As you (parents and youth) read through this book, use these questions to help you further reflect on what you’re reading. Also, take time to share and discuss your answers with each other at the end of each chapter, dating and signing the bottom of one another’s sheets when you do so. We hope and desire that you will take time to explore the questions and exercises and that your answers reflect how it has changed or impacted your faith. We like paragraphs not sentences! 😊

Opening Questions:
1) Please pray together out loud (youth and parents) for God to give you insights as you read this book together & for God to bring you closer to Him & to each other as a result.

2) Look at the titles for each chapter. Have you ever had any of these questions? If so, do you still have them now and why? If not, what helped to answer them for you?

3) Let’s lay it all out on the table. What are your biggest doubts or fears about having faith in Christ and being a Christian? Have you ever shared these with anybody?
Read the Introduction and Chapter #1.

1) Please respond to the next 3 pages 1-1 through 1-6 in some detail.

2) Has there ever been a time in your life that was hard but you now are thankful that you went through it? Please tell that story below and explain why you are thankful for having gone through that.

3) Reread the story on page 24 in the shaded box. Do you think you could have the same attitude that she does-- that being in a wheelchair and knowing God is better than walking and not knowing God? Why/why not?

4) Why do you think her faith in God is more important to her than being able to walk? Is your faith that important to you? Explain. If so why is it so strong, and if not what needs to happen in order for you to get there?
Investigation is Suffering as Training

Why does God allowance suffering?

If God is all-powerful and all-loving, why doesn't he just wipe out all suffering?

Investigation 4: Positive from Negative

Investigation 2: Suffering as a

_Why Does God Allow Suffering?_

_Why Does God Allow Suffering?_

This issue? For your response here. Be ready to share it and explain it.

Now read the section, "Positive from Negative," on pages 21 and 22 of the case.

Now read the section, "Suffering as a Positive from Negative," on pages 20 and 21 of the case.

_What is God like in his power and holiness?_ Why does God just wipe all tears away?

_What is God like in his power and holiness?_ Why does God just wipe all tears away?
Investigation 6: Is God Unfair?

In this issue, let your response be ready to share it and explain it.

Imagine the Long View: How does your section add to your understanding of
Is God Unfair? Can you explain the reason for your belief?

Now read the section, If I Were You (page 24-25 of The Case for Faith—

Investigation 5: Getting Your Attention

Because you are ready to share it and explain it, do these sections add to your understanding of the issue? For your response
Is God Unfair? Can you explain the reason for your belief?

Now read the section, Getting Your Attention (page 25 of The Case for Faith—

Why Does God Allow Suffering?

Why Does God Allow Suffering?
Read Chapter #2

1) Do you personally know anyone who has witnessed or experienced a miracle? Tell the story below.

2) What are some Bible Stories that you have read or heard about that involve miracles that are hard to believe? What makes them hard to believe for you?

3) Explain in your own words the top 5 reasons to “Give God the Benefit of the Doubt”

4) Reread the 4 facts on page #37. Had you ever heard these before? Which one is the MOST convincing to you and why?
Read Chapter #3
1) Which of the evidence presented in this chapter is the most convincing to you and why?

2) Would you say that there is a convincing case that science does not disprove the existence of God? Explain

3) What questions do you still have – either questions you wonder about yourself or that you know other people wonder about – regarding science and faith?

4) Read Genesis 1:1-2:4. Place yourself at the side of God during that time He was creating the universe; what would that be like? What would you be thinking and feeling?

5) After reading those passages what answers do you find to your questions? In #3

6) What questions are raised after reading this scripture?
7) Read Psalm 139.

8) Reread verses 13-16. As you think about the people listed below list 5 words or phrases for each person about how they are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (for example Adam is a friendly, funny guy. Liz is designed by the Master Artist, Chris is awesomely complex).

My mom

My dad

My best friend

My siblings (do each individually)

Myself
Read Chapter #4
1) What stands out to you the most from this chapter?

2) On p.56 reread the paragraph starting with “Because he calls…” Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

3) Do you think abuses in church history are valid reasons to reject Jesus Christ? Why or why not?

4) Write a 3-5 paragraph letter on another page. EITHER A) Write to a friend who thinks Christianity is an intolerant and exclusive religion. Include the points you found most persuasive in this chapter. OR B) Write a letter to God expressing the doubts, questions, and concerns you still have about this issue.
**Read Chapter #5**

1) Which of the questions helped you the most in understanding hell and why? (pick at least 2)

2) Which one(s) are you the most confused about and why?

3) Reread the shaded box on page #67. What is your reaction to this? Have you ever thought of God as a baby killer? If so, does this change your mind and why? If not, why does this strengthen your belief?

4) Read Matthew 16:16-19. What do you think it means that the gates of Hades (hell) will not overcome the church? What comfort does that give you if you are one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

5) How will you respond to what’s said in this passage in Matthew? Do you need to accept Jesus as the Son of God? If you have done so, do you need to express your thanks to God that hell has no power over you?

6) Is there someone in your life who God may be asking you to talk to about Jesus so the door of the kingdom will be open to that person and they won’t have to face hell?
Read Chapter #6
1) Read Mark 9:14-27. Would you say the father had faith or doubts? What do you think he meant by, “I do believe, help my unbelief?” Do you think it is possible to have belief and unbelief, faith and doubts at the same time? Explain.

2) Take the “Self Test: Doubters Anonymous” on the next page, answering the questions honestly.

3) What is the relationship between your faith and your feelings? What do you think I should be? Do our feelings always match reality? Explain.

4) Have you ever had one of those terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days? See if you can relate to this person in Psalm 22:1-8 (read it!). How would you say the writer of this Psalm is doing emotionally?

5) The Psalm also describes the events of Jesus death on the cross. What kinds of emotions do you think Jesus was experiencing at that moment on the cross? Do you think Jesus’ faith was weak because his emotions were so troubled and he was in a painful situation? Explain.
Doubters' Anonymous

Check the box that best describes you.

☐ The church kid: You've grown up in church and you consider yourself a Christian—but sometimes you find yourself wondering if it's really all true.

☐ The smoke screen: Your doubts aren't so much about whether or not God is real. They're more about whether or not you can really change your lifestyle to live the way you know God asks you to.

☐ The disappointed: God hasn't answered your prayers or met your needs. So you wonder, "Is God really there?"

☐ The wounded: Abuse or rejection or some kind of suffering makes you ask, "If there's a God, why does he let this happen?"

☐ The rebel: You don't want to follow your parents' lead, so you rebel against the God they believe in.

☐ The independent: You're not going to let anybody—not even God—run your life.

☐ The uncommitted: You want to keep your options open. There are a lot of points of view and a lot of lifestyles out there. Commitment to Christ isn't for you right now.

☐ The worshiper with the blahs: You go to church, but you don't seem to get as much out of it as other people do. You've started to wonder, "Is there something wrong with me—or something wrong with God?"

When it comes to the relationship between my faith and my emotions, usually...

☐ if I'm feeling low, my faith is low; if I'm feeling good, my faith is strong

☐ how strong I feel in my faith is somewhat influenced by my emotions at the time

☐ I know that God is real and that he loves me even if I don't necessarily feel his presence or his love

I think

☐ having a strong faith means never having doubts.

☐ it's possible to have doubts even when you believe.

☐ facing doubts can help you develop a stronger faith than if you never doubt.

I think the opposite of faith is

☐ doubt—serious questions about what I believe or about whether or not God is real and the Bible is true.

☐ unbelief—a willful refusal to believe or a deliberate decision to disobey God.
6) Read Psalm 22:22-24. From these verses do you think the writer’s emotions went up or down with his emotions? What do you think caused the change?

7) In the *The Case for Faith* Strobel says “It’s normal to mix up faith and emotions. Sometimes that can leave us longing for a spiritual high – and wondering who’s at fault, us or God, if we don’t feel it…We need to learn that faith is not always about having positive feelings towards God or life” Based on what you’ve observed in this Psalm-writer and about Jesus, would you agree or disagree with that statement? Explain. Share any additional insights you have from this.

8) On p 81-84 there are 3 steps to “Dealing with Doubt.” Summarize each one below in your own words:
9) On p.83 there is a shaded box. Take the time to fill it in with your own words on the space below with 3-5 answers under each one:

a) People I know whose faith I respect (and WHY you respect their faith)

b) “Faith-building materials” (books, music, etc) I could look into—or someone or some place I could go to find out about some:

c) My persona; “North-Pole” place/people/media that tend to freeze my faith:
Read the Conclusion

1) What sticks out to you from the conclusion and why?

2) Review everything you’ve written about in this packet. What do you think has impacted your faith the most and why? What have you found the most helpful toward strengthening your faith?

3) What has challenged you the most and why?

4) Take some time to pray together again, thanking God for teaching you through this book and asking him to guide you as you write your faith statements and consider making a public confirmation of your faith to the body of Christ!

5) Now is a good time to write your faith statements (on the next page). Take time to prayerfully consider each question on it and to give an in-depth, thoughtful, and honest answer. Make sure to contact Pastor Anderson or Eric with any questions by phone 252-1625 or email Eric at skaboy4123@yahoo.com.
Statement of Faith
We would like you to write your personal Statement of Faith to be turned in at the 9th grade retreat along with the Case for Faith packet. There are 5 questions we would like you to answer. There is no “right” way to write this, it is personal to you. Be creative, honest, and most of all have fun writing this. We also encourage you to share this with your parents. If you need help or have any questions please contact Pastor Anderson or Eric Blake. Please write this on a SEPARATE piece of paper and put thought into each answer. We like paragraphs NOT sentences 😊

1) What are important times, people, and places that have helped you grow to the level of faith you are at right now?

2) What do you believe about God the Creator, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit? (write separately about each)

3) What is the church, and what is your understanding of the mission of the church? How do you plan to get actively involved in that mission?

4) How do you intend to keep the promise of your confirmation vows and be responsible for keeping a growing relationship with Christ and the church?

5) Do you want to be confirmed at this time and why?