

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY



This is my view of what I think God looks like.

Adam Miner

MAY 17, 2009

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Stephanie GOD. Wow, for such a small name there is so much to say.
Brennan God? Is he real?
Hannah I think God is the most powerful being in the world.
Brennan I believe God is real and that he is everywhere. Almost like the air,
considering that he is always there protecting and forgiving us.
Hannah I think God is like Zeus and Hera because he is the ruler of all beings.
Ross I believe God controls how you are born. And how you lived on this earth,
nothing more nothing less, I believe we make our own judgments.
Allison I don't believe God makes bad things happen. He gives us choices and it
is up to us to make good choices.
Ross If God could control our daily lives, then there wouldn't be bad things like
death at birth – it just wouldn't happen.
Allison If our choice is bad then we know that there will be a consequence.
Ross I think God tries to affect our lives through his Word but doesn't control
whether we will listen to his Word or not.
Allison My cousin was in an accident last year from drunk driving. And that
would be an example: she made a bad decision. And the consequence was
leaving this world.
Hannah God has everlasting love for everyone in the world. If you do something
wrong, God still loves you.
Allison My cousin who died in the car accident, left behind three children, and
God helped her family get together and get through it.
Brennan God is the one you go to for anything.
Hannah No matter what you do, God still loves you.
Allison I believe God has given my cousin forgiveness and she is living a great life
up in Heaven.
Hannah I feel God's love. I feel God's love is everywhere.
Allison Every ending has a new beginning.
Stephanie Why is God so important to us?
Brennan Why God? Why is it Him and not somebody else? I don't know what He
is, or what I'm really believing in, even though I do believe in Him.
Stephanie I mean we hardly know Him, or do we?
Ross I often feel a big gapping hole in my chest. It's there when I feel like
something is missing. I often get it when I think about deep questions,
but what fills it is the most spiritual thing I have ever felt, Love.
Stephanie God is love.
Ross When my Mom hugs me and makes me feel good about myself, or when
people embrace me. It is the most spiritual feeling I get.
Hannah God's love is a bond between human and savior.
Brennan I believe God is our savior -
Hannah holy, supernatural,
Stephanie God is our father.
Brennan I believe God is our protector -
Hannah heavenly, pure
Stephanie God is our mother -
Hannah angelic, saintly, and celestial.
Stephanie And he's always there to listen.
Ross His Word is like one big long string that flows through life, through the
lessons we learn.
Stephanie People may have lost some trust in people, but not in religion, so that's

how I know that I can trust God. If people could trust him then, then we can trust him now.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT

Ross It doesn't even matter what's real or not, whether God's real, or if Jesus could actually do special healing miracles.

Allison It doesn't?

Ross What matters are the lessons we get from our experiences and these teachings.

Max I feel like our church is good because it's not necessarily about learning about Jesus, but more what Jesus taught us and how to apply that to life.

Allison For instance?

Ross For instance....

Tristen For instance, there was an 'unpopular' girl in my gym class.

Allison These outsiders are usually alone, only looking for a friend. They may be different from others, just a little, not so appealing.

Tristen Some of the popular girls thought it would be funny to push her out of the locker room and lock the door so she couldn't get in.

Max Jesus' big message was how to love people and treat them.

Tristen I noticed a group of girls standing by the door and laughing because she couldn't get in.

Max For me, sometimes, I'm a little too quick to judge people. But, Jesus would want me to rethink that.

Tristen I thought 'WWJD'

Max That sounds kind of corny, to ask, "What Would Jesus Do?" but that's what we should think.

Allison Jesus would go over to him and announce to the people, saying "People, this person is no longer going to be out of the crowd -- use your kindness to get to know this person."

Tristen So, back to my story, even though I knew it might make me an unpopular person, I decided the right thing to do would be to unlock the door and let her in the locker room.

Allison He would treat an unpopular person like this: making them feel like an insider.

Tristen Jesus doesn't turn anyone away – he invites everyone in.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT

Allison Forgiveness is a strong thing and I believe that God is someone who does this so very often.

Tristen When Jesus was on the cross, he knew that he was being punished.

Doug If some of my friends are fighting, I try my hardest to end their fight.

Tristen He knew that he didn't deserve it, but he was trying to forgive the people for what they were doing.

Allison I know that people shall learn to forgive each other for all the bad that they may have done.

Doug Jesus would teach us that to solve any problem you should talk it out, and make sure that you agree on the solution.

Tristen Jesus taught us about justice and peace, and we are called to mentor it.

Doug I am also someone who strives toward peace.

Tristen We are called to teach it to everyone else.

Doug That being said, I don't suffocate them by getting all in their business. I try to just give them some advice to get them back together.

Allison He may say, "You are going to make a bad decision," and that will help them think before they act.

Doug In wars, people don't want to give up. Fighting doesn't make the problem go away, it just makes it worse.

Max Whether he was doing his magical things of walking on water and feeding a bunch of people with two fish, that doesn't matter so much – he was here with us and taught us his message.

Hannah Jesus is our savior from spiritual or mental death. Jesus is our savior. To be a savior means to be pure, inside and out.

Max That's what I think matters – it doesn't matter that he walked on water. He taught us to love one another and how we should treat one another.

Doug It matters to me that every person is a son or daughter of God – it makes us feel closer to Him.

Tristen When I think of Jesus, many stories told about him in the bible come to mind.

Doug Jesus was similar to me. He's a peacemaker and an all-around nice guy, like me.

Allison Jesus was also a very kind man.

Tristen Jesus shows us kindness by healing the blind and curing the sick.

Hannah Jesus healed people by meeting their needs, not the rules made by officials in his time.

Doug I think that Jesus is someone who tries his best to create peace and tranquility, but is constantly stopped by people's ignorance.

Allison I believe that Jesus was put on this earth by God to help people.

Doug For instance, when he was resurrected, Thomas didn't believe that he was resurrected. It made Jesus want to show him that he really was alive.

Hannah Jesus could be anything around us, which means Jesus is the push to get us up and about.

Doug When I see someone at my school that is being left out I feel it necessary to talk to them and invite them to join me and my friends.

Tristen Jesus is a brave and dedicated leader that is full of faith, like a parent or guardian to the members of this church.

Doug Inviting people in shows them that it doesn't matter who they are, we would like them to enjoy their time wherever we are, whether it is at school or at a party or wherever.

Max It really matters to me that Jesus walked among us – he sees things through our eyes and that makes him easier to talk to.

Hannah Jesus is the most perfect being in the world because he hasn't sinned, like some people have. Jesus is always the good cop.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT

Brennan What is service really like?

Ross When we are serving other people, we shouldn't act pompous about what we are doing.

Doug If you see something happen to someone, instead of walking by and pretending like nothing happened, you should go over to them and make sure they are okay.

Ross We do service a lot out of guilt and seeking reward, but when we do it out of a pure sense of wanting to help people, that's when it's the best.

Doug These show that we believe in helping people that are less fortunate than

us.

Brennan When I delivered flowers to the aging folks in the retirement home, they were happy to see me.

Ross At the same time, though, some of those people seemed like they were sick of people feeling sorry for them.

Brennan I will never forget the look on the man's face in the wheelchair. He was very grateful and thanked me numerous times in his raspy voice. It made my day – I knew that I had done something for him that he couldn't do for himself.

Ross Delivering flowers, going there, those people really appreciated it.

Allison When I went down to the food bank, I saw all those people that can make a living, but just needed a little help. The food is just a gift to them.

Brennan That made me feel good about myself.

Allison That helped me learn how it feels to help others.

Brennan I didn't picture myself in this situation before. I have people skills, but I can't see my brother or me going into a home and talking to a man, finding out his story, having a conversation that's important. But, now that I've done it, I know that I have the skills to be confident to be able to go and visit and make people happy.

Allison I felt just so much better doing these service hours. Helping others is great for me.

Ross Better yourself by helping others: we should just do it. For example, opening a door for someone - sometimes you do it just to hear the 'thank you' or because your mom says to, but sometimes you do it just because they need help.

Allison Our church also does some cool trips like the mission trips.

Doug We support the children from South America, and trips to Guatemala.

Allison We take senior high kids to a bad part of the United States to help out their neighborhood by building things for peoples' homes and just helping others.

Doug It shows them that even though we have houses and things, we still make sure everybody is happy and comfortable.

Allison I think that our church is creative for not having to do everything formally but still learning about the Lord in fun and different ways.

Doug Our mission is to just take what you learn at church and take it out into the world, so that everyone sees that people who go to church are better in the real world.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT

Stephanie My spiritual gifts - well I'm very good at volunteering.

Adam I believe that my spiritual gifts are music, art, history, and compassion towards others.

Ross My spiritual gift is deep thinking.

Stephanie Last summer I worked at the zoo and I'm hoping to again this summer.

Ross I enjoy many types of music: playing my guitar, playing my trombone, and singing. I enjoy drawing and I receive the most compliments on my art.

Ross I can think things into a frenzy almost. It never leaves my mind. I can think out problems.

Stephanie I don't do it because I want something to do for the summer, I do it because I want to show people how much having animals in our environment affect us, and they are God's creatures just like us.

Adam When I see people mistreated, or living on the streets, I feel very sad and compassionate for them. One time I even stood up for my sister when she was being antagonized on the school bus.

Ross I can sit in my room and think out elaborate plans and schemes and stories all in my head. And I can think about the big questions over and over. I can also think about them too much and over-think things. But, at least I can think about them.

Brennan Our family just received some bad news a couple weeks ago. My mom told my brother and me that our aunt was still feeling under the weather. She had been going through a series of test and finally received the results. She has Lou Gehrig's disease.

Ross What if you pray for somebody who's sick and they die? Is that God, or is that just life? Does God affect that?

Brennan What do you do when an honest doctor steps into a room with you and your husband and says, "I'm sorry, but you have been having these things happen because you have this disease."

Ross What happens when you pray and it doesn't work out the way you want?

Brennan This was my aunt who cheered me up when I was down - who gives the party's an extra flair with her crazy personality. Now I wonder if I have to be the one who has to cheer her up. I don't get to see her that often, so one way I can make sure I can make things better is pray. Praying is my favorite spiritual gift. I believe that prayers can be answered. I believe in miracles.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT

Ross People always talk about religion in terms of an after life all the time

Hannah What kind of death does Jesus save us from?

Ross After life -- like never ending, always going on, living forever.

Hannah Eternal life means living forever, but eternal life to me means that you are immortal and everlasting.

Ross Like it's some goal you are going to get for being good.

Max If I don't go to church, will I not go to heaven? Does that make me a bad person?

Hannah You would go to heaven.

Max Will I have eternal life after I die?

Hannah You wouldn't need to worry.

Ross But, I think religion means a way of doing things, a way of bettering yourself and others. It's not about how you die; it's about how you live.

Max Will God strike down bad people in the name of justice, or does he punish them in the afterlife? Is there even an afterlife or do we just simply die?

Hannah Eternal life could be fun and entertaining if you wanted it to be.

Ross It's about how you spend your short time here.

Hannah I have really gotten along with my grandma dying. Even though she is not here, as in "in human flesh", she's in my heart. Some days, it still feels like she is still alive and with me. I think that if you are in someone's heart, you can be alive. Eternal life means that if you are in someone's heart and mind you can live on. I feel that if my grandma is in my heart and mind she'll have everlasting life and live on through me and her family.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT --

Stephanie The Holy Bible is probably the most sold book in every country around the world, even in Antarctica.

Max When you are little, you hear all the stories -

Stephanie My whole thing with the Bible is, how do we know everything in the bible is truth?

Max Like, when Jesus walked on water, turned water into wine, and healed the blind man – that seems impossible, there’s no way that happened.

Stephanie I don’t think all of the Bible is true. And that’s complicated. It makes it easier if it’s all true. If it’s not all true, then I have to figure out the truth from the misunderstandings, and that’s frustrating!

Max You hear them again and again. At some point, I think, “I’ve heard this story. Why do I need to hear it again?”

Stephanie What are we suppose to do about the misunderstandings? I don’t know.

Max Why can’t I just hear it at home?

Stephanie But, if it’s not all true, then you don’t have to worry so much about doing everything right because we don’t understand everything perfectly.

Max Maybe I wouldn’t read the stories at home or think about them as much.

Stephanie If you make mistakes, God understands. We can’t intentionally make mistakes because then it’s not okay. But, God will still understand.

Max But, if I were just thinking about them at home, I wouldn’t apply it to my life now, I would just apply it to my life when I was younger. I wouldn’t learn about it as something that I should apply to my life, I would just remember it as a good story I learned once.

Stephanie I was also a little shocked to find out this year, that different faiths may have a different bible or no bible at all. When we went to the Jewish temple they only had 5 books and it was in Hebrew, I thought it was the weirdest thing, but it’s their faith and I have to respect that.

Tristen I believe that our church is the best.

Max I feel that if you’re going to be at church

Tristen This is the church I grew up in and I love the fact that we accept everyone.

Max then you should be at church for you, not for someone else,

Tristen The pastors and members have taught me a lot -

Max not for your grandma or your grandpa -

Tristen and I feel that I can talk to anyone if I have a problem -

Max or your mom or the pastor -

Tristen You won’t be judged.

Max or your cousin twice removed on your father’s side -- you should be at church for you!

Tristen At school a lot of my friends don’t go to church so when I talk about God and the stories that I have learned, they really don’t know what to say.

Max I shouldn’t be in church looking at my watch and going, “OK, 5 more minutes, almost done”, or “come on now, guys, time to go”.

Tristen They don’t understand what I am talking about.

Max I should be there to understand the message and see if I agree or disagree with what the preacher is saying. When you’re in church and you think that everything they say happened in the bible that is absolutely fine. But me, I think that some of the stuff its just like - no way that happened - come on, are you serious? But I’m not sure if it matters whether it’s true or not. I think for most of us it’s about having something to believe in, not whether it’s true or not. What matters is what he was trying to do – it matters that he was trying to help the blind man and trying to feed the thousands of hungry people. If we all did that, the world would be a

better place.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT

- Brennan What about the Holy Spirit?
Stephanie The Holy Spirit is probably the thing or person or spirit that we know least about.
- Adam When it comes to the Holy Spirit, there's not a lot I can say about it.
Stephanie Why is the Holy Spirit so important if we don't ever hear about him really?
- Adam In the Bible, they describe the Holy Spirit as a dove that came to Jesus when he was being baptized.
- Brennan I believe that the Holy Spirit is always around us. Free flowing, throughout everyone's body.
- Tristen I believe that the Holy Spirit isn't a real person but a feeling that follows you everywhere.
- Brennan It seems to be another helping hand in my mind.
Adam I think that the Holy Spirit is a stream of light that falls on you like sunlight
- Stephanie I know that he or she is the light to guide us.
Tristen I remember my church school teachers talking about the Holy Spirit being a ghost that made sure I did the right thing.
- Adam Through it you can communicate with God.
Stephanie The Holy Spirit is always there
Brennan Is the Holy Spirit really flowing throughout everyone?
Adam I believe it is a way that we can communicate with God.
Brennan The Holy Spirit to me is like the thing that comes along during my bad day and makes it better. But for some people, you don't see that, especially when life is all for themselves and not others.
- Tristen The bible says God is the start of everything – then Jesus is born. Jesus follows what God has done. Then the Holy Spirit comes along – makes sure it's sealed for goodness.
- Stephanie When I think of the Holy Spirit I think of the apple story our Shepherds in Sunday school taught us.
- Tristen Think of an apple. Got it?
Stephanie They said -
Tristen Now the core is God, the flesh of the apple is Jesus and the skin is the Holy Spirit.
- Stephanie The Holy Spirit is like the peel of an apple protecting Jesus and God.
Tristen It all starts with the core (God), then the flesh grows into something sweet (Jesus) and is surrounded by a protective layer (the Holy Spirit). The Holy Spirit is surrounding you and helping you. Just like the skin on an apple protects it – the Holy Spirit protects us.

CONGREGATION SINGS -- MORE LIGHT

- Doug Although I have said all of these things I don't know everything about Christianity. No one in the world does know everything about Christianity. That means that everyone has some questions that need answering.
- Adam I don't have that many questions, but I do have a few.
Hannah I still have questions.

Stephanie This is my favorite part, MY QUESTIONS; you have no idea how many questions I have.

Doug One of my questions is whether or not we believe in hell.

Hannah Where is Hell ?

Stephanie Do we believe in hell?

Hannah Who rules the underworld?

Adam What is Heaven?

Hannah What is heaven?

Doug What is "heaven" really like?

Hannah After we die how do we get to heaven?

Stephanie Is there a heaven? And if so, what happens in heaven?

Adam To me I think that heaven is a place where you meet with God and confess to him all of your life, and what we enjoyed while we were living.

Stephanie What happens when we die?

Hannah When does our spirit go after death, to heaven/hell?

Adam I believe that you look out into the world and tell God if someone is in need of his help. I believe that you justify what you did before you go into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Stephanie How can we trust in the bible?

Hannah Was the Bible really written in Jesus' time?

Doug What is acceptable, as in abortion, premarital sex, and other things of that nature?

Adam Is God a man or a woman? I think that God is a man because in my eyes I see him as a male, not that there's anything wrong with being a female.

Doug Why is it that other churches are less accepting than us?

Hannah What is Love? Where can we find love?

Stephanie How do we know Christ will come back?

Doug These are just a couple of the unanswered questions that people need to know. These questions make me think hard about what I have learned over the past year.

Stephanie I don't know the answers, but I want to know, you may not know,

Adam You might think that I feel very confident about myself. Well, let me tell you something. I'm not all that sure.

Adam Well, that's it. You've heard our statements of faith and inquiry. You might think that I feel very confident about myself. Well, let me tell you something. I'm not all that sure about what I've just said.

Stephanie That's okay, I think the thing about religion is that it is a mystery, I think that's what pulls people in.

Adam During our time in confirmation, we've had a lot of fun doing service hours with our sponsors. We've learned a lot about other church's religions, and how their worship services differ from our worship services.

Stephanie We've learned about all the subjects you've heard us speak about here:

Doug God and Jesus, The Holy Spirit and Church

Hannah Forgiveness, Mission and Service

Stephanie Our questions, my favorite

Adam How to live out our faith

Doug Why our faith matters

Adam I'll never forget participating in Confirmation. It's been so much fun that I'm going to miss it, even though I'll be in Senior High next year with Jim Jordan, who likes to tease me. " OH JOY"!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!