

The Jesus Fatwah

session outline,
general format, &
session suggestions

materials

- *The Jesus Fatwah* DVD
- DVD player and TV monitor (or computer, projector, and screen)
- Participant handouts printed from the Living the Questions website (www.livingthequestions.com or www.thejesusfatwah.com)
- *OPTIONAL: Whiteboard or flipchart for discussion session.*
- **BEFORE EACH SESSION, MAKE SURE TO TEST THE DVD (INCLUDING AUDIO) TO BE SURE THAT EVERYTHING WORKS!**

group size

There is no prescribed size for groups using *The Jesus Fatwah*. The optimal size is that which is most conducive to conversation. From sitting around a table to gathering in a living room, den, or classroom – do what's comfortable for your group. Keep in mind that conversation and open dialogue can get bogged down with too many participants. If a group is too big, several extroverted voices may tend to dominate discussion. Consider dividing even a group of seven or eight into smaller groups of three or four for discussion. Living the Questions groups are often most effective when movable chairs are set up in a circle so the larger group can quickly move into conversation groups of three or four and then just as quickly come back together for large group discussion.

facilitator

The facilitator coordinates the flow of each session's conversation with questions and discussion. The facilitator is not expected (and should resist the temptation) to try to provide answers for the class. Asking open-ended questions tends to promote the best group conversation. The facilitator can be the same person each session or can be rotated among group members.

The facilitator can also help or be responsible for organizing the location of any orientation session, the gatherings, publicity, collecting supplies and materials, arranging for refreshments (if any), and recruiting participants.

session format

BEFORE BEGINNING ANY SESSION, MAKE SURE EACH PARTICIPANT HAS THEIR OWN COPY OF:

- INTRODUCTION
- TABLE OF CONTENTS
- CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES
- PARTICIPANT GUIDE/QUESTIONS FOR EACH SESSION

(See www.livingthequestions.com or www.thejesusfatwah.com to download)

Schedule Options

The Jesus Fatwah has been designed to be a flexible resource that can be utilized in a variety of settings and scheduling situations. Below are several options that would work in most situations:

Option 1: Limited amount of time (50 minutes to 1 hour) Ideal for a Sunday morning class or other situation where time is short.

- Review the reading material as a group. Prompt the participants for any comments regarding thoughts or questions raised in their reading. (10 minutes)
- Watch the DVD in its entirety. (approximately 25 minutes)
- Open the floor for observations and first impressions.
- Invite participants to discuss selected questions from the participant guide.
- Close with a prayer or other communal action (see below).

Option 2: Time to stretch out (1 ½ hours or more...) Designed for evening classes or weekday classes where longer discussions can be encouraged.

- Review the reading material as a group. Prompt the participants for any comments regarding thoughts or questions raised in their reading. (10+ minutes)
- Watch one segment of the DVD material.
- Pause the DVD (at the prompt on the screen). Participant guides have specific questions relating to each DVD chapter. Break into groups of three or four to discuss the questions. After giving participants a chance to be in conversation, come back together as a group to share any observations with the larger group. The facilitator can also encourage conversation in the larger group by asking questions like:

What jumped out at you? What caught you by surprise? What idea or comment did you disagree with? Why? What comment caused you to breathe a sigh of relief? Why?

- d. Following any comments, resume DVD to end of next chapter. Repeat item (c) above.
- e. After the DVD concludes, have the group divide into pairs or small groups to discuss the additional questions provided at the end of the participants guide.
- f. Come back together as a group to share conversations/questions/observations from the pairs/small groups.
- g. Close with a prayer or other communal activity (see below).

Option 3: Whatever works for you!

Some *Living the Questions* groups have spread the discussion out over months by discussing only one DVD segment (chapter) per meeting (taking weeks to complete just one session). Others have used multiple sessions over the course of a weekend retreat. Some have used LtQ sessions as the core of a series of summer worship services. Do what works best for you and let us know about your ideas and successes at info@livingthequestions.com -- and don't forget to share your ideas with other users on our Facebook page!

Option 4: Go Deep!

Contact your local mosque or Islamic Speakers Bureau and arrange to meet with an established group or individuals from their faith community that are interested in interfaith dialogue. Organize a shared meal to discuss your faith traditions – or arrange to study *The Jesus Fatwah* together!

Closing

Depending on the tradition and comfort level of your group, your closing prayer or ritual act may include:

- 1) quiet time / meditation
- 2) contemplative prayer
- 3) intercessory prayer, etc.
- 4) passing of the peace

As people head out the door:

If the material has not already been handed out or emailed for the whole series, don't forget to hand out next week's material.

Confirm location, responsibilities, etc. for the next gathering.



