



# CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week #3 - Parenting 101: Direction over Perfection



## GETTING STARTED

Spend some time checking in with each other. Any highs and lows since the last time you met?

What was your favorite TV family growing up—and why?

## THIS WEEK'S THEME

### Opening

1. What were you taught (explicitly or implicitly) that the goal of parenting was?
2. Whether or not you're a parent—how has your experience of being parented shaped your understanding of what “successful parenting” looks like?

### Core Reflection

1. The sermon asked: What is your “it”? What direction are you parenting (or living) toward? Have you ever defined this before?
2. “Families don’t accidentally end up healthy.” What do you think it takes to raise kids who want to be together, even when they don’t have to be?
3. Which of the four parenting stages—Discipline (0–5), Training (5–12), Coaching (12–18), Friendship (18+)—resonated most with you? What was insightful or challenging?

### Faith + Relationship

1. What do you think it means to “parent with the relationship, not their faith, in mind”? Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. Hans said, “Don’t let your faith get in the way of your relationship with your children.” How do we balance truth and grace in that tension?

### Application

1. Name Your “It”: Take time this week to write down what you’re parenting (or leading/living) toward. What is your North Star?
2. Evaluate Your Calendar: Look at how your current schedule reflects (or doesn’t reflect) your North Star. What needs to shift?
3. Encourage Another Parent: Share something from the message with someone in a different parenting stage.

# DIGGING DEEPER

Read Romans 8:31-39

## The Big Idea

Faith in Jesus creates new humans who are liberated to become a people characterized by love for God and their neighbors. This new humanity is being transformed by God's Spirit and is the fulfillment of God's ancient promises.

While the letter is designed to have four main movements, it is also unified as one long, flowing exploration of the Gospel, which "reveals God's righteousness" (Rom. 1-4), "creates a new humanity" (Rom. 5-8), and "fulfills God's promise to Israel" (Rom. 9-11). As a result, it is this Gospel alone that can "unify the Church" (Rom. 12-16). (<https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-romans/>)

Read John 13:34-35

- Jesus' one command was to "Love one another." What if this guided every stage of parenting?

Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment, to love one another as he has loved them. This new commandment is similar to the command to love one's neighbor as oneself, but it differs in two ways. First, the new commandment does not focus on the love people have for themselves but on the love they receive from Christ. The love Jesus gives becomes the source and standard for Christian love. Second, the new commandment speaks of loving one another, emphasizing the mutual quality of love. ... The way the world comes to know about the love of Christ is through the love that takes shape in Christian community (John 13:35). The disciples will once again know Jesus' love by sharing love with one another and the world. (<https://enterthebible.org/passage/john-1334-35-a-new-commandment-from-jesus>)

See also Andy & Sandra Stanley's book, *Parenting: Getting It Right* (<https://andystanley.com/parenting/>)

## PRAY

Generous Savior, you are FOR the faith of the next generation. Guide us to creative ways to engage the faith of our kids and students. Use us to rally together to continue to pass the faith. Amen

## TAKING IT HOME

Create a "North Star" statement for your family:

- In one sentence, write down what you're parenting—or living—toward.  
Example: "We want to be a family that shows up for each other and laughs a lot." Put it somewhere visible at home (fridge, mirror, phone lock screen) as a daily reminder of your direction.