

YOUCAT
Confirmation course
Handbook

YOUCAT

Confirmation course Handbook

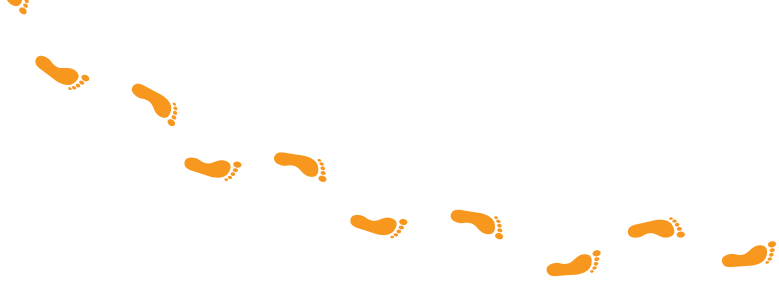
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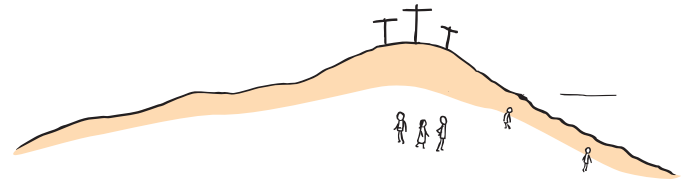
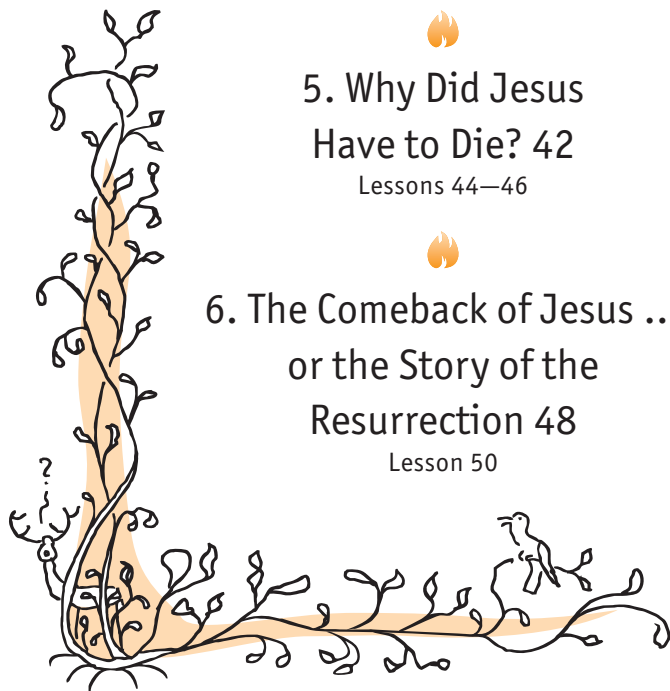
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BEFORE YOU START

Foreword

”The Church is alive, and she is young”, Pope Benedict has told us. And in YOUCAT we deliberately adopt this youthful and informal manner—toward you, the group leader, as well. This should not be misunderstood as presumption or a lack of respect, however.

Ever since the YOUCAT began its triumphant progress, leading to the more than 2.5 million copies that have now been printed, the most frequent question we have encountered has not been “Is the Pope really infallible?” or “What has the Church got against condoms?”, but “When are you going to get around to producing a YOUCAT Confirmation course?” Well, here it is.

“Young people are not so superficial”, writes the Pope in his foreword to the YOUCAT. It’s true. They want to know what they believe. And so this course is shaped around the fundamental content of our faith. But because this can sometimes be quite tough going, we have made sure to leave room for a little fun as well.

The course consists of the YOUCAT Confirmation course book for the students and the handbook you are now reading. The two books belong together and complement each other. The two books follow the same twelve steps leading to Confirmation—and both books refer to the same key passages in the Bible and in the YOUCAT.

The Confirmation course book is addressed directly to the young people in your Confirmation group and explains to them in an attractive manner, as though in a novel of twelve chapters, what the Confirmation course is all about.

In the handbook you will find fully planned lessons, relating directly to the twelve chapters in the course book. In addition, for each chapter there is a brief article giving the theological basis, which should help to provide you, as the Confirmation group leader, with the necessary background knowledge. Overall, then, an integrated network results, comprising the YOUCAT, the Bible, the course book, this handbook, and your own Confirmation lessons—since all these things will always be interrelated.

How you can work with this handbook

Size of the group

In preparing the lessons, we envisaged a group of around eight to ten Confirmation candidates, who would regularly meet together as a group.

Basic resources

The basic resources for this Confirmation course will include a Bible and a copy of the YOUCAT.

YOUCAT Confirmation course material

We have already prepared a good deal of material for you in advance, in the shape of cards, pictures, and worksheets. You will find them in the “Resources” section at the end of each chapter. So you have only to copy or cut out these pages as you need them.

Media and other resources

For a number of the lessons, you will need additional material that, for practical and legal reasons, we cannot simply include—for example, when we suggest watching a film or making a candle.

Preparation

For this reason it is quite important that you prepare the lesson well in advance. This means that you read through the material, look up the suggested Bible texts and YOUCAT passages, and, of course, get hold of the necessary materials. If you discover only twenty minutes before the lesson begins that you need ten white candles and wax sheets in nine different colors, then things are likely to get a little pressured.

Format of the handbook

Theological basis

The handbook is arranged in such a way that for each topic you will first of all find an introduction, giving you general information about the topic. Not everything that is explained there will be found later in the suggested lesson plans. The “theological basis” section is there to give you a basic idea of what this particular topic is about.

Suggested lesson plans

The introduction is usually followed by two suggestions about how you can approach the topic in practice with your group. You can then choose from the two plans the one best suited to your group. Theological information that is absolutely essential in the course of this lesson will once again be briefly explained here.

Materials

At the end of each chapter, you will find the materials we have already prepared for you. All you have to do is photocopy it or, if you prefer, cut it out.









Confirmation course book

This handbook for you, as the catechist, is complemented by the YOUCAT Confirmation course book for your students. All the topics are explained there in an entertaining way and are sometimes examined from a quite different aspect. It therefore makes sense for you, the catechist, to take a look at the course book as well in preparing for each lesson. Maybe you will come up with a few additional good ideas yourself as a result.

Signs and symbols

B → 1 Cor 9:24–27 Bible reference
Y → 203 reference to YOUCAT

Most of the lessons in the YOUCAT Confirmation course offer a choice of two different levels of difficulty in order to take different age groups into account. You must decide here which is more appropriate to your group.

   fairly simple,    rather more challenging    somewhere in between.

Why you are important for this Confirmation course

This handbook provides you with a large fund of background information, ideas, and materials to support you in your work as leader of a Confirmation group.

However, you are more important than all these materials.

You are the face of the Church

That’s because you are the face of the Confirmation course for your students and, as a result, often the face of the Church as well. Do not underestimate your influence in this regard. If you present your faith credibly and openly in these lessons, this will make a big impression on your young people. Even when they are perhaps not always immediately convinced by the teachings of the Church.

Take Jesus on board with you

If you’re starting to think that’s a big responsibility to place on your shoulders, then of course you’re right. That’s why you shouldn’t have to bear it alone. Take Jesus on board with you. After all, the whole thing is about his Church. And without him, it won’t succeed in any case.

That’s why it also makes sense for you to pray regularly for your Confirmation group. Not only when things aren’t going so well, but also when everything is working out beautifully.

Renew your own faith

On this Confirmation course you are the one who is meant to be guiding your young people a few steps farther forward on their path to Jesus. So it is a good idea for you to renew or strengthen your own faith beforehand. A good way of doing so is through regularly available courses in the Catholic faith. Another way to gain a deeper understanding is to get together with other catechists and use YOUCAT to prepare together for the upcoming lessons; then you can exchange ideas among yourselves about the topics to be discussed.

What is important in every lesson

BIBLE SESSION, **YOUCAT SESSION**, and **DISCUSSION** should be part of every lesson. The points you generally need to keep in mind are summarized briefly below:

BIBLE SESSION

All the students should have the text in front of them

In the Bible session, you should read the relevant text from the Bible together. Every student should have a Bible in hand, ideally the same version. An excellent and readily available version is the second Catholic edition of the Revised Standard Version.

Reading together

The best approach is for one of the students to read the relevant text out loud, while the others follow the reading quietly in their own Bibles. A good person to choose here would be someone who is otherwise rather quiet, in order to get him involved. We strongly advise against such games as: "Everyone reads a sentence in turn", or: "One person reads until he makes a mistake, then the next person takes over." Experience has shown that while the students may well concentrate on the reading itself during these games, they do not tend to absorb the meaning of the text.

Questions

After the reading, give your young people the chance to ask questions about words or expressions in the text before you go on to the next point.

YOUCAT SESSION

The YOUCAT session works in exactly the same way as the Bible session, except that you work with the relevant question from the YOUCAT. Here again, every young person should have a copy of the YOUCAT in front of him. Read the text together, and give them an opportunity to ask questions.

DISCUSSION

Encourage open discussion

This point is intended to enable the young people to discuss and debate the relevant texts among themselves. In order to foster a genuinely open discussion, it is important that the young people should be able to express their real opinions openly. It is necessary, therefore, that you take good care to ensure that all the participants address one another with mutual respect, allowing the other person to finish what he is saying and being open to the expression of opposing views. This is true even where the opinions and ideas expressed diverge a long way from the Christian faith.

Make the Catholic Christian position quite clear

Now, however, it is important that you make absolutely clear what the position of the Catholic Church is in this matter, so as not to give the impression that the Church doesn't really know quite what she thinks, either, and that therefore any view is more or less okay.

1

GETTING STARTED

Marathon vs. Confirmation

Theological basis

The YOUCAT Confirmation course book compares Confirmation with a marathon and suggests a “four-step” training plan for the young people, comprising: participation in the course, Sunday Mass, regular prayer, and Bible reading. The aim is to make the young people understand that, without proper preparation, nothing will be achieved. This was something that Saint Paul had already understood.

B → 1 Cor 9:24–27

The Confirmation candidates should be made to understand that in Confirmation they will receive “power” from above—the power of the Holy Spirit. This training program likewise has its own team of trainers, namely, the Bible, YOUCAT, and the Confirmation course book. And, of course, you. However, the Chief Coach is God himself, in person.

Y → 203

The candidates need to be clear that this is not a matter of some kind of theory but, rather, that they themselves, as young adults, need to engage more intensively with God. They should—as the course book shows with Mother Teresa—be like power cables carrying the current of God so that light can shine on earth. The Holy Spirit, whom we receive in Confirmation as the gift of God’s own self, is the power circuit that unites us with God and with one another as Church, so that we are not people who live in the dark.

A brief observation: the impulse for this sometimes also takes effect only belatedly. Your Confirmation catechesis has not therefore already failed simply because there is no immediate sign of “success”. Sometimes there are still waters, where everything seems to pass over without effect. That does not, however, mean that nothing is happening within these young people with respect to the Confirmation course. On the contrary, an encounter, a brief moment, a phrase from the Bible or from the YOUCAT can remain for years in the memory. Suddenly, this memory awakens and only then begins to take effect. You should therefore also be relaxed in your Confirmation classes and not expect too much of them or of yourself. Our faith is always a matter between the individual and God himself.

Back to the text: The first lesson is an opportunity to get to know one another, and so it simply briefly outlines the “four steps”—involvement in the course, Sunday Mass, regular prayer, and Bible reading—which the young people can then reread and start to practice as a training program. These steps are also meant to help them get to know God better and start to converse directly with him themselves. If you should start to wonder whether that is not asking a little too much, then here are a few thoughts to reassure you:

Every training program begins with the first step. Marathon, running, movement ... Basically, what we mean by religion is always a way to God. It is surely the case that all the major world religions are in some way earnestly seeking something “higher”, something beyond the merely human. The religious understanding is as old as mankind itself: the belief that there is more to life than this life, this here and now; that there is something that transcends this life. But does this “something” actually exist?

At all events, we already assume this “something” whenever we speak of the world as a whole or about our death. That part of us which quite naturally reaches out beyond our bare existence is what we call the human spirit. It is a spirit that for thousands of years has contemplated this “other” world. Philosophy and theology, religion and the Church, and likewise poets and artists also move in this world and are inspired and fascinated by it. Already, when two people fall in love, the world seems to open up. Similarly, the love between parents and their children and the spirit of genuine friendship lead into this world.

Thus there is something that points to this non-material world, to a world “behind the tangible”, “behind physics” (or “metaphysical”). So far so good, but there is no certainty in relation to this “something”. In the Christian understanding of religion as a way to God, there is another fundamental dimension that enables us to believe with all our hearts, namely, the fact that God has come to meet us of his own accord, has communicated himself to us in history, in word and deed, has finally shown himself to us, in Jesus Christ, as he really is and now accompanies us on our way in Jesus Christ.

Our way through life is a way with God, which finally ends once more in God. This way began for us with our Baptism, when our parents and godparents professed the Catholic faith on our behalf. First Holy Communion was a first solemn high point, when we received Jesus Christ in the consecrated Host. Now we are about to take the next step, which involves truly coming to know our faith so that we can also say in response to it: “Yes, this is what I believe.” And so that we can convey it to others, also. This is the reason why the Holy Spirit is promised to us in Confirmation. What happens in this sacrament is a gift of God to us. Whoever truly embraces this gift will certainly pass it on to others.

Y → 197

That is the reason for the Bible (Step 4), so that we can look up everything in it ourselves. But also the reason for Holy Mass (Step 2), for here this self-giving of the Son to the Father is celebrated in such a way that it is actually made present. That’s enough for now. We will go into detail about prayer (Step 3) in Chapter 8, where it is also the principal topic of the lesson.

LESSON



Getting Started—Here We Go

CATEGORY



Theme and objective

Getting to know one another in the group

Introducing the young people to the idea of personal prayer



Preparation

- 🔥 Get the cards ready for the *Conf!activity*. Be sure in each case to copy the correct back page onto the cards. Additionally, you will need a standard set of dice, plus paper and pencils.

Introduction

Give your group the following game as a quick way to get to know one another: Everyone has to give his first name, a Church-related term beginning with the same letter as his name, his favorite food, and his favorite character from a movie, book, or TV show. Give your young people a short time to think about it first. For the sake of simplicity, it’s best if you start first.

Basic ground rules

Next you can give some brief information about the basic rules for the Confirmation course—for example, how often and for what reasons they are allowed to miss, and what the consequences will be in each case. This would also be a good moment to explain briefly the rules about how to behave toward one another.



Conf!activity

Next thing on the program is Conf!activity. (Incidentally, we went to great lengths to give the game as goofy a name as possible—and I think we succeeded.) Divide your group into two teams, and deal the cards into three separate stacks (mime, draw, describe). The participants take turns throwing the dice. Depending on the number thrown, the player takes a card from one of the three stacks:

1 and 2 “mime it”

3 and 4 “draw it”

5 and 6 “describe it”.

The other members of his team have to guess the word, while the opposing team makes sure he plays by the rules (e.g., “Miming doesn’t mean speaking or humming or singing!” and “Drawing doesn’t mean writing or putting down numbers or using foreign languages!”). For every card correctly guessed, the team gets a point. Once the cards in one stack are used up, the game can continue, using the remaining cards. The winning team is the one with the most points at the end.

Conclusion and prayer

So that you can also get a little closer to God during your Confirmation course, we are inviting you to take on our prayer challenge: Take at least ten minutes each day, during this Confirmation course, to have a real conversation with God. And you will find that something happens in your relationship with God.

Lord Jesus Christ,

we are preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

Be with us and help us each day to understand better what your life and your message mean for us. Come to meet us during the weeks before us, as we try to get to know you better. And give us a helping hand whenever we get lazy and try to get out of spending time with you.

Amen.





HE EXISTS?, HE DOESN'T EXIST? ...

What We Can Know about God

Theological basis

In the course book, the young people get to know about atheism, which in our days is particularly aggressive in its approach and simply rejects outright the idea that believers can be rational thinkers. **Y → 5** And yet there are arguments for God that are so good that they have been called “proofs” of God’s existence. The course book

touches on one such argument, in which the so-called “cosmological proof of God” (the universe cannot have its cause within itself) and the “proof from causality” (everything that exists has a cause) come together. Take a look at www.youcatconfirmation.com to see what other “proofs” for God there are. **Y → 41–45**

A powerful argument is the existence of the tiny grain of sand, which raises the question of why there is anything at all rather than nothing. **B → Ps 53:2**

But then things really get interesting. The fact that God exists is something we can reach by the power of our own reason; but when it comes down to who God is and what he is like, then we need to be careful, for then we must stick strictly to what God tells us about himself. **Y → 7**

What? He speaks to us? Is it not rather the case that he remains silent? Isn’t that perhaps the reason why people do not believe? Why doesn’t he step in with all his power, say, in Syria, or in some other country where people are massacring one another, and tell them straight out who’s who and make them stop it at once?

But if God were to show himself, to reveal himself, in such a way that all we can then do is say, “Okay, God. Whatever you say; we will obey”, then his intervention would have the quality of an absolute command. If God were to intervene in me from the outside in this way, like a system administrator in my PC, and perform whatever operations he considered necessary, regardless of what I happened to be doing at the time, then he would simply be turning me into an automaton.

Could it be that this talk about the silence of God ultimately reflects the fact that we would like a God to speak with such clarity that we no longer have to decide for ourselves, no longer have to take a position, no longer have to believe, because we are completely overwhelmed by the absolute? That we want a God who would, so to speak, flatten us? Then he could sort out all the other things at the same time, clean everything up properly, couldn’t he?

Whether it be the longing for God to speak to me directly or the longing to be merged completely with him in love or the longing for his ordering rule, his justice—all these things are profoundly human yearnings that also have their place and their value in theology and in the teaching of the Church. But there is only one such longing that God will not fulfill—and that is to take away our freedom from us. For this does not correspond with God’s plan. He has created us to be free. We are the ones who must accept his revelation. We ourselves are the ones who must work and strive to be united with him. And we are likewise the ones who have to act; we have to do good, while knowing that it will remain the work of man. And yet—to avoid a further error—God does not leave us all alone in this. Without his help, we can neither recognize his revelation nor believe in him nor act as he intends.

Essentially, God’s revelation begins with his creation. It bears testimony to God; its order, beauty, and complexity point beyond itself—to God. **Y → 4**

Man is created “in the image of God”. For us he is a God with a Name. **B → Ex 3**

“God is love” **B → 1 Jn 4:16**. A love that has been revealed in Jesus Christ. **Y → 56**

So now we are already deep in the Bible text. But what makes this text the word of God? How do we know that this is God’s revelation? We do not have the kind of knowledge here that we can normally take for granted—for example,

that Washington, D.C. is the capital of the United States of America. But if someone tells me that his father has died, then I can generally assume that it is true. In fact, I would even tell other people that I know it. I know it from his son. This is the critical point: Can we trust the witnesses? That is not an issue that requires much reflection—for witnesses appear in court, and, on the basis of the testimony of these witnesses, judgments are made, legal verdicts issued. The credibility of a witness can determine whether another person is sent to jail.

But who are the witnesses in regard to the Bible? First and foremost, those who actually wrote it. Thus Saint John writes in his first Letter: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life” (B → 1 Jn 1:1). This is someone who is at pains to ensure that he relates the experiences he himself has had, in other words, things he has seen, heard, and touched.

The Gospels do not contradict anything we know from history. Indeed, many details are confirmed by sources outside the Bible. And there are four evangelists and other authors of the New Testament who essentially confirm the same events concerning Jesus. (Secular history is in many cases much less solidly supported, and yet few people cast doubt on it.) Many of these early Christians traveled long distances and endured great hardships in order to tell of these happenings and spread their faith. They were imprisoned, tortured, and killed. Thus they sealed by the witness of their lives what they had written and recounted. Who would be willing to die for an invented story?

We have already spoken about how both the natural world and man himself bear witness to God. At the beginning of the Bible, man is described as being made in the image of God. As the reality of God, Jesus Christ finally concludes this revelation. (We will see how the understanding of this revelation later unfolds still further with the Church.) Through Jesus, God has definitively stated: “See, this is who I am.” Y → 10

That is why we believe in him, as someone who has lived among us. Our faith relates to an event—the Christ Event. It is the relationship to a Person, to the Person of Jesus Christ. And not merely to a book ...

LESSON

2

CATEGORY



What We Can Know about God

Theme and objective:

Three aspects: God has created us out of love; he wants to make contact with us; and he wants to spend eternity together with us.

Preparation

- 🔥 Copy out the illustrations about our ideas of God from the materials supplied and make eight cards out of them. You can of course make several copies of the individual pictures, so that everyone can take part in the same exercise.
- 🔥 Photocopy each of the pictures: on the creation of man, the burning thorn bush, and Jesus.

Introduction

Lay out the copies with the different representations of God, and ask your group members to pick out the one that corresponds most closely to their own ideas. When everyone has chosen, go around the group asking them to give the reasons for their decision.

Link

You can lead on to the next point by saying something like this: “Now that we have all thought a little about our own ideas of God, let’s take a look at what God himself has to say about it. God has given us a few indications of what he is like, and I imagine you’ve already heard some of them.”

God as Creator

Place the picture of Adam and Eve in paradise in the center, and get one of your young people to tell you the story. If there is no one in your group willing to do so (as experience has shown, young Confirmation candidates can vary widely), tell the story yourself or read the verses from the Bible: **B → Gen 1:26–31** Ask the group what this Bible text tells us about God and his relationship to man.

For the present topic, the following aspects are important:

- 🔥 God finds that man is good (**B → Gen 1:31**).
- 🔥 God has created man without seeking to harness him for a particular purpose (but purely out of an abundance of overflowing love—see also **Y → 59**).

God reveals himself to man

Proceed in exactly the same way with the image of Moses and the burning thorn bush (cf. **B → Ex 3:1–6, 13–14**). What is important is to make clear to your students that God, on his side, wants to make contact with man.

God reveals himself in Jesus Christ

Now take the picture of Jesus and his disciples, and encourage them to tell what they know about Jesus. What is above all important for our topic is that God reveals himself to us in Jesus, in other words, we see in Jesus what God is like. You can also point them to **B → Jn 14:9** (“He who has seen me has seen the Father”).

Link

Lead on to the next point by saying, “We’ve heard what God reveals to us about himself. Now let’s take a look at how he actually sees us.”

Who am I to God?

Look now with your group at two key passages from the Bible that quite clearly characterize God’s relationship to us:

“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.” (**B → Jn 15:15**)

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (**B → Jn 3:16**)

You can either read the two passages from Saint John’s Gospel directly from the Bible with your group or else lay out the two cards with the verses on them, so that everyone can read the text.

DISCUSSION

Discuss with your candidates what the two passages say about God’s relationship to us. What is important is that he sees us as his friends (**B → Jn 15:15**) and that he sends his Son to save us (**B → Jn 3:16**). You can also point out to your group that in the last-mentioned verse we could even substitute the words “the world” with “you”.

Link

You can lead in to the conclusion of the lesson by saying something like this: “We will now finish by taking a look at the plan that God has in mind for us.”

What does God want for me?

Together with your young people, read the answer in bold type to YOUCAT Question 1, or simply place the corresponding card in the middle. Explain to them that God’s plan for us is that we all live one day with him in heaven. This is God’s plan for us, because he loves us infinitely. (You can also illustrate this plan with the quotation from **B → Jn 17:24**.)

DISCUSSION

After a brief discussion about God’s plan, end the hour with a prayer.

Conclusion and prayer

Dear God,

You have created us all out of love. You want to be close to us and to live with us. Help us in our everyday lives actually to behave like friends of yours, and at the end of our lives, take us into your eternal company.

Amen.



What We Can Know about God

CATEGORY



Theme and objective:

Three aspects: God has created us out of love; he wants to make contact with us; and he wants to spend eternity together with us.

Bonus approach

For this topic we have thought of an additional approach that you could possibly use, either instead of the methods described below or even in addition to them, beforehand.

- 🔥 In the video *The Footprints of God: Moses*, Steve Ray depicts Moses' encounter with God. Show your group a clip of *The Footprints of God: Moses* video (available online at www.youcatconfirmation.com).

Then you can ask your students if the portrayal of God in this video matches their own idea of him. Share your own ideas of God with one another.

Preparation

Photocopy the illustrations, showing the different representations of God, from the material provided and make eight cards out of them. You can of course make more than one copy of the individual pictures, so that more people can choose the same representation.

Introduction

Lay out the copies with the different representations of God, and ask your group members to pick out the one that corresponds most closely to their own idea of him. When everyone has chosen, go around the group again, asking them to give the reasons for their decision.

Link

You can lead on to the next point by saying something like this: "Now that we have all thought a little about our own ideas of God, let's take a look at what God himself has to say about it."

Bible group work

Divide your students into three groups. Each group is given one of the three texts and allowed roughly ten minutes time to answer this question: "What does the Bible passage tell us about God and about his relationship to us?" You can either copy out the corresponding Bible passages or have your students read them directly from the Bible.

Group 1: **B** → **Gen 1:26–31** (the creation of man)

Group 2: **B** → **Ex 3:1–6, 13–14** (God reveals himself to Moses in the burning thorn bush)

Group 3: **B** → **Jn 14:8–11** (God reveals himself in Jesus Christ)

Presentation of the results

The three groups will now present their findings. They should do so in the right chronological order (creation, Moses, Jesus).

In the presentation and in any ensuing discussion, the following aspects should be highlighted:

- 🔥 God finds that man is good (**B** → **Gen 1:31**).
- 🔥 God has created man without seeking to harness him for a particular purpose (but purely out of an abundance of overflowing love—see also **Y** → **2**).
- 🔥 God makes contact with man (**B** → **Ex 4:14**).
- 🔥 God reveals himself in Jesus Christ (**B** → **Jn 14:9**).

Link

Lead on to the next point by saying, “We have heard what God reveals to us about himself. Now let us take a look at how he actually sees us.”

BIBLE SESSION “WHO AM I TO GOD?”

Read together **B** → **Jn 15:15**: “No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”

What is important here is that God sees us as his friends.

Then read **B** → **Jn 3:16** “For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” In discussing this passage afterward, you can point out that at this point we could equally replace “the world” with the word “you”. In this way, you can make still clearer just how immensely important every single one of us is in God’s eyes.

Link

You can lead on to the final topic of the lesson by saying something like: “Now that we have seen how important we are to God, we need to ask ourselves what plan God actually has in mind for us.”

BIBLE SESSION “WHAT DOES GOD WANT FOR ME?”

Read together **B** → **Jn 17:24** (“Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which you have given me in your love for me before the foundation of the world”). Explain to your group that what is meant here is that God wishes to have communion (be united) with us in eternity.

YOUCAT SESSION “WHAT DOES GOD WANT FOR ME?”

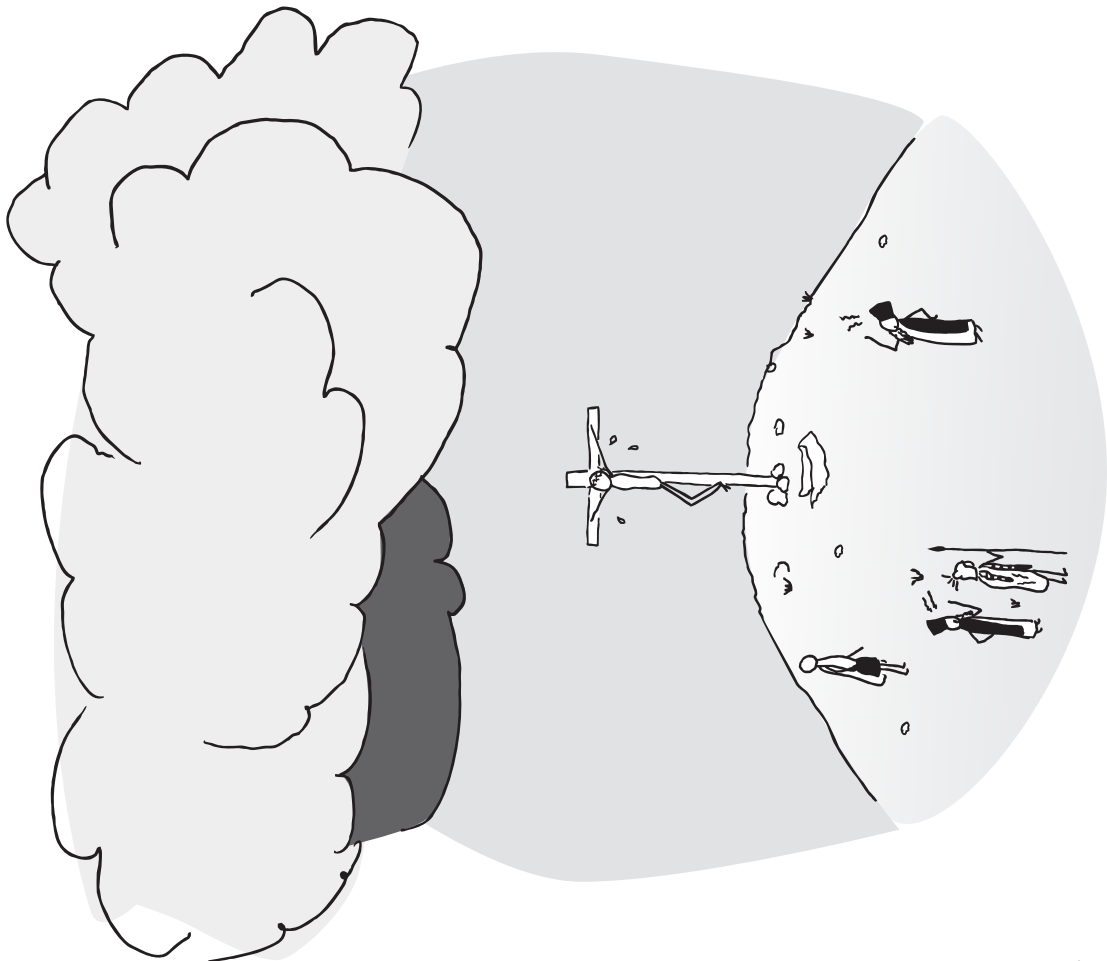
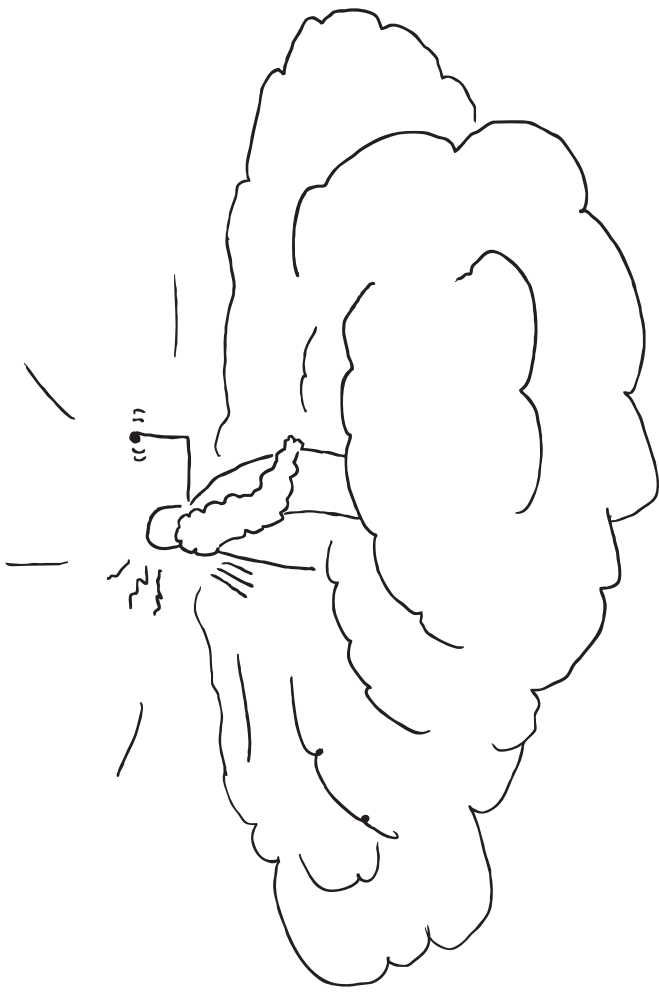
Read **Y** → **1** (“For what purpose are we here on earth?”), and share your ideas about it with the group.

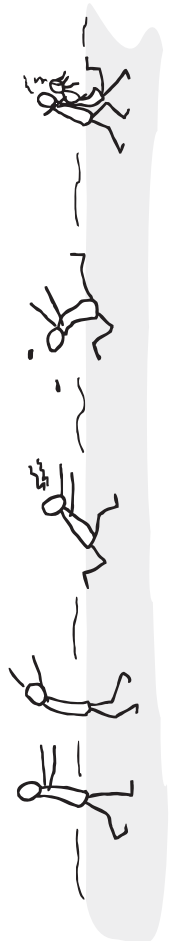
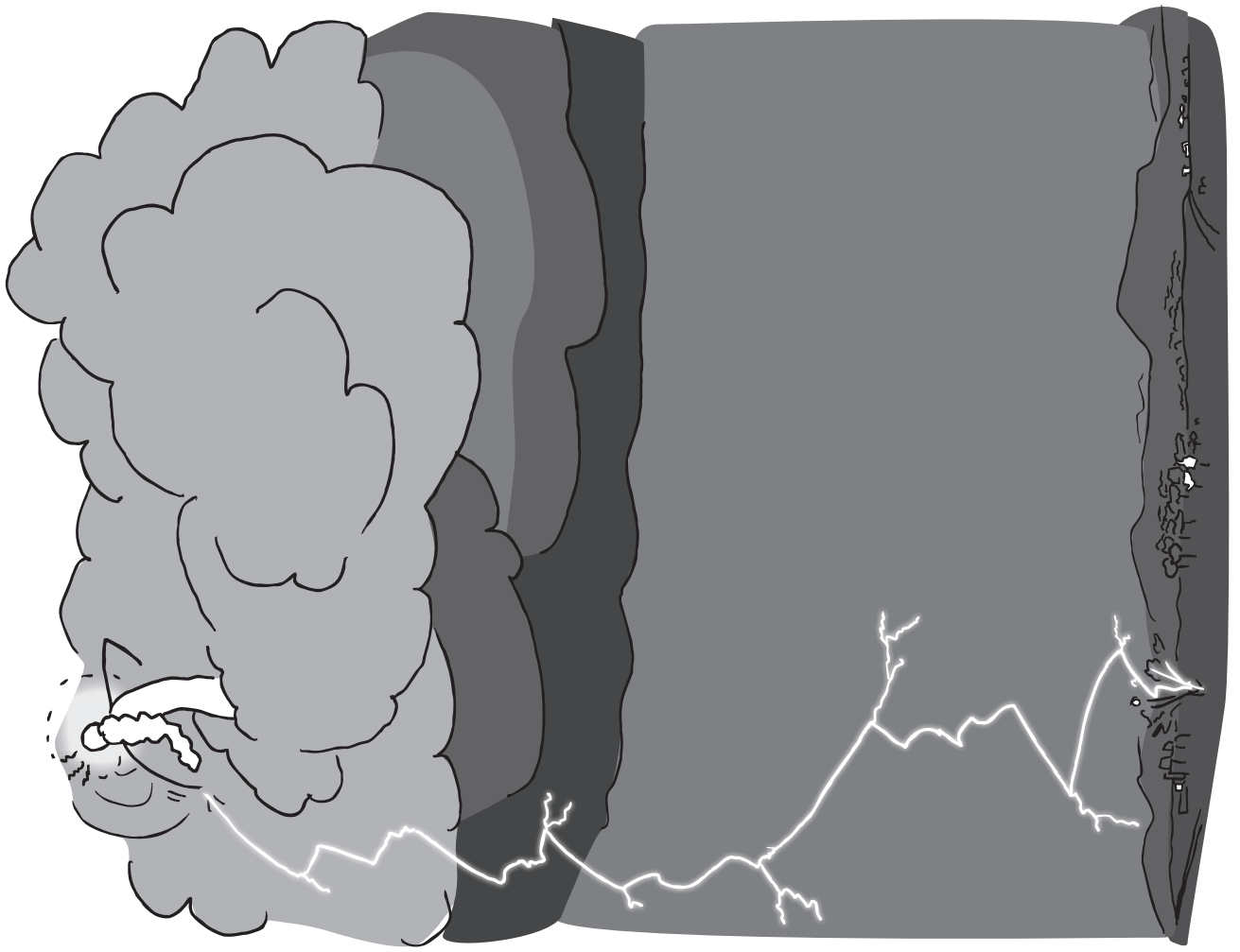
Conclusion and prayer

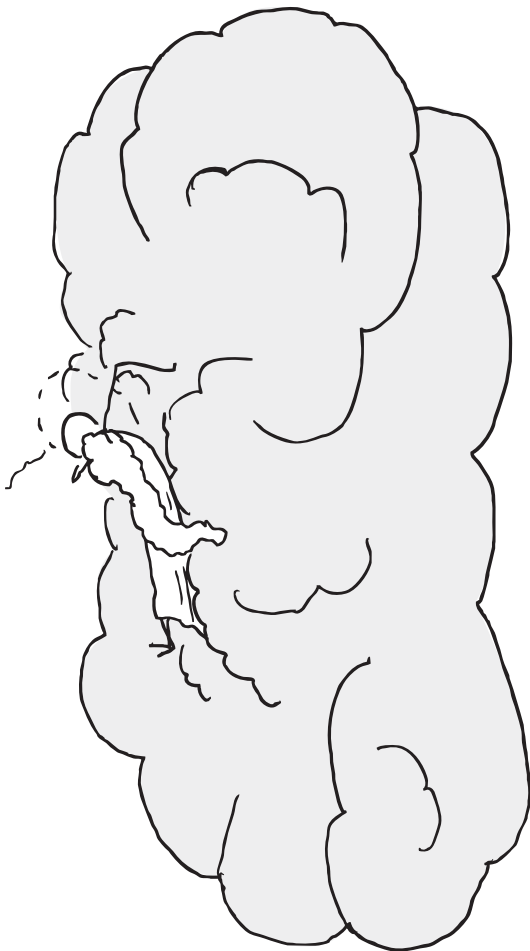
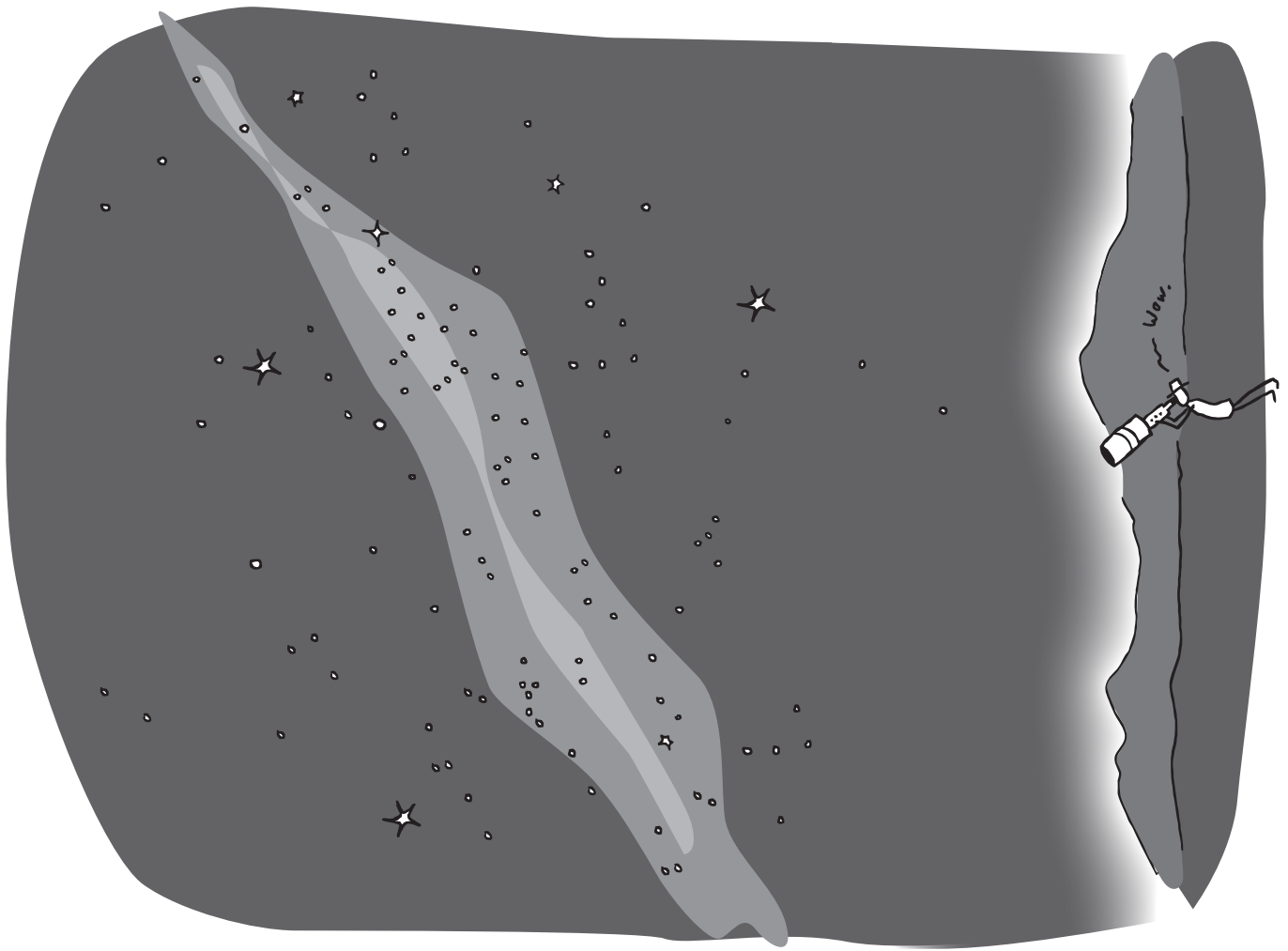
Gracious God,

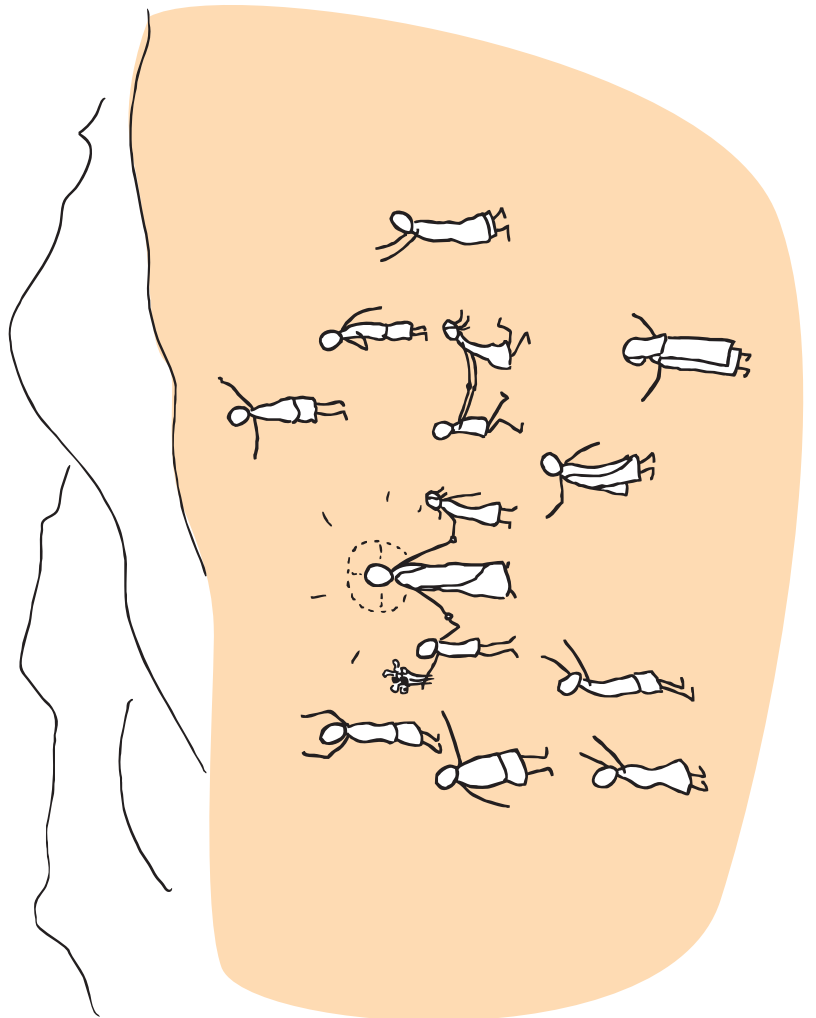
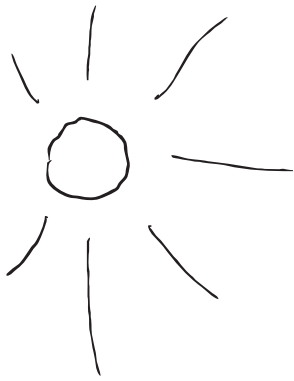
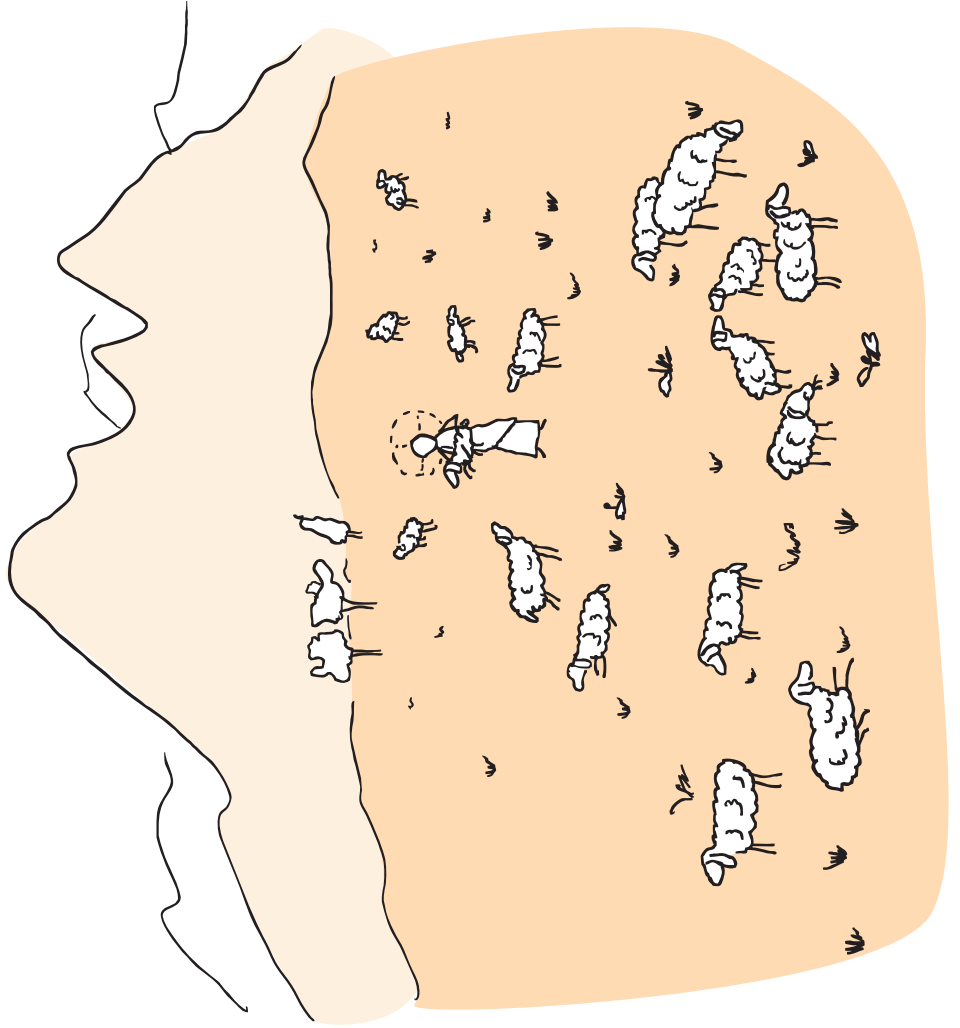
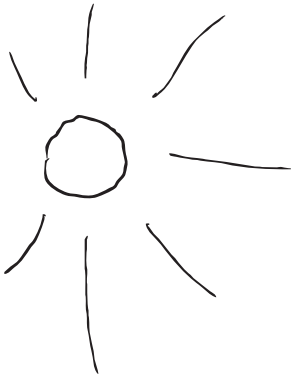
You have created us all out of love. You want to be close to us and to live together with us. Help us also, so that in our ordinary lives we can really behave like your friends, and, at the end of our lives, take us up into your everlasting community.

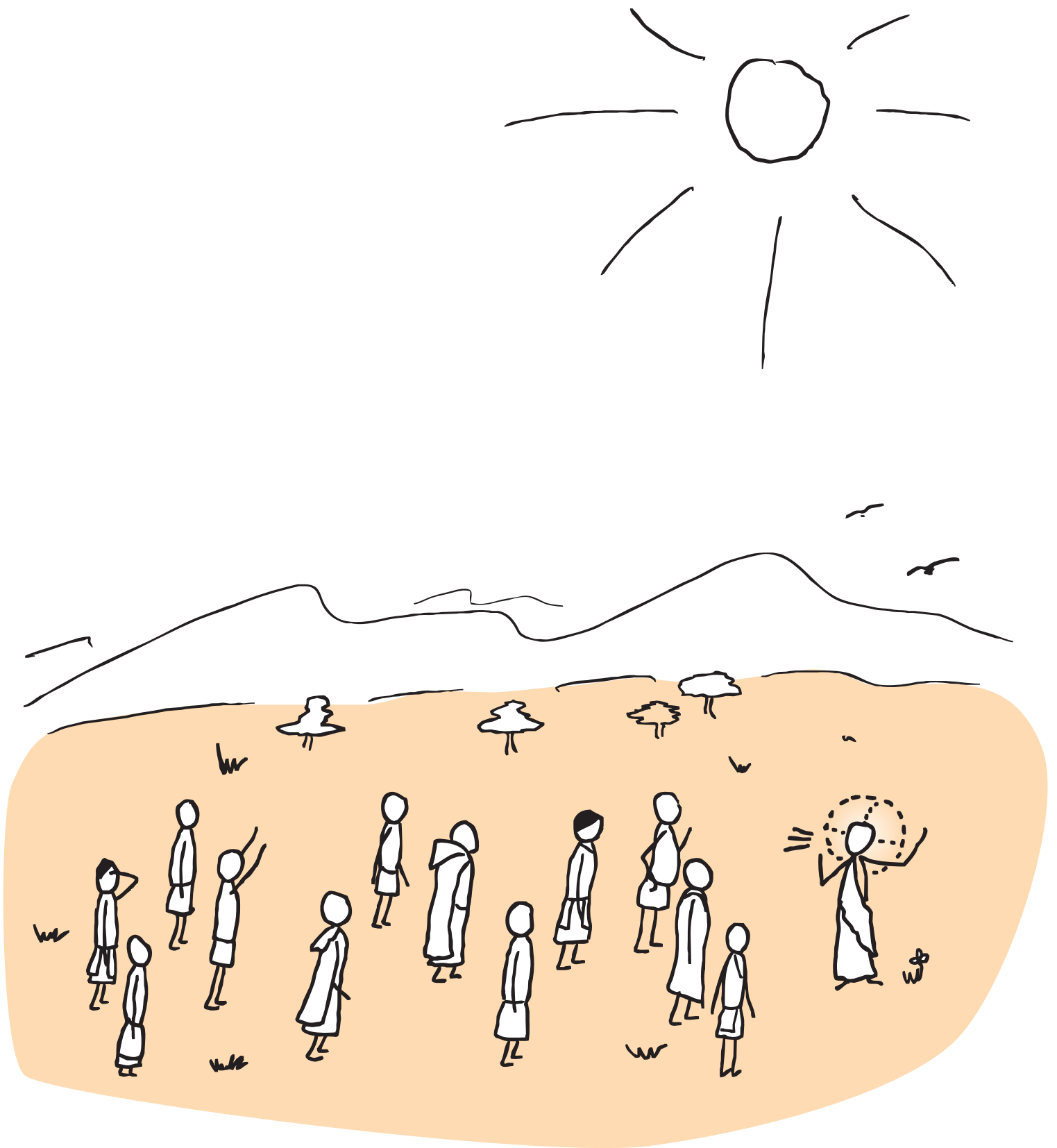
Amen.

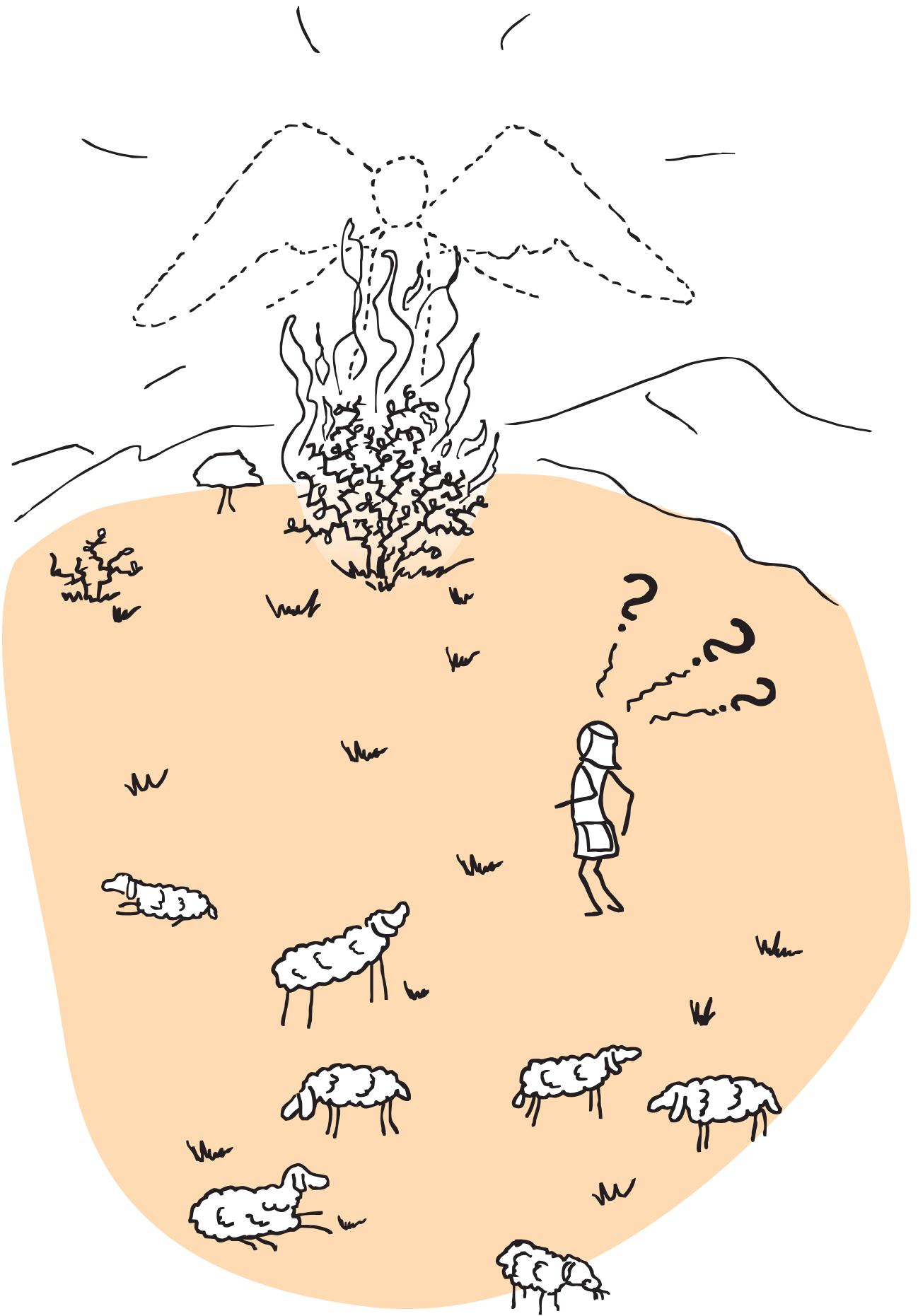


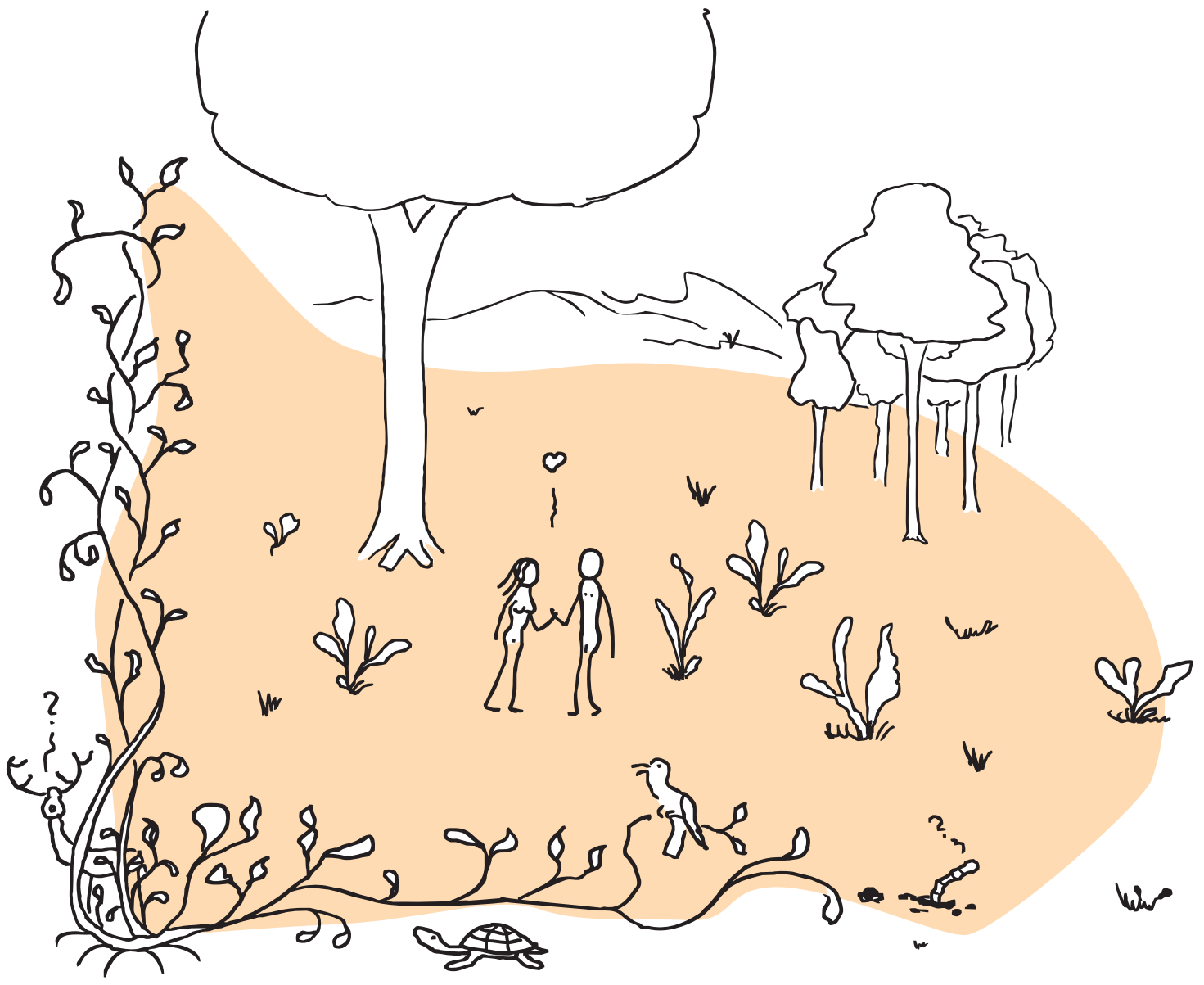












“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”



→ Jn 15:15

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”



→ Jn 3:16

“We are here on earth in order to know and to love God, to do good according to his will, and to go someday to heaven.”



Jesus says: “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which you have given me in your love for me before the foundation of the world.”

