



Bounce | January 13, 2016

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

Some of us fear doubts when it comes to faith. We work hard to protect our positions on certain issues and leave little room in our lives for anyone who thinks differently. What if our faith is designed to have difficult conversations and ask difficult questions?

Key Verse

Mark 9:23-24

"What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes."

The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"

Discussion

Rob Bell discusses an illustration in his book *Velvet Elvis* about our faith either being like a brick wall to protect or a trampoline that stretches but holds its shape. The brick wall style of faith is self-centered and argumentative while the trampoline style is others-centered and invites conversation.

1. When have you experienced a brick wall style faith conversation?
2. Have you ever had faith conversations with someone who didn't believe as you do? How did it go?

When it comes to things we don't fully understand or have questions about, we typically get defensive. We tend to try to eliminate things that cause us to doubt or create boundaries to protect ourselves from having to face them.

3. What are some things about life and faith that you don't fully understand or don't make sense to you?
4. Are there any things about your faith that you used to see one way but now think differently as a result of asking questions?

The father in the story from Mark 9 says, "I believe, but help me with my unbelief." This seems to suggest that there is room for doubt and questions. In fact, the father is sitting in front of Jesus, seeking him out. He has belief but still doubts.

5. Who in your life do you need to spend some time in trampoline type faith conversations either for your sake or theirs? Are there people in your life that need to sit with someone who allows them to question and discuss?

What's Next?

There is a saying that states, "Know why you believe what you believe." Wrestling with things and asking questions helps us know how and why we came to the beliefs we hold. Without questions or doubt we essentially believe what someone else tells us to believe or what we believe others want us to believe. This week consider what parts of your faith are the solid foundation to your trampoline. Consider inviting some people into a conversation about faith, doubts, and being comfortable with not having it all figured out.