

Grace Group Discussion Guide

For the week of June 23 - 29, 2019

Main Passage and Thoughts:

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven..." (Ecclesiastes 3:1 ESV)

God designed life to operate in seasons, each with unique features and challenges. Understanding and adjusting to these seasons is essential to health and the fulfillment of God's purposes as He designed. Here are a few of the seasons that families must walk through:

- **The season of singleness:** We must maximize our season of singleness by establishing a solid foundation of devotion to Christ in every aspect of our lives as well as relationships that will support our discipleship to Christ. (1 Corinthians 7:32-35)
- **Courtship and entering marriage:** In this season, we must allow God to bring us together since He knows us best, who is best, and when is best. This requires trusting God completely and not giving in to the lust of the "flesh." (Genesis 2:18, 21-22)
- **Parenting little ones:** This season focuses on creating emotional security and intentional directing and training. Studies show that emotional connection and unconditional acceptance are critical for the cognitive development of the child. Training and discipline must be given but in the context of an emotionally supportive and secure environment. (Proverbs 22:6, 3:11-12)
- **Parenting adolescent children:** As children mature, parents must move from directing to processing life with their children. Children's brains are beginning to individuate from the parent and morphs from "command-based" thinking to "abstract/analytical" thinking as they prepare for adulthood; therefore, the parenting style must adjust. Listen first, speak next. Seek to understand their perspective before responding. (Luke 2:46-51)
- **Parenting adult children:** This stage releases and empowers adult children into the world. There must be a full "letting go" without obligation or manipulation. Communicate and collaborate now more as peers rather than authoritatively. Parents must create a safe space for their adult children to "come home" and initiate relationship at their pace. (Ephesians 5:31-33, Luke 15:11-22)

Reflection:

- Reflect on the main thoughts above. What stands out to you the most and why?
- In the current season you are in, what challenges come to mind as you reflect on the concepts listed above?

Application:

- What is one practical takeaway that you can apply to the current season you're in?

Prayer:

- Pray for one another for the challenges we are facing in our given season. Ask the Lord to give us the grace to apply what we have learned.

For further reading:

"Loveology," John Mark Comer. *"Boundaries," "Boundaries with Kids," "Boundaries with Teens,"* Cloud and Townsend. *"Our Mothers, Ourselves,"* Cloud and Townsend. *"The Whole Brained Child," "Brainstorm,"* Daniel Siegel. *"Shepherding a Child's Heart"* Tedd Tripp. *"How We Love Our Kids,"* Milan and Kay Yerkovich. *"Doing Life with Your Adult Children,"* Jim Burns. *"Anatomy of the Soul,"* Curt Thompson.