



Week Two

Opening Prayer

God, thank you for being a God who wants to connect us in a loving relationship with you and with others. Help us to say 'yes' to the meaningful relationships you have for us. Amen.

If your group is new this season or you have some new members, start with this simple icebreaker.

- Tell everyone your name and your favorite place to eat in San Diego.

If your group is new or you have new members, let's remember that we want this group to be a place of authenticity but we understand trust takes time to build and transparency is not the same as authenticity. So, while honoring the newness of our friendship, let's simultaneously allow people to get to know the real us.

Talk It Over

This week we continued our new series #relationshipgoals. During this series, we are looking at various types of relationships and various practices we can adopt to bring greater health to our relationships. This week the content was focused on parenting, but know this guide was created to work even if you don't have kids.

- Share one of your favorite funny parenting moments with us. This can be a story about your life as a parent, a story from your childhood, or something you watched take place.
- Tell us one thing you appreciate about your parents parenting style.
- What's something your parents did that drove you crazy but you can now laugh about?

For groups consisting of parents, read 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV). If your group is full of people who don't have kids, jump to Proverbs 20:7.

Parenting is full of changing, evolving, and dynamic complexities. As we go about our conversation today let's remember we are all rookies learning to get better. Even in the best of seasons, we all know it's just a matter of time before something changes and we are back to asking the question "how do I parent well now?".

- What has been the hardest part of parenting for you?
- Other than the love we have for our kids, what has been the best part of parenting?

Read Proverbs 20:7

While this verse isn't a promise, the underlying wisdom offered here is that if parents walk out their own life well, kids will catch what the parents are modeling. This idea leads smoothly to this week's big idea: Our children learn more from what we do than what we say. In other words, our actions are powerful; much more is caught than taught when it comes to parenting.

- What is something, good or bad, you learned from observing or watching your parents live their life?
- If you are a parent, tell us about a time you noted that your kids were copying what they saw you do. This can be positive, negative, or funny.

(Content continued on the next page.)

Building on this week's big idea of parenting well, knowing kids are watching what parents do, we looked at five important aspects of life parents can intentionally serve as healthy models.

Read Ephesians 5:15-16

M: Model management of time.

Parenting comes with endless tasks, but parenting is more about relationships than the tasks. Parents can choose to be intentional in modeling the value of relationships and family as keys to a life well lived.

- In what ways did your parents show they value a relationship with you?
- In what ways did your parents struggle to show they value a relationship with you?
- If you are a parent, how are you doing at intentionally choosing to make the most out of this parenting phase relationally? In other words, how are you investing in a relationship with your kids this season?
- If you are a parent, how can you invest in the relational aspect of parenting this week?

Read Deuteronomy 6:5-7

O: Observe teachable moments.

Being a good teacher starts with us living well. What we teach must be in us. In turn, it's from this place of being relationally present with kids and embodying the good life we want kids to live, we are best positioned to teach kids.

- Consider what your parent's life look liked.
 - What would you say they valued?
 - Where did their identity and worth come from?
 - In what areas of life were your parents good teachers?
- Who in your life has served as a good teacher? What did this person do that helped you learn? This can be a person from any area or phase of life.
- If you are a parent, how much or how little do you currently talk to your kids about what it means to follow Jesus?
- If you are a parent, how can you grow at teaching your kids about Jesus this season?

D: Date your family.

Building on this idea of parenting being relational, it's important for families to be intentional about making memories together, setting time aside to enjoy each others company, sharing experiences, and doing things the group or even just one member of the group enjoys.

- Growing up, what did your family do for fun?
- What does your family currently do for fun?
- If you are a parent, are you good at making time for fun with your family? Why or why not?

Read Hebrews 10:24

E: Encourage your kids.

The verse we just looked at references the church, but the principle is one that is true of all communities and should be true of our homes. We all need encouragement and encouragement is a motivating, life-giving tool.

- Thinking of your home or those closest to you, in what ways does encouragement come easy for you?
- In what ways is it hard for you to give encouragement?
- What's one thing you can do this week in your home to foster an environment of encouragement?

Read James 1:2-3

L: Learn from difficulty.

While the goal of this verse is not to be thankful for our trouble, it does highlight the point that difficulty can deepen our faith. Furthermore, parents should be mindful that their response to life's hurts and challenges will inevitably teach their children something about how they should handle difficulty.

- Growing up, how did your home deal with conflict, difficulty, challenges, hurts, or so forth?
- Knowing what you know about life now, what would a good guide in this area look like?
- If you are a parent, in what ways can you grow at modeling a mature, healthy response to the hard things of life?

We are going to close today by reading the first part of 1 John 3:1. To help us focus on the part of the verse that matches today's discussion, the first section of the verse has been included here:

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!... - 1 John 3:1 New International Version (NIV)

While parents are important, the Bible teaches us that God wants to be our perfect father and we are his children. The Bible tells us that he looks to pour his love and grace into our lives.

- Is there a trait, value, or strength you didn't get from your parents but you somehow found or received through other means?
- If you are a parent, what specific areas of parenting do you want God's help in most this season?

Closing Prayer

God, thank you for all the ways you show us your love. Help us to encounter and embody all that you want us to model and extend to those around us — especially our children, our future children, those closest to us, those we have influence with, and the people in our lives who look to us for leadership. Help us to live well and to bless others. Amen.

If your group is new, be sure to cover any important details for next week's meeting.

How To Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith in your specific group.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead.