

Faith Club Ice Breakers

How do you start talking to strangers about God, religion, faith, death, prejudice, and eternity? Very slowly. It's not like discussing the weather. You can disagree about tomorrow's forecast, and no one will suffer. But if you imply to someone that her religious practices are devoid of reason, her faith has no validity, or her religion misinterprets scripture, you are threatening the very core of her identity. Don't expect to see her at meeting number two.

So, play it safe instead. Use some of our Ice Breakers to get to know one another. Faith club members will each reveal a little about themselves, and in the process you'll learn to trust and respect one another. You'll find commonalities that may surprise you and discover differences that you may need to keep in mind as you ease into more intimate and divisive conversation topics. You can try out a few ice breakers at your first meeting or start each meeting with a new one. It's up to you. If you have a new ice breaker idea, let us know by emailing us at TheFaithClub@TheFaithClub.com.

THE INTERVIEW Divide into pairs. Each person gets five minutes to interview another person about her background including where she is from, what she studied, how religion was practiced in her family, etc. (If you're a small group, take turns interviewing each other.) After ten minutes, the members introduce their partner to the rest of the club. See how accurately people perceive one another based on a first impression.

FIND A PARTNER Each member takes a nametag and writes down two or three adjectives describing themselves. Everybody compares tags, then chooses someone with opposite adjectives and talks to that person for five minutes. Can they come up with two or three adjectives that describe both of them?

THEY JUST DON'T GET IT If you are a large faith club, break into groups of three or four people of the same religion. Make a list of five things you'd like people to understand about your religion. If you're a small group, each member can make his or her own list.

DREAM WEAVER Share a dream that you think may have had some religious significance. Let the other members of your faith club try to analyze its meaning.

THE LIE DETECTOR Each person takes an index card and writes down three statements about his or her faith. Two are true, and one is a lie. Read them aloud, and members try to guess which statement is a lie.

THE QUOTATION GAME Everyone should bring a quotation that is inspirational to them. Write the quotes on index cards. Shuffle the cards and see if faith club members can guess who brought each quote. Don't guess your own!

DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES? Share a miracle you've heard about in your life. Do you believe it? Do others believe it?

ARE YOU TALKING TO ME? Write down a sentence that you hope no one ever utters in the confines of your faith club. Take a deep breath, read your sentence aloud, and see what happens to the temperature in the room.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T Lay your cards on the table. What is the most important thing you want people to respect about you and your religion? Write that point down. Then belt it out!

I HAVE A DREAM Answer these two questions. Why did you join a faith club, and what do you hope to get out of this experience?