



## **PART 1: UN-RELIGIOUS: Reflections of a Religious Fanatic**

Losing faith is part of the human experience. We all know someone who lost faith. And if we're honest, we'll agree that there are many reasons to lose faith—from all the harm that has been done in the name of religion to wondering if God really hears our prayers. But, what if we lose faith for the wrong reasons? What if we have been looking for God in all the wrong places?

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Think about a time when you lost faith in something or someone. What caused you to lose your faith? Did you ever gain it back? Why or why not?
2. Think about your friends or acquaintances that do not believe. What reasons do they give for not believing? Do any of these reasons resonate with you?
3. Share about a time when you were sincere about an opinion or belief, but were wrong. What did it take for you to admit you were wrong? What did you do once you realized you were wrong?
4. **Read Acts 26:1-19.** Why do you think Jesus chose to appear to Paul? Why do you think he appeared in such a unique way? How would you feel if Jesus were to appear to you like that? Why do you think he hasn't?
5. Tell about a time when you had to ask for forgiveness. What was the other person's response? How did you feel afterwards? How did the act of asking for forgiveness affect your relationship?
6. Any religion that does not have "intimacy with God through forgiveness" at its center results in its followers feeling controlled. Do you agree or disagree? Why? What is it about forgiveness that is freeing? What is it about forgiveness that restores?

### **MOVING FORWARD**

We have all had the experience of not living up to our own expectations and the expectations of others. When this happens we are in need of forgiveness. If forgiveness is the key to restoring our relationships with others, it would make sense that the same principle would hold true for our relationship with God.

Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives. **Micah 7:18**