



Darkroom Faith

Case for Support

The Challenge

Teens today feel disconnected from faith and unsure how it speaks to their real lives. In a digital world flooded with information, opinions, and expectations, they're overwhelmed, anxious, and silently struggling to find where they belong. **Beneath the surface, many feel unseen and unheard, carrying doubts they're afraid to voice.**

***“Why does faith matter? Why is God important?
Am I enough to be loved and valued?”***

The fallout is sobering:

- **2 out of 3** young adults walk away from faith as they enter adulthood.
- **7 in 10** wrestle with doubts, but most never voice them.
- **40% of Gen Z** say they are unsure they are worthy of love.
- **70%** report depression and anxiety as major struggles in their circles (Pew).
- Suicide rates for youth ages 15–19 **doubled** from 2010–2020; for ages 10–14, they **tripled** from 2007–2018.

Answering the Need

This moment of crisis is also a moment of opportunity. Teens are asking deep questions about who they are, where they belong, and whether faith has anything to offer them. Too often, those questions go unanswered—or worse, are met with silence or judgment.

Darkroom Faith is uniquely positioned to bridge that gap. By combining cinematic storytelling with guided conversation, we create safe spaces where students feel seen, heard, and valued. Instead of offering quick answers, Darkroom invites teens into honest dialogue with caring adult mentors, showing them that their questions are not barriers to faith but doorways to deeper trust in Jesus.

In doing so, Darkroom equips the Church to respond with empathy and courage—igniting faith in a searching generation.

Our Mission is to empower teens to think critically and talk openly, so they can build a biblical foundation for lasting faith.

The Darkroom Difference

Founded in 2020 and launched in 2022, Darkroom Faith is a film-based discipleship program that helps teens wrestle honestly with life's toughest questions and discover that faith in Jesus is both relevant and essential for a fulfilling life.

- **Cinematic storytelling:** Short films rooted in real student experiences capture attention and break down walls.
- **Guided conversations:** Discussion guides and leader tools equip mentors to spark meaningful dialogue instead of giving lectures.
- **Safe environments:** A focus on listening and empathy creates space where students feel free to ask hard questions and share doubts without fear of judgment.

Darkroom shifts discipleship from one-way teaching to authentic, two-way conversation—helping trusted adults walk alongside teens as they process identity, purpose, and belonging in light of Christ.



Top-quality, biblical, and created in a way that speaks to a new generation

Gen Zers are asking the tough questions about God and life. But we need the right tools to engage them. I'm thankful for the Darkroom series because it's top-quality, biblical, and created in a way that speaks to a new generation.

**Sean McDowell, Ph.D, Biola University Professor,
Speaker, Author**

Why It Works

Darkroom succeeds because it meets students where they are—honest, questioning, and longing for connection.

- **Real stories** disarm defensiveness and make space for vulnerability.
- **Open questions** invite students to wrestle with faith in ways that feel authentic, not forced.
- **Relational trust** builds bridges between students and mentors, allowing faith to be explored, not imposed.

*This combination turns silent struggle into honest dialogue—and honest dialogue into **lasting faith**.*



Impact

400,000+

**students
reached**

14,000+

**youth pastors
equipped**

97%

of youth pastors
report improved
student engagement
and understanding
of key faith topics

9 out of 10

youth pastors would
recommend Darkroom
to a colleague

Voices from the Field

“Darkroom has fostered open, healthy relationships between me and my students, and created breakthrough moments I didn’t think possible.”

Rebecca S., Youth Pastor

“Because the videos featured teens, our group stayed engaged instead of tuning out. We saw students open up and share in ways they hadn’t before. Darkroom made faith feel real, relatable, and hopeful.”

David S., Youth Pastor

“We work with unchurched teens who are often invisible to the community. These videos help them see God works with and through their struggles, opening conversations with teens who once felt He couldn’t love or forgive them.”

Carole N., Youth Pastor

Student Voices

“For the first time, I felt comfortable opening up and asking questions. Now, I actually look forward to talking about my faith.”

Jessica, 14, New Orleans

“The Mission episode helped me know I’m not alone. It was like seeing my own story.”

Hannah, 18, Cedar Rapids

“Darkroom helped me see that there really is a God who loves me and there is something worth living for.”

Sarah, 13, Florida



Growth Plan: Expanding Kingdom Impact

This is just the start. The need is greater than ever. We want to go further, reach more teens, impact more lives, and transform more hearts.

To do that, we must grow our organizational capacity and expand our reach. Our vision is bold: **to reach 1 million students by 2030**. To get there, we are focusing on three initiatives—**Expanded Content, Expanded Support, and an Expanded Team**—each designed to multiply Darkroom's impact and equip the Church to disciple the next generation.



Darkroom sparked a powerful discussion about what makes Jesus' teachings unique. If we could bottle that supernatural goodness, it'd be the hot sauce we'd sprinkle on every meeting.

Pradeepa Ganhewa, Young Life Director, San Diego

Expanded Content: Season 2 and Beyond

Season 2: Answering the Heart Longings of a Generation

Every young person longs to be known, to belong, to be loved, and to have a story that matters. Season 2 will help students see not only that Christianity is true—but that it is good, beautiful, and life-giving. We will connect these deep heart-longings to their true source: the Author of life, the source of all goodness, and the One who gives meaning and purpose—Jesus.

Building on Season 1's reach to over 400,000 students, Season 2 will expand this proven tool with:

- **Six new cinematic episodes** paired with leader guides, discussion prompts, and training resources.
- **Diverse stories and voices** so every student sees themselves reflected.
- **Practical resources and onboarding tools** to equip youth pastors and expand leader networks.

Custom Curriculum

To broaden our reach and equip more communities, we are developing tailored versions of Darkroom:

- **Parent Program:** Practical resources to help parents guide their children through faith conversations at home.
- **Catholic Program:** In partnership with EQSaints, a trusted Catholic discipleship provider, we are creating a tailored Darkroom version to serve the Catholic Church (40% of global Christianity).



*We will connect these
deep heart-longings to
their true source: Jesus*

Expanded Support: Website Leader Hub

As Darkroom grows, our digital backbone must grow with it. An expanded website and integrated leader hub will serve as the central platform for global reach, leader engagement, and program delivery. This will ensure the program remains accessible, scalable, and sustainable for years to come.

All-in-One Leader Platform

Youth pastors are pressed for time and often feel under-resourced. Darkroom is building a platform that brings everything a leader needs into one place—training, resources, and tools to run a Darkroom group from start to finish:

- **Comprehensive online onboarding** modules and video training.
- **Webinars and 1-on-1 coaching** for encouragement and best practices.
- **Leader community forums** to share ideas and support.
- **AI-powered support** to answer practical and theological questions, recommend resources, and help leaders adapt content for their unique contexts.
- **Program management tools** to guide group sessions, track progress, and provide real-time access to films, guides, and discussion prompts.

Foreign Translations

In partnership with Jesus Film Project, Darkroom will be translated and dubbed into six new languages—**Arabic, Mandarin, French, Spanish, Russian, and German**—expanding access from 17% to over 40% of the world's population. This collaboration will deliver multi-language resources, culturally sensitive web access, and global outreach for adoption.



Expanded Team

To sustain and scale Darkroom's growing global reach, we're strengthening the team behind the mission. Strategic investment in key roles will expand our capacity, deepen leader impact, and enhance organizational excellence. New positions will focus on:

- **Development and Donor Relations** to build a stronger base of support.
- **Leader Training and Research** to equip pastors and measure program impact.
- **Marketing and Administration** to ensure scalability and sustainability.

Together, an **Expanded Team, Expanded Content, and Expanded Support** form the foundation of our next chapter. These initiatives will increase reach, deepen discipleship, and move us closer to our vision of igniting faith in 1 million students by 2030.



**So remarkable it gives the Truth
the chance to enter their hearts
and minds.**

Jonny Radcliff, National Network of Youth Ministries



Capacity for Success

Darkroom is backed by a multidisciplinary team of creatives, theologians, researchers, and professionals with deep expertise in adolescent development, discipleship, and digital engagement.

- **OX Creative:** Our award-winning media production partner, with proven expertise in cinematic storytelling and creative strategy, delivering high-quality, impactful films that capture students' attention.
- **Nerdy NonProfit:** A leading digital outreach and web development partner specializing in building scalable, user-friendly platforms for mission-driven organizations.
- **Arbor Research Group:** A trusted research agency serving Christian ministries and educational institutions nationwide. With a team of seasoned scholars and practitioners, Arbor delivers rigorous analysis and actionable insights tailored to faith-based contexts.
- **Darkroom Team Expansion:** We are growing our internal team to strengthen development, donor relations, leader training, content strategy, and operations to sustain long-term impact.

Leadership

- **Randy Templeton, President & Cofounder:** With 30+ years in business marketing and product innovation, Randy brings entrepreneurial vision and a lifelong passion for student discipleship. His own faith journey as a teen, influenced by Francis Schaeffer's ministry, shaped his conviction to create culturally relevant tools for youth ministry.
- **Ashley Cope, Executive Director & Cofounder:** Ashley has 20+ years of experience in marketing and product strategy, with proven skill in program management and execution. Her passion for equipping young people to ask honest questions of faith, sharpened through ministries like Cru and the teaching of Tim Keller and C.S. Lewis, fuels her leadership in guiding Darkroom's growth and impact.



Together, Randy and Ashley have assembled a strong network of advisors and collaborators to ensure Darkroom's continued effectiveness and scalability.

Financial Efficiency

Recognizing that 75% of student ministers are volunteers or bi-vocational, and that church resources are often stretched thin, Darkroom is provided **free of charge**. Our commitment is to equip churches and mentors with cutting-edge, biblically grounded resources that ignite meaningful conversations with teens.

We steward resources carefully:

- **75% of every dollar** raised goes directly to program creation and distribution.
- **\$1.25** is the current cost to reach a new student. With scale and new partnerships, we expect to drive this below **\$1.00 per student**.
- **\$1.4 million** has been raised to date to build, launch, and expand Darkroom.

Transparency and accountability are central to our values. All financial and organizational documents are available at darkroomfaith.com/darkroom-financials-and-documents.

Invest in the Faith of the Next Generation

Help us reach 1 million students by 2030.

Every teen deserves a safe place to ask hard questions, encounter Jesus, and build an unshakable faith.

This is a pivotal moment for the Church and our youth. As the cultural narrative shifts away from faith, the need for a thoughtful, engaging, and loving response has never been greater.

We invite you to join us in this mission. Your partnership—through prayer, advocacy, and financial support—will make a tangible difference. Together, we can ensure that every student knows their questions are welcome and that the answers can be found in the unchanging love of Christ.





I have come into the world as light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

John 12:46

How You Can Make an Impact

- **\$75,000** funds one new episode
- **\$50,000** sponsors a global website upgrade
- **\$25,000** fuels story and script development
- **\$10,000** underwrites leader resources for one episode
- **\$5,000** helps translate and expand reach

Every gift, large or small, helps keep Darkroom free for churches and leaders everywhere.

Let's change the narrative.
Let's ignite faith.
Let's transform young lives.



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