lead a simple prayer thanking God for inviting our questions, challenges and doubts; and thanking God for him revealing himself to us.

Small Group Discussion (5

mins)

Ask people to move into groups of about 4 or 5 people. Include adults and children in each group.

Within your group, briefly share a special experience of God that you have had.

Mention the ones above that didn't get listed in your interviews.

If you can't think of one then you could share about why you think God exists and how you would like Him to reveal Himself to you. If you don't believe in the existence of God, then share about why it is that

you struggle to believe that God exists?

After 1-2 minutes depending on the time you have, remind the groups to let someone else have a turn at speaking. 2 minutes before you stop the small groups, say something like – *"If you haven't had a turn at speaking yet, now is your chance, and the other members of the group need to let you take a turn now"* – go for a loving way to help the extroverts stop talking and give the introverts the signal that it's now or never (*usually quite effective*).

Invite and encourage everyone at the meeting to talk more about this after the formal part of the meeting is over.

Link to song

A wonderful thing about our living God is that He knows each of us so well and meets us where we are so that we can know Him. He LOVES it when we seek Him, and wants to reveal Himself to anyone who looks for Him. The Bible says... Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV) *"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."* But God has also said that He will reveal Himself to those who aren't interested as well He said through the prophet Isaiah 65:1 (NIV) *"I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, 'Here am I, here am I.'"*

Song

Sing – *I have a Father He calls me His own – He knows my name.*

Or choose a song that your church likes that tells about how God knows us and approaches us in a way we can understand and respond to.

PowerPoint Slideshow

Show a slideshow series of scripture stories that are direct/indirect encounters with God.

1. **Adam and Eve:** walking with God in the afternoon.
2. **Cain** – talking with God about His tough judgment.
3. **Noah** – walked with God
4. **Pharaoh** – received messages from God from Moses.

5. **Moses** – when God was giving him the 10 Commandments, he saw God’s hand and it turned his hair white.
6. **Jonah** – didn’t respond well to God
7. **Joseph** – dreams revealing God’s plan
8. **Daniel** – the hand of God revealing judgment
9. **Zechariah** – God speaks to him in the temple about the birth of his son (to be John the Baptist)
10. **Mary** – God’s messenger (an Angel) speaks to her about her coming pregnancy and the birth of Jesus.
11. **Lots of people** – met Jesus, God’s son.
12. **Paul** – heard Jesus speak to him on the road to Damascus and it changed his life.
13. **What about You?**

Prayer

Invite someone to lead a short prayer that asks God to reveal himself through the Bible and the speaker.

Scripture Reading

Choose one or two of the following Scripture passages to share:

Psalm 19:1 - 4a

Romans 1:20

1 John 4:8, 13 - 16

Hebrews 11:1, 6

The main thing

Show the Louis Giglio clip, ‘Indescribable’ (8 minutes)
<http://youtube/UONbizg4ORc>

OR

This could be done with each part of the topic being covered by a different speaker. Try to include people from a wide range of age groups. This is a fantastic opportunity to show how much you value the experience of God that our children have.

You can use the passages below, and the script written, or write your own script for God revealing Himself in this special way in your life. This will be difficult to keep brief, but please limit your ideas to between 4 and 7 sentences.

Introduction

Earlier in the meeting some of us shared about why we believe God exists. Maybe you agree with one of these reasons. You might have another reason for believing or you might not yet be sure that God does exist. We are going to have another look now at some of the things that have convinced people that God does exist.

1. **Personal experience of God – vision, voice, dream.** Refer to previous examples from the PowerPoint. This is an opportunity to talk about a personal encounter with God in the way that He chose that doesn’t have to be the same as any of the Bible stories, care needs to be taken to not say that everyone must have an encounter like this for it to be real.
2. **Science** – wonder of creation and order through physics, astronomy, biology, medicine etc., when we look at the mathematical world, the finest details of pure math come from the created world. And for high level physicists there are so many reasons to look for the hand of God in their work ... Psalm 19.
3. **History** – God’s plans, purposes and prophecies being linked up with key moments that do show His purpose and plan working out. Number of prophecies about Jesus X number of them fulfilled in Jesus = also x.
4. **Struggling/wrestling with doubt about God’s existence.** Genesis 32:24b - 32 This is great because in life we are faced with all sorts of struggles, doubts, challenges, tragedies and difficulties. God is willing to fight with us, to battle with us and to bless us in all of this. Here’s a man called Jacob who fought God and was blessed by Him!

A man came and fought with Jacob until just before daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not win, he struck Jacob on the hip and threw it out of joint. ²⁶ They kept on wrestling until the man said, “Let go of me! It’s almost daylight.”
“You can’t go until you bless me,” Jacob replied.
²⁷ Then the man asked, “What is your name?”
“Jacob,” he answered.
²⁸ The man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob. You have wrestled with God and

with men, and you have won. That's why your name will be Israel." [b] (Meaning of Israel – God wrestler.)

²⁹ Jacob said, "Now tell me your name."

"Don't you know who I am?" he asked. And he blessed Jacob.

³⁰ Jacob said, "I have seen God face to face, and I am still alive." So he named the place Peniel. [c]

³¹ The sun was coming up as Jacob was leaving Peniel. He was limping because he had been struck on the hip, ³² and the muscle on his hip joint had been injured. That's why even today the people of Israel don't eat the hip muscle of any animal.

- 5. Miracles** – Healing, resurrection and other miraculous signs and wonders. Acts 2: 16-24 God has healed people in the past and He will heal and work miracles in the future, for some of us we have been witnesses to a miracle, or even received a blessing of a miracle transforming our own lives.

¹⁶ But this is what God had the prophet Joel say,

¹⁷ "When the last days come, I will give my Spirit to everyone.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will have dreams.

¹⁸ In those days I will give my Spirit to my servants, both men and women, and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will work miracles in the sky above and wonders on the earth below. There will be blood and fire and clouds of smoke. ²⁰ The sun will turn dark, and the moon will be as red as blood before the great and wonderful day of the Lord appears. ²¹ Then the Lord will save everyone who asks for His help."

²² Now, listen to what I have to say about Jesus from Nazareth. God proved that He sent Jesus to you by having Him work miracles, wonders, and signs. All of you know this. ²³ God had already planned and decided that Jesus would be handed over to you. So you took him and had evil men put Him to death on a cross. ²⁴ But God set Him free from death and raised Him to life. Death could not hold Him in its power.

- 6. Relationship – seeing God in His people.**

Receiving the Holy Spirit (God living in us) Philippians 2:1 - 5 Through the presence of God in us (His holy Spirit), God lives and works through His people. For some of us, we will see God most clearly in His people as they serve, care and minister to us and in the wider community.

Christ encourages you, and His love comforts you. God's Spirit unites you, and you are concerned for others. ² Now make me completely happy! Live in harmony by showing love for each other. Be united in what you think, as if you were only one person. ³ Don't be jealous or proud, but be humble and consider others more important than yourselves. ⁴ Care about them as much as you care about yourselves ⁵ and think the same way that Christ Jesus thought:

- 7. Mystery** – seeing glimpses of the incredible, amazing, indescribable God. etc.

¹ Corinthians 13:11-13 Some of us catch glimpses of God in many ways, but find great joy and wonder in the mystery of God, that He is so powerful and intimate, so all knowing, and forgiving; for God to be so much and to want "little us" in relationship with Him SO MUCH.

¹¹ When we were children, we thought and reasoned as children do. But when we grew up, we quit our childish ways. ¹² Now all we can see of God is like a cloudy picture in a mirror. Later we will see him face to face. We don't know everything, but then we will, just as God completely understands us. ¹³ For now there are faith, hope, and love. But of these three, the greatest is love.

- 8. Logic** – God, the Bible and living life as a Christian makes sense to me. Isaiah 40:21-22 (CEV). For some people, God just makes sense...

²¹ Don't you know? Haven't you heard? Isn't it clear that God created the world? [d] ²² God is the one who rules the whole earth, and we that live here are merely insects.

- 9. Lifelong belief** – there has never been a time when I haven't believed. Psalm 71: 5-9 (GNB) For some people, there has never been a moment without God in their lives, so there is no question of whether God exists or not, He has always been, He is eternally with us, and that

has been clear always.

Sovereign LORD, I put my hope in you; I have trusted in you since I was young.

⁶ I have relied on you all my life; you have protected^[b] me since the day I was born. I will always praise you.

⁷ My life has been an example to many, because you have been my strong defender.

⁸ All day long I praise you and proclaim your glory.

⁹ Do not reject me now that I am old; do not abandon me now that I am feeble.

Time to reflect

Have you understood something more clearly about you and God today? What is it? We are going to take some time to think over what is in your mind and turn it over with God. During this closing time you can choose to go to a prayer station and reflect on how you see God in your life.

Pray with others if you would like to or take some time to be by yourself.

Prayer

Invite someone pray thanking God for revealing Himself so that we can find him and know him; and asking God to help us to decide what to do next.

Prayer Stations

1. Personal experience of God – vision, voice, dream

Set up: Create a quiet space, light it with candles (*battery operated tea lights are a good option*), play soft music, provide cushions/bean bags/comfy chairs. Add the description/instruction sheet

Description: This is a space in which people can take time to quietly listen to the voice of God; **to dream about what is yet to come through God**

Instructions: Shhhh! Come quietly into this space. God is here. Make yourself comfortable. Close your eyes and ask God to speak to you. Then wait and listen. Let God speak to you and dream about all He has in store for you.

2. Science – Creation, Medicine, Physics,

Astronomy

Set up: Make an arrangement of items from nature such as flowers, small jars of sand, shells, rocks etc. Also provide an array of photographs of different elements of creation (*provide several of each item and photo so that everyone can take something with them*). Add the description/instruction sheet

Description: Many people find a deep connection with God when they are immersed in the beauty and intricacy of His Creation. The items provided in this space will serve as a reminder of that connection, sparking both gratitude, wonder and worship.

Instructions: God is a creative God. He has made heaps of beautiful things. Look at these objects and photos. Choose one that helps you to know God is real. Think about how God's creation helps us to know He exists. Take something from this table to remind you of God.

3. History – God's plans, purposes and prophecies

Set up: Stick two large pieces of cardboard next two each other on the wall OR draw a line to divide a large whiteboard in half. On the top of the first write "*God's Promise*". On the second write "*Promise Kept*". Provide some markers. Add the description/instruction sheet

Description: This activity allows people to consider the fulfilment of God's plan as seen in both the Bible and their own lives.

Instructions: God has made lots of promises to His people. When He keeps His promises it helps us to see that He is real. *Can you think of a time when God has answered your prayers?* The Bible tells us about other times when God made promises and then kept them. *Can you think of one?* When we share these things we can help other people to know God better.

On one side write the promise that God made to you or someone in the Bible or the prayer that you prayed.

On the other side write how or when He kept that promise or answered your prayer.

4. Struggling/wrestling with doubt about God's existence – struggles, difficulties, challenges

Set up: Prepare a number of small gift boxes. Place a small gift within each box. Tie each one with ropes or ribbons, make lots of knots. Place the gift boxes on the table and add a pair of scissors on the side. Add the description/instruction sheet.

Description: Sometimes there are obstacles that get in the way of our belief in God. We can stay locked out of the gift of faith and relationship with God or we can wrestle with these obstacles. The Bible tells us that anyone who looks for God will find Him. There are times in our faith struggles where something cuts through these obstacles (*like scissors through the knots and we find ourselves able to come close to God*).

Instructions: Maybe you are not sure yet that you believe God is real. Choose a box and try to untie the knots. As you do this, talk to God about the questions and problems that you have. He is a big God and He can handle your questions. If you cannot untie all the knots then you can use the scissors. Sometimes talking to a friend about our doubts can cut through them and help us to get to the gift inside. If you are still struggling with belief maybe you could talk to someone today.

5. Miracles – Healing, resurrection and other miraculous signs and wonders

Set up: Place a cross on the table. On one side put a collection of candles and a box of matches. On the other side place a bowl of flat stones with a fine-tipped permanent marker. Add the description/instruction sheet

Description: Miracles occur every day, from the lighting of a match to the birth of a child. These miracles become so much a part of our lives that we sometimes fail to even see them. At other times God performs a miracle that cannot fail to grab our attention.

Instructions: Strike a match and light a candle. A flame gives us light and makes us warm. Isn't it amazing how a flame can come from striking a match on a box? God's miracles are around us every day. Think about the miracles of God that you can see in your life.

Sometimes we start to think these every day miracles are normal and we forget to thank God for them. But then there are also times when God does something so amazing we cannot miss

how wonderful He is. Take a stone and write or draw a picture on it show something amazing that you have seen God do.

Place your stone on the table along with the stones of others. Together they will make a tower that reminds us of all the fantastic things God has done for us.

6. Relationship – seeing God in His people

Set up: Place a large bowl of water on the table. Place some small pebbles beside the bowl. Put a box of dominoes on the table, leave space to set up a line of dominoes. Add the description/Instruction sheet.

Description: The belief of one person has an effect on others that they relate to. Just as the ripples in the water spread out, or one domino causes the next to fall, a person who is committed to Jesus will impact those who are close to them.

Instructions: Take a pebble and drop it in to the water. Can you see how the lines move outwards, affecting all of the water in the bowl? These lines are called ripples. Set up a line of dominoes and knock over the first one, causing the others to fall in turn. Each one has an impact on the next.

When God is in you it makes a difference to the people around you. Think about the people in your life who have helped you to know God better. Thank God for them. Ask God to help you to make a difference to your family and friends.

7. Mystery – seeing glimpses of the incredible, amazing, indescribable God

Set up: Choose a jigsaw puzzle that forms a beautiful scene from nature or a close up portrait. If your budget is limited you could easily make your own by printing a photograph, laminating it and cutting it into random pieces. Place the jumbled pieces of a puzzle on the table (at least 100 pieces). You might like to put together one corner of the puzzle. Add the description/instruction sheet.

Description: We have an incredible, amazing, indescribable God. He is full of mystery. He is too big for us to fully comprehend but we do see glimpses of who He is. As we see more and pieces and begin to fit them together we gain a better understanding of God. One day all the

pieces will come together and we will see the full picture.

Instructions: There are times when we think about God and find him hard to understand.

Choose one piece and look closely at it.

Can you tell what the picture is by looking at just one piece?

Try to add a few pieces to the picture.

When we add more pieces it is easier to see the whole picture.

Ask God to help you to learn more about him.

The more you know about God, the better you will understand him.

8. Logic – God, the Bible and living life as a Christian makes sense

Set up: Supply a child's shape sorting toy or peg board with different shaped holes. Add the description/instruction sheet.

Description: There is a lot about life and our purpose that can be hard to understand but sometimes things just seem to fit together logically. For some people, understanding God is like putting a round peg into a round hole. It just fits with their concept of the world.

Instructions: Place the pieces in the correct holes.

What do you know about God?

Some of the things might make sense – they might fit well with how you understand life and this world.

But some of these things might be hard to understand.

Ask God to help you to make sense of some of the things that don't yet seem to fit.

9. Lifelong belief

Set up: Place a shallow tray of sand on the table. If all of your participants are able to access the floor then this could be set up on a rug. Add the description/instruction sheet.

Description: Looking back through life, some people have always had a belief and faith in God. They cannot think of a time when they were not aware of God in their lives. If this is the case, it's

important to take time to stop and remember this gift of God's presence.

Instructions: Use your finger to draw a line in the sand to represent your life. Looking back at your life you may be able to see how God has been with you. Slowly draw another line beside the first one and thank God for being with you.

YouTube Clip - Isaiah 40

Play this video to signal the end of the Prayer Station time.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3IXU1KBgjE>

Decision Week - PowerPoint Presentation

What does it look like to earnestly seek God – to search for Him with all our hearts? This week we all have a challenge to accept or reject – how are you going to respond? And what will God do when you look for him, wrestle with Him and get to know Him?

Benediction

May God who created all things, who is greater than we can understand, help us to know him better and love Him more each day this week and always.

Amen

Script for PowerPoint Presentation

1. The Bible tells us lots of stories about times when people had experiences of God
2. **Adam and Eve** walked with God in the Garden each afternoon.
3. **Cain** talked with God about His tough judgment.
4. **Noah** walked with God.
5. **Pharaoh** received messages from **God through Moses**.
6. When God gave **Moses the 10 Commandments**, he saw God's hand and it turned his hair white.
7. **Jonah** didn't respond well to God.
8. **Joseph** had dreams that revealed God's plans.

9. **Daniel** saw the hand of God revealing judgment.
10. God spoke to **Zechariah** in the temple about the birth of his son (John the Baptist).
11. God sent His messenger, an **Angel to Mary** to speak to her about her pregnancy and the **birth of Jesus**.
12. Lots of people met Jesus, God's son.
13. **Paul** heard Jesus speak to him on the road to Damascus and it changed his life.
14. What about You?

Personal experience of God – vision, voice, dream

Description: This is a space in which people can take time to quietly listen to the voice of God; to dream about what is yet to come through God

Instructions: Shhhh! Come quietly into this space. God is here. Make yourself comfortable. Close your eyes and ask God to speak to you. Then wait and listen. Let God speak to you and dream about all He has in store for you.

Science – Creation, Medicine, Physics, Astronomy

Description: Many people find a deep connection with God when they are immersed in the beauty and intricacy of His Creation. The items provided in this space will serve as a reminder of that connection, sparking both gratitude, wonder and worship.

Instructions: God is a creative God. He has made

heaps of beautiful things. Look at these objects and photos. Choose one that helps you to know God is real. Think about how God's creation helps us to know He exists. Take something from this table to remind you of God.

History – God's plans, purposes and prophecies

Description: This activity allows people to consider the fulfilment of God's plan as seen in both the Bible and their own lives.

Instructions: God has made lots of promises to His people. When He keeps His promises it helps us to see that He is real. Can you think of a time when God has answered your prayers? The Bible tells us about other times when God made promises and then kept them. Can you think of one? When we share these things we can help other people to know God better.

On one side write the promise that God made to you or someone in the Bible or the prayer that you prayed.

On the other side write how or when He kept that promise or answered your prayer.

Struggling/wrestling with doubt about God's existence – struggles, difficulties, challenges

Description: Sometimes there are obstacles that get in the way of our belief in God. We can stay locked out of the gift of faith and relationship with God or we can wrestle with these obstacles. The Bible tells us that anyone who looks for God will find him. There are times in our faith struggles where something cuts through these obstacles (like scissors through the knots and we find ourselves able to come close to God.

Instructions: Maybe you are not sure yet that you believe God is real. Choose a box and try to untie the knots. As you do this, talk to God about the questions and problems that you have. He is a big God and he can handle your questions. If you cannot untie all the

knots then you can use the scissors. Sometimes talking to a friend about our doubts can cut through them and help us to get to the gift inside. If you are still struggling with belief maybe you could talk to someone today.

Miracles – Healing, resurrection and other miraculous signs and wonders

Description: Miracles occur every day, from the lighting of a match to the birth of a child. These miracles become so much a part of our lives that we sometimes fail to even see them. At other times God performs a miracle that cannot fail to grab our attention.

Instructions: Strike a match and light a candle. A flame gives us light and makes us warm. Isn't it amazing how a flame can come from striking a match on a box? God's miracles are around us every day. Think about the miracles of God that you can see in your life.

Sometimes we start to think these every day miracles are normal and we forget to thank God for them. But then there are also times when God does something so amazing we cannot miss how wonderful He is. Take a stone and write or draw a picture on it show

something amazing that you have seen God do.

Place your stone on the table along with the stones of others. Together they will make a tower that reminds us of all the fantastic things God has done for us.

Relationship – seeing God in His people

Description: The belief of one person has an effect on others that they relate to. Just as the ripples in the water spread out, or one domino causes the next to fall, a person who is committed to Jesus will impact those who are close to them.

Instructions: Take a pebble and drop it in to the water. Can you see how the lines move outwards, affecting all of the water in the bowl? These lines are called ripples. Set up a line of dominoes and knock over the first one, causing the others to fall in turn. Each one has an impact on the next.

When God is in you it makes a difference to the people

around you. Think about the people in your life who have helped you to know God better. Thank God for them. Ask God to help you to make a difference to your family and friends.

Mystery – seeing glimpses of the incredible, amazing, indescribable God

Description: We have an incredible, amazing, indescribable God. He is full of mystery. He is too big for us to fully comprehend but we do see glimpses of who He is. As we see more and pieces and begin to fit them together we gain a better understanding of God. One day all the pieces will come together and we will see the full picture.

Instructions: There are times when we think about God and find Him hard to understand.

Choose one piece and look closely at it.

Can you tell what the picture is by looking at just one piece?

Try to add a few pieces to the picture.

When we add more pieces it is easier to see the whole picture.

Ask God to help you to learn more about him.

The more you know about God, the better you will understand Him.

Logic – God, the Bible and living life as a Christian makes sense

Description: There is a lot about life and our purpose that can be hard to understand but sometimes things just seem to fit together logically. For some people, understanding God is like putting a round peg into a round hole. It just fits with their concept of the world.

Instructions: Place the pieces in the correct holes.

What do you know about God?

Some of the things might make sense – they might fit well with how you understand life and this world.

But some of these things might be hard to understand. Ask God to help you to make sense of some of the things that don't yet seem to fit.

Lifelong belief

Description: Looking back through life, some people have always had a belief and faith in God. They cannot think of a time when they were not aware of God in their lives. If this is the case, it's important to take time to stop and remember this gift of God's presence.

Instructions: Use your finger to draw a line in the sand to represent your life. Looking back at your life you may be able to see how God has been with you. Slowly draw another line beside the first one and thank God for being with you.