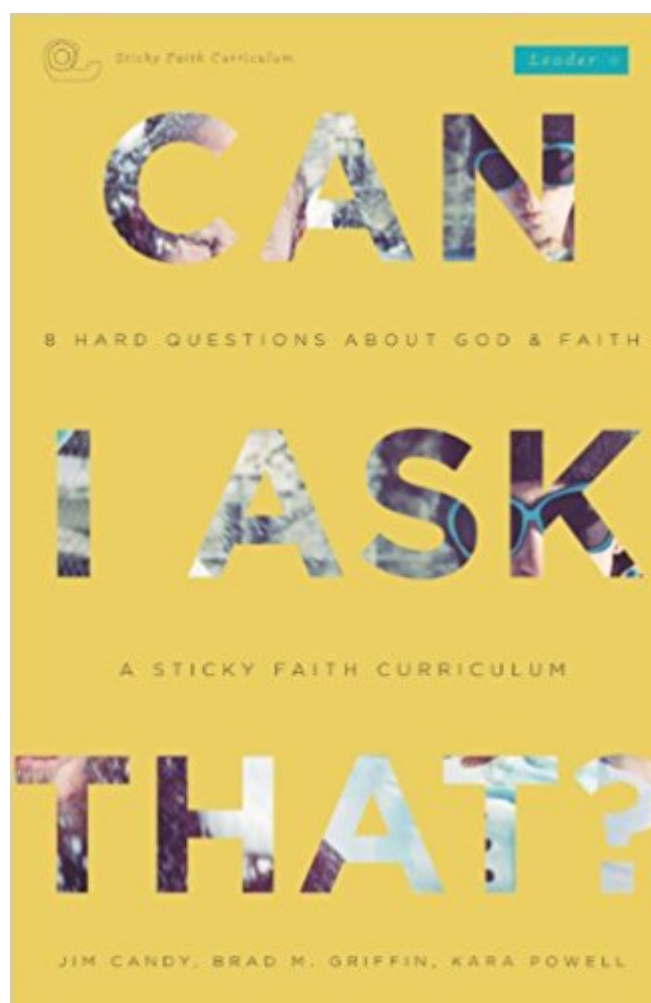


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# Can I Ask That?: 8 Hard Questions About God & Faith [Sticky Faith Curriculum] Leader Guide



## Synopsis

Teenagers are tired of vague or nonexistent answers to their tough questions about God, the Bible, and Christianity. Just when they're capable of diving into the deep end of their faith, all too often the church keeps them splashing around in shallow waters. As eight years of Sticky Faith research on teenagers has shown, it's not doubt or hard questions that are toxic to faith. It's silence. The trusted voice of the Fuller Youth Institute and proven best practices from churches around the country converge to provide you with tools both to start conversations about hard questions, as well as to lead students toward discovering their own faith convictions. Designed for use in small groups alongside the Can I Ask That Student Guide, these eight sessions tackle the following tough questions: What is the Bible, anyway? Why does the Bible contradict itself? Can I be a Christian and believe in evolution? Does God discriminate against women? Is Jesus really the only way to God? What does the Bible say about being gay? Does God endorse violence? How can I follow a God who would let Christians do such bad things?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Young people want to connect with the Bible and ask tough questions, in a way that will not lead to formulas but renewed minds and transformed lives. Can I Ask That is designed to help them do just that. - John Ortberg, pastor and author, Faith & Doubt If one of your primary concerns as a youth leader is to equip the young people from your community to continue their faith pursuit long after they graduate, I heartily endorse Can I Ask That? Your leaders

will appreciate this study as much as your students, if not more. It's a breath of fresh air. - Dan Gannon, City Church of San Francisco

Can I Ask That? provides a platform for conversation around subjects that students experience but often do not feel comfortable talking about. This curriculum presented a conversational tool to our students, not just cut-and-dried answers. - Chris Hill, First Presbyterian Church of Boulder

"As my friends wrote this book, they intentionally did and didn't do a few important things. First, they didn't shy away from the real questions. Second, they didn't over-simplify the answers into neat little packages. They allow us to live in tension of a real faith. Third, they support us as parents, youth workers, and shepherds of our youth's souls. Lastly, they offer hope for a lifetime of following Jesus Christ. I'm so thankful for resources like this rooted in research ... and love." - April L. Diaz, pastor, consultant, author

Kara Powell is the executive director of the Fuller Youth Institute and a faculty member at Fuller Theological Seminary. Named by Christianity Today as one of "50 Women to Watch," Kara is the author or coauthor of several books, including *Sticky Faith*, and a regular speaker at national leadership and youth ministry conferences.

Brad Griffin is associate director of the Fuller Youth Institute. A speaker, blogger, and youth pastor, Brad is the coauthor of several *Sticky Faith* resources as well as *Can I Ask That? 8 Hard Questions about God and Faith*. He speaks nationally at churches, denominational training events, and youth ministry conferences.

I love this book! I'm doing a small group bible study with high school girls. I chose this study in the hopes that it would expose them to some of the challenging issues they will face as they go off to college. Well, it has succeeded on so many more levels. The discussions we have had throughout this study have been so spiritually enriching. I wish I had this book when I was in high school! The authors did a very good job in presenting the biblical worldview and encouraging a loving response to those that challenge it. We especially enjoyed the chapter on being gay. The girls had so many thoughts on this issue that we probably could've done a whole other session on just that topic. This book encourages the students to go through the process of thinking about topics they may have never thought of before. For some sessions, I printed off some other materials to add even more to the discussion (newspaper articles, statistics, church statements of faith, etc) to help personalize it. This wasn't specifically needed as the study can easily be used alone. Be sure to read the leader guide before the study. It helps to prepare you so you're not caught off guard with some of the potential rabbit trails the discussions may travel. Even if all the questions can not be

answered completely, the authors encourage you, the leader, to understand that the process may be the end goal. My group loves it so much, they've already asked to do Book 2.

There are a handful of resources already in print that deal with hard questions that students ask. This is the first one that truly puts the students and their faith first. Too many resources that deal with hard questions that students ask are more concerned with providing adults with well packaged answers that will help get rid of doubt. This book invites us to see the questioning and doubt of a student as not something to fear, but as an opportunity for engagement, inquiry that may lead to a deepening of faith and personal ownership of faith and belief and not just inheriting an idea that was taught to them. There are some questions in this book that may make adults squeamish, but students will be thankful that they are being given the chance to ask them. Fantastic resource. Kris Fernhout - Student Ministry Pastor at Christ Community Church, Kansas City

Have been using this as the basis for High School Sunday School for the last two months...great resource. We have really focused with the kids on the idea that, when they leave home for college and the "big world", they WILL encounter many whose views don't line up with a biblical worldview as they have learned in their homes and church over the years. The format allows a given church/denom to specifically make a point of what they teach is a proper interpretation of Biblical teaching.

I think the ideas in this book are excellent and I loved the concept. But it's not working for my high school group at all. It's very difficult to follow as a group leader and doesn't really offer much insight to the deep questions that are asked. I had to do most of my own research and come up with my own discussion questions because the little scenarios presented with fake names (fake drama situations between fake characters) was really kiddy and ridiculous. It doesn't work with high school and I wouldn't use those fake examples with jr. high either. This book was pretty confusing and just didn't offer much for real authentic deep discussion. I pretty much ended up only using the questions written on the back of the books and have had to completely re-write my own curriculum for the idea. For me... definitely a waste of money.

Great book to answer questions about faith. Easy reading.

As the proud owner of 12 copies of Can I Ask That? (volume 1), I cannot recommend this book

enough. I took my youth group through volume 1 at summer camp last year and continued it through the fall as well. I knew our time with the book had gone well and that the kids had liked it but I didn't know HOW much until we finished it and went through a second book by someone else. My kids (mostly high schoolers) were really bored with his book and greatly preferred CIAT and went as far as to tell me so explicitly. CIAT is so obviously formatted for small groups and with jr. high/high school students in mind. There's no cheesy jokes, it takes its readers seriously, it presents meaningful content in a discernable way, has conversation at the forefront of how its presented, and has the right depth of content...not too much, not too little. I'm doing ministry bi-vocationally and switched from researching and creating content each week to following books like CIAT last year when my wife and I had our first child and my other co-leaders all stopped due to their own kids. Now that we are having our second kid on the way, I'm all the more excited for CIAT volume 2. It really gives me so much more room in my schedule to be an employee, dad, and youth pastor and to focus my energy on building relationships each week with my kids, knowing I have solid content already set to go. Carving out time to research, prepare, and teach took a much larger toll on me after we had kids and my job (again!) ramped up its work load so your book has really been a major blessing to me and my youth group.

Our youth group is just getting into this book. Some of the lessons that are longer I've broken up into a couple weeks. I really like the way it handles the subject matter. We may not discuss all the topics just yet because I'm mostly talking to 11 year olds.

The Sticky Faith series is incredible. Most of the students in my youth group have really enjoyed discussing the questions that this book raises. It is extremely relevant and important for students to learn about and be exposed to some of the questions that this book contains. I just wish there were more than 8!

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