

BACKPACK FAITH

Helping Your Child Live Confidently
for Jesus in Public School

A GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

A guide for groups to share stories, ask questions, and deepen your reading experience with the *BACKPACK FAITH* book.



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Part 1:

Knowing Your Role and the Rules

Chapter 1 - You're the Starter

1. As parents, we often compare our children's school experiences to when we were in school. Culturally, what have you seen change for the better? For the worse?
2. What concerns do you have about your child's schooling?
3. What questions about your child's religious liberties do you hope this book will answer?
4. How do you feel about your role as your child's primary discipler?

Chapter 2 - Understanding the Rules of the Game

1. Before reading this chapter, what was your understanding of 'the separation of church and state'? How have you seen that phrase misused? What is your understanding of the idea of 'the separation of church and state' now?
2. Were there any ways that your child can express faith in school that surprised you?
3. How have you experienced or heard your child's school upholding its students' religious liberties?
4. On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you at this moment that you could defend your child's religious liberties if necessary?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for entrusting us with the sacred role of discipling our children. Grant us wisdom and courage to know and defend their religious liberties in every educational setting.

Part 2:

Three Ways Your Children Can Freely Express Their Faith at School

Chapter 3 - Expressing Faith Individually

1. What would your child say about their freedom to express their faith at school? Would it be welcomed, or invite criticism? Have they seen others express their faith and if so, was it an encouragement to them?
2. We often hear the phrase, 'Prayer was taken out of public schools.' After reading this chapter, how would you respond to that statement?
3. What benefits do you see to your child choosing to read the Bible or other devotional material during free reading time?
4. Our choices in what we wear and what we listen to are deeply personal. What is your child's comfort level in their self-expression of faith through clothing, jewelry and music at home compared to school? In what ways could you support your child in feeling comfortable expressing their faith at school if they wanted to?
5. Have you or your child ever seen or heard someone else's self-expression that would be offensive to you? How did you respond? How do others' rights to self-expression strengthen your child's right to self-expression?

Chapter 4 - Expressing Faith with Others

1. How have your child's Christian friends at school been a support to them and their faith?
2. In what ways have you seen or heard groups of Christian students sharing their faith together at your child's school? Are there already opportunities to connect in faith groups, or is there a void that could be filled?
3. It can be intimidating to consider challenging an existing school policy. What impact has the bravery of parents and groups like Alliance Defending Freedom made?
4. Colson was a Christian kid who assumed that school and his faith needed to be separate. What do you imagine could happen if our Christian children instead knew the truth - that their faith is allowed to be seen, heard, and expressed with their friends at school?

Part 2:

Three Ways Your Children Can Freely Express Their Faith at School

Chapter 5 - Expressing Faith in Class and at School Events

1. How is your child expressing their faith and worldview through a speech or class assignment different from other forms of faith expression we have explored so far (wearing a shirt, reading, listening to music, praying with friends)?
2. In what ways will this type of expressive freedom impact your child's faith?
3. What is your assessment of the current state of critical thinking, listening, and constructive conversation around controversial topics in our nation? What about in your community?
4. How does being an active participant in respectfully sharing your worldview strengthen our First Amendment rights? How will this impact your child's classroom?

Prayer:

Lord, empower our children with the courage to express their faith in school, both through quiet devotion and bold witness with their friends. May their lives shine as a testament to your love, respecting the rights of others while fully exercising their own.

Part 3:

Three Unique Spaces for the Bible in Public School

Chapter 6 - How the Bible Can Transform Kids' Lives

1. The author presents salvation through the framework of guilt, grace, and gratitude. Is it possible to have a salvation experience if one of these elements is missing? How does the evidence of (or lack of) these elements help us confirm or question a salvation experience?
2. We read in this chapter of the behavioral and educational benefits of reading Scripture, as cited from studies and surveys. What benefits have you personally experienced or witnessed that can be traced back to reading God's Word?
3. Coupled with the religious liberties we've already unpacked, how does the truth that *'People cannot take God out of any place; He is everywhere'* impact your view of your child living out their faith at a public school?
4. How do the following statements give fresh perspective to the court cases that removed religious instruction and practices from the hands of school administration? *'The real lesson in our history is that public-school teachers and administrators were legally taken out of the picture as Bible facilitators and prayer leaders in our children's lives.' Yet discipleship was never their job to begin with; it is our job as parents and first-string disciplers!*

Chapter 7 - Before- and After-School Bible Clubs

1. As a child or teen, what learning experiences did you have with Christian adults, other than your parents? How did they impact and shape your faith?
2. Are there any before- or after-school Bible clubs offered for public schools in your area? If so, what kind of impact have you seen?
3. How do Equal Access Laws as they pertain to before- or after-school Bible clubs being held in the public school help strengthen religious liberties?
4. After considering the benefits and challenges of a before- or after-school club, would you be more or less likely to enroll your child in one (or start one if none are currently offered)? Why or why not?

Part 3:

Three Unique Spaces for the Bible in Public School

Chapter 8 - Bible-Literacy Classes

1. Where have you seen or heard a Biblical reference used in literature, music, or art? How did your understanding of the Bible enable you to fully grasp the reference?
2. Are there any Bible-Literacy classes offered in your local public schools? If so, what is your impression of them?
3. After considering the benefits and challenges of a Bible-Literacy class, would you be more or less likely to enroll your child in one (or advocate to have one started if none are currently offered)? Why or why not?

Chapter 9 - Released-Time Bible Programs

1. How are Released-Time Bible programs similar to before- and after-school Bible clubs and Bible literacy classes? How are they different?
2. Are there any Released-Time Bible programs offered for your local public schools? If so, what impact have you witnessed in the lives of children and families?
3. The author states that close to 60% of children attending a Released-Time Bible program don't regularly attend church, and 17% of parents reported starting to attend church because of their child's involvement in the program. Why do you suppose parents enroll their children in the program? How does this change your impression of the impact a Released-Time Bible program can have on your community?
4. After considering the benefits and challenges of a Released-Time Bible program, would you be more or less likely to enroll your child in one (or start one if none are currently offered)? Why or why not?

Prayer:

God, we pray you would bless the unique spaces—Bible clubs, literacy classes, and released-time programs—that introduce your word to public school students. May the scriptures transform their lives from the inside out, leading them to salvation and an eternal relationship with you.

Part 4:

Preparing Your Kids to Get in the Game

Chapter 10 - Preparing Versus Protecting

1. What are your thoughts on preparing your child as opposed to protecting them? How do the two views differ? How is preparing ultimately a form of protection?
2. William Temple described secular humanism as ‘Christian values without Christian faith.’ How do Christian values play a role in the order of our society? Where have you seen the lack of Christian faith distorting those values?
3. How does knowing what God says in His Word an essential backpack supply for our children? What is the role of the Holy Spirit as our children encounter falsehoods cleverly wrapped in a thread of truth?
4. How does prayer instill God-confidence? What impact would you anticipate seeing if there was a shift in where your child placed their confidence?
5. In James we read, “The testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” How can these words ease your anxiety about your child encountering different worldviews?

Chapter 11 - Playing on the Same Team

1. Where do you see opportunities to encourage, thank, or serve your child’s teacher? What could be the result of those efforts?
2. Think about your pattern of communication with your child’s teacher. Has it been more positive or negative? How will you balance your communication with your child’s teacher moving forward to cultivate a team approach to your child’s education?
3. Have you ever been in a situation similar to Alicia’s? How did you handle it?
4. This chapter emphasizes the importance of interacting with your child’s teacher respectfully as a fellow human being, rather than approaching them as a public servant paid for with our tax dollars. How does our view of public educators affect how we interact with them?

Part 4:

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Chapter 12 - Kindly Educating the Educators

1. In a culture where we are prone to naturally assume the worst, how does assuming the best about the intent of your child's teachers change how you interact with them?
2. How does being curious and clarifying your concerns steer a conversation?
3. How does knowing you carry your parental rights into the public school impact your courage to defend the truth?
4. Which of the ABCs of kindly educating resonated with you the most? Why?

Chapter 13 - Conversation Tools for Kids

1. When has your child been in a conversation where their faith was challenged? How did they handle it?
2. Why is the posture and tone of our conversations important? What does it convey to the person or people we are interacting with?
3. What tools will you equip your child with to help them respond to untruths, attacks, and mistaken directives in a Godly way?
4. What tools will you equip your child with to help them share their faith proactively?
5. Do you think it's harder to defend your faith or proactively share your faith? Why?

Chapter 14 - Role Models on Speed Dial

1. What are you doing right now to be a role model for your child? What else would you like to intentionally model for your child?
2. Who is acting as a role model in your child's life right now? Who else would you consider stepping into that role for your child?
3. Are you acting as a role model for someone else's child? How so?

Part 4:

Preparing Your Kids to Get in the Game

Chapter 15 - It's Time to Get in the Game!

1. The book quotes Stephen Covey saying, "The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities." If someone took a look at your family's calendar, what could they infer about your priorities?
2. Where has saying a 'good no' helped your family? What do you do when you realize a commitment you said 'yes' to should have been a 'no'?
3. How has your perspective changed on the religious liberties we enjoy in the United States?
4. How will you use what you have read to encourage your child to get in the game?
5. How has this book encouraged you to get in the game?

Prayer:

God, grant us the wisdom to equip our children with your word and Godly confidence, preparing them to face the world rather than just sheltering them from it. Direct us in supporting their teachers and giving our children the resources they need to share their faith with others.

Want to Learn More About a Released-Time Bible Program?

Bible2School is a released-time ministry that equips communities to legally provide free Bible classes to children DURING their public school day.

Their vision is that **every public school** in our nation would have a dynamic Bible program taught during their school day as **allowed by national released time court rulings**.

Explore How YOU Can Start a Bible2School Program in YOUR Community

www.bible2school.com

