



FULL CIRCLE
PARENTING



**DISCUSSION
GUIDE**



CHAPTER by **CHAPTER** QUESTIONS

FOR INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP USE

INTRODUCTION:

1. Did the opening sentence of the book, “Parenting isn’t for wimps,” resonate with you? Why or why not?
2. How has parenting so far compared to your expectations of parenting? Has it been easier or more challenging? More joyful or more exhausting? Some mix of all the above?
3. This introduction tells us that the book is going to provide “a simple tool to help you navigate crucial conversations with your kids.” What are some of the most difficult conversations you’ve had as parents?
4. Do you find it comes naturally to talk to your kids about hard topics, or is it particularly challenging for you?
5. What did you think about the 3 circles—brokenness, gospel, and God’s design—and their accompanying arrows—sin, repent and believe, recover and pursue? Does this make sense to you? Do you have any questions about it?
6. What are you most looking forward to in the process of reading this book?

CHAPTER 1:

1. This chapter discusses God’s design for parenting. How would you have defined the purpose of parenting before this chapter?
2. On page 14, the authors write, “the futility of formulaic parenting is difficult for our human minds to accept.” We all wish parenting were as simple as a formula! Why do you think that is?
3. What are some formulas you have tried for parenting? Have they helped at all or left you frustrated?
4. What is the difference in formula-based parenting and wisdom-based parenting?
5. What do the authors mean when they say Christian parents “are going to have to teach our kids to swim upstream against the flow of the culture around us”? What are some specific ways that you’ve had to teach your kids to swim upstream? Has this been difficult?
6. What is the difference in parenting for heart transformation and parenting for behavior modification? What are some specific changes you can make in your parenting to aim for heart transformation?
7. After reading this chapter, how would you define “success” in parenting?

CHAPTER 2:

1. How does the message that our children are made *on purpose, for a purpose* differ from the messages they might hear from the world?
2. What do the authors mean when they say children are “complex”? How does this help you make sense of your parenting experience?
3. Where does this complexity come from, ultimately?
4. The authors write, “Parents who fail to recognize the reality, depth, and ugliness of sin in the heart of their children will be very disappointed. Their kids are going to sin over and over again.” Yet, it really is hard sometimes to grasp this. Why do you think that is? Why is it important to reckon with the sinfulness of our children?
5. Why is building strong relationships with your kids so crucial to managing their complexity?
6. Why is it important for other adults and mentors to speak into your children’s lives in addition to just you, their parents? Do your kids currently have those mentors? If so, who are they? If not, who might be a good candidate?

CHAPTER 3:

1. This chapter dives right into some of the most challenging conversations we face as parents today. Before we dig into the chapter's content, what has your experience been with talking to your kids about gender, sexuality, and marriage?
2. On page 49, the authors write, "Someone who is trained to spot counterfeit money doesn't become an expert on every possible deviation from legitimate currency. They only need to be an expert on real money." Relatedly, the most important thing for parents in this conversation is that we be experts on the Bible's teachings on gender and marriage. What does the Bible teach about God's design for gender?
3. What, according to the Bible, is marriage? What is the purpose of marriage?
4. Why is it important for your children to see examples of healthy marriages and healthy singleness?
5. Why is it so important to start having conversations about gender, sexuality, and marriage when your children are young?
6. What do you think is the next important conversation you need to have with one or all of your kids about this topic? How do you plan to use the 3 Circles in this crucial conversation?

CHAPTER 4:

1. This chapter helps us have conversations with our kids about technology. How would you define technology?
2. What are some significant ways technology has changed since you were growing up? Does this make you intimidated to talk about these things with your children?
3. What challenging conversations have you already had, or challenging situations have you already faced, related to this topic?
4. What do the authors mean when they talk about the "secret world" of kids? How does technology contribute to this, and how should parents respond to this challenge?
5. What challenges have social media posed to you as parents? Do you know which social media apps your kids use, and how much they use them?
6. It is easy to get fearful and reactive when talking about this topic, but again, the most important thing for us is to know God's design for technology well. So, how would you define God's design for technology after reading this chapter?
7. What is the next important conversation you need to have with one or all of your kids about this topic? How do you plan to use the 3 Circles in this crucial conversation?

CHAPTER 5:

1. This chapter equips us to talk to our kids about alcohol and substance abuse. To what extent have your kids been exposed to problems related to substance abuse and alcohol?
2. How would you summarize God's design for alcohol based on the Scripture references in this chapter?
3. Does our culture normally use alcohol according to God's design, or in a sinful way that leads to brokenness? Have you ever had conversations with your kids about this?
4. How can you create a culture in your home that is consistent with God's design in this area without being judgmental or condemning toward those who are not living according to God's design?
5. This chapter talks about the importance of teaching your kids the facts about alcohol and drugs and talking to them about your family's history in this regard. How can you initiate this conversation in an age-appropriate way? Do you need to do any homework beforehand to make sure you are prepared?
5. Starting these conversations early, in a casual way, can prepare you and your kids for harder discussions about peer pressure as they get older. How old are your kids, and how can you start having casual conversations about this topic with them now?
6. What is the next important conversation you need to have with one or all of your kids about this topic? How do you plan to use the 3 Circles in this crucial conversation?

CHAPTER 6:

1. This chapter dives right into some of the most challenging conversations we face as every child—every person—has at some point had their feelings hurt and had to choose between bitterness and forgiveness. Share about a time when one of your children had his or her feelings hurt by a friend.
2. Share about a time when your child was perhaps the one on the offending side and needed to apologize to a friend.
3. Do you think you, as parents, model healthy conflict through forgiveness and restoration? How could you improve at this?
4. Why does the gospel compel us to be forgiving people?
5. The authors say in this chapter that when hurt feelings resurface, “Our kids need to constantly remind themselves of the gospel of Jesus and choose to forgive their offenders all over again. Rise. Repeat. For the rest of their lives if necessary.” Why do you think we humans find this so difficult?
6. What is the next important conversation you need to have with one or all of your kids about this topic? How do you plan to use the 3 Circles in this crucial conversation?

CHAPTER 7:

1. This chapter is related in some important ways to the last chapter. We talked about hurt feelings and the importance of forgiveness. This often arises in the context of friendships. Share about your children’s closest friends, and perhaps a story of a time when there was conflict in the friendship.
2. The authors write, “Our kids will become like their friends. Because friendships are so vital, Christian parents must do everything we can to help our children cultivate healthy friendships.” How are you helping your kids cultivate healthy friendships and choose good friends?
3. How do we balance the impulse to get our kids our good influences with the impulse to help them be evangelistic and to make friends with unbelievers for the sake of the gospel? Are you modeling both of these impulses for your children?
4. If you have multiple children, would you say that they are close friends with one another? What can you do to encourage close sibling friendships between your children?
5. How can you help build a “team mentality” in your family?
6. Have your children ever had difficult friendships or tried to be kind to a mean kid? How does God’s design for friendship help in these situations?
7. What is the next important conversation you need to have with one or all of your kids about this topic? How do you plan to use the 3 Circles in this crucial conversation?

CHAPTER 8:

1. The authors write at the beginning of this chapter, “Our goal for this book was to share a pattern for having gospel-centered conversations with your kids about any topic.” What was the pattern they shared? Can you repeat it at this point?
2. Has the 3 circles tool been helpful for you? Do you feel equipped to use it in these conversations and more?
3. Would you be willing to share one successful attempt you’ve made to wade into a crucial conversation with one of your children since beginning this book? What about an attempt that didn’t seem so successful?
4. After reading chapter 1, we talked about the purpose of parenting. Now that you’ve finished this book, how would you answer the question, *What is the purpose of parenting?*
5. Do you feel more equipped toward this purpose than you did at the beginning of the book?
6. How will you commit to creating an environment in your home where crucial conversations happen regularly, all pointing back to the gospel of Jesus Christ?