

# **Series: Born To Be Believe**

## **Lesson I: An Introduction to World Religions**

### **Lesson Objectives:**

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Identify that all people have beliefs of some kind.
- Identify the “Four Big Questions” of life.
- Identify that it is Christ-like to dialogue lovingly with people about belief.

### **Materials Needed:**

- ☐ Copies of page A-42, one per student
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Chart paper with prepared questions, see Task One
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Copies of scenario, from page A-43

## Lead In:

Give each student a copy of page A-42 and ask them to individually read that handout and follow the instructions given at the bottom. Collect the examples and read them, anonymously, to the whole group. Have the other students guess who wrote each one. If it is a smaller group, you can have each student keep a list of guesses on a scrap piece of paper. If it is a larger group, you can have students shout out their guesses.

## Task One:

Transition by saying something like, *Everybody has beliefs whether they are true or not. Today we are going to work together to explore some of our own and other's beliefs and why we have them. We are going to start by trying to figure out some of the questions that all people and all faiths are trying to answer. What do you think that those might be?*

In advance of the lesson, prepare four large pieces of chart paper with the following questions written in the top half of the page. Fold each paper in half so that the question is covered. Write the number of the question on the visible side of the folded chart paper. Tape the four pieces of paper around the room so that the questions cannot be seen.

1. Where am I?
2. Who am I?
3. What is the problem?
4. What is the solution?

Ask for a volunteer who will act as Vanna White, to reveal the questions as they are guessed (the ones from the preparation above). When a student correctly guesses a question, have the Vanna impostor reveal the appropriate question by telling him or her

the number of the question to unfold. You may need to give hints along the way if your students are not able to guess them initially.

## **Task Two:**

Tell students that they are going to walk around to the four stations (questions on chart paper) with a marker, and they are going to record not only what they believe is the answer to the question but other answers that they hear often (on television, in movies, from friends). Do an example together. For example, if I approached the question “Where am I?” I could write “on a small, insignificant planet” even if I don’t agree with that statement. I could also write “in a world created by God” if that is my opinion. The only other rule is that they may not duplicate an answer.

When students are done, ask them to sit back down. Tell them that they have just answered The Four Big Questions of life. Way to go! Say something like, *These questions are fundamental to all of us. At some point in life most people ask these questions or some similar kinds of questions. Every religion tries to answer these questions. And when you boil down each religion they all answer these questions differently.*

Ask for a volunteer to approach each paper and highlight two or three answers (could be the wackiest one, the funniest one, the strangest one, the best one, etc). Now ask the volunteers, with the help of the class, to identify one answer on the sheet that would be a Christian answer to the question. Look for answers such as these:

- ☐ Where am I? In a universe created by God and ruled by God. (Genesis 1:1, 2:1; Colossians 1:15-17)
- ☐ Who am I? A child of God, created in God’s image. (Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139)

- ❑ What is the problem? Sin, separation from God, evil, suffering. (Genesis 3:14-15; Romans 3:23)
- ❑ What is the solution? Salvation, heaven, right relationship with God. (Acts 4:12; Romans 8:28)

### **Task Three:**

Tell the students that they are going to work in little groups on a case scenario. Have students break into small groups and give them a copy of the scenario that can be found, copied, and cut out from page A-43. The instructions are included on the handout.

Bring the whole class together and solicit some answers from the groups. Ask the listening students to agree or disagree with the given answers or to add anything that is missing. Try to highlight that Christians can dialogue with people of other religions in ways that are loving, gracious, intelligent, respectful, truthful, and prayerful.

Ask a final question to the whole group. Ask if anyone can remember a time when Jesus dialogued with people of various religions. In fact, Jesus is a perfect example of someone who dialogued with people of various (or no) religions, such as Samaritans, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Roman.

### **Closing:**

End by saying something like, *Over the next few weeks we are going to be learning a little more about other religions and beliefs so that we can be better prepared to interact and dialogue with all kinds of people.*

Pray for guidance and truth as you continue to learn.