

// Parent Ministry

Talking with Your Kids about God

30 Conversations Every Christian Parent Must Have

Authors: Natasha Crain

REVIEW:

A simple but powerful book for every Christian parent to have in their toolbox of resources. This well-written and thorough book is one of the best parenting books written recently. The most important thing a parent can do is to have spiritual conversations with their children. There are no quick tips or easy answers to be a better parent in this book, just a straight forward approach to spur families on to 30 of the most power conversations parents can have with their children.

SNAPSHOT

Part 1: The Existence of God

The 3 keys to impactful conversations about the existence of God are: 1.) Introduce the discussion with evidence of God in nature. 2.) Make terms clear. 3.) Remember the "Big 3 Questions:" *Where did the universe come from? Where did life come from? and Where did our moral understanding come from?*

1. ***What we can learn about God from Nature?*** We learn about God's nature from God's "word" in our natural world. While the evidence requires human interpretation of the possible explanations, the best explanation leads us to a discussion about God.
2. ***Where did the universe come from?*** The Bible begins with God bringing the universe into existence. Science has studied the universe and understands it had a beginning. Someone or something supernatural must have caused our universe to exist.
3. ***Where did life come from?*** There are 2 main questions when it comes to life on earth: 1.) What are the conditions needed for life to exist and survive? 2.) Where did life itself come from? Our universe is created exactly the way it needed to be for life to exist and continue to exist. We live in a complex universe that has been perfectly made with the purpose of life. It reveals an intelligent creator.
4. ***Where did our moral understanding come from?*** The most basic human intuition knows there is 'right' and 'wrong'. We know that there are simple moral values and actions that create a natural "law". If there are morals and natural laws of understanding right and wrong, the best explanation is there is a moral law giver and creator?
5. ***What is the difference between God and a flying spaghetti monster?*** If there is no real evidence for God's existence, then it is ridiculous to believe in God. Theist look at the set of facts about the universe and see the best explanation is the existence of God. Atheist look at the same evidence and believe there must be another natural explanation.
6. ***How much evidence do we need to be confident God exists?*** People may say there is not enough evidence for God's existence, but with the evidence we do have, is it enough? We absolutely have enough evidence with so many things pointing to the best and only explanation being the existence of God.



Part 2: Science and God

The 3 keys to impactful conversations about Science and God are: 1.) Discussions need to start in elementary school. 2.) Explain that people use the same words but may mean different things. 3.) Acknowledge that even Christians have varying views on science.

7. ***Can science prove or disprove God's existence?*** Science with absolute certainty cannot prove or disprove God's existence. The key is to better understand what people mean when they say "God", either a supernatural being or a religious concept.
8. ***Do science and religion contradict each other?*** The age of earth varies greatly between traditional religious views and evolution. Christians also vary with a basic understanding that there was an intelligent designer and creator. An accurate interpretation of science does not conflict with an accurate interpretation of the Bible.
9. ***Do science and religion complement each other?*** Science is the study of a world that is understandable and logical. Only a person believing in God would expect a world that is so orderly and measurable. The Bible teaches about a world that is created to be studied and humans that were intelligent enough to study it. The Bible and science naturally complement each other, both offering us knowledge of our world.
10. ***Is God just an explanation for what science doesn't yet know?*** Natural phenomena that were hard to explain in the past were attributed to the supernatural. In the present world of science, we can study and understand these natural phenomena as part of God's creation.
11. ***Can science explain why people believe in God?*** Cognitive science shows that humans are born with a processor and predisposition to believe in something bigger than themselves. Every person is born with a mental system that is built to study, understand and believe. There is a foundational biological connection to our minds and God.
12. ***What do scientists believe about God?*** Studies vary, but 5 major studies show that 33%-50% of scientist believe in a personal God.

Part 3: The Nature of God

The 3 keys to impactful conversations about the nature of God are: 1.) Emphasis on the Bible. 2.) Take time to explore your kids' current understanding. 3.) Help your kids understand the complexity of God.

13. ***What can we learn about God from the Bible?*** There are 7 important attributes of God children should understand: Holiness, Sovereignty, Transcendence, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Faithfulness, and Goodness.
14. ***What does it mean that God is love?*** There are 5 aspects of God's love children should understand: 1.) The love of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father. 2.) Love for all He has made. 3.) God provided salvation. 4.) God's love for His People. 5.) God's love is conditioned on obedience.
15. ***What does it mean that God is just?*** God's justness means he can, should and will judge perfectly between right and wrong. He must do something about sin because He is holy and good.

16. Why does God seem so harsh in parts of the Old Testament? God's character never changes, even if He seems different between the Old and New Testament. God always responds with justice in His response to sin.

17. How can God be three persons in one? The doctrine of the "Trinity" in the Bible refers to the belief that there is one God, in 3 distinct persons, each being fully God.

18. Why didn't God reveal more of Himself in the Bible? God does reveal much about Himself in the Bible. Through the Bible we learn about who He is, what He is like and how to have a relationship with Him.

Part 4: Believing in God

The 3 keys to impactful conversations about believing in God are: 1.) Explain the transition of conversations you are having. 2.) Speak the truth in love. 3.) Be prepared to be personal.

19. Why do people believe so many different things about God? One of the biggest factors of differing beliefs about God is the "holy books" that each religion holds as truth. Even inside of the broad range of Christianity there are different interpretations of what the Bible teaches about God.

20. Do all religions worship the same God? All religions do not worship the "same" God. When people say that, they are making 1 of 4 claims: 1.) There is only one true God. 2.) All religions are the same. 3.) All religions have the same concept of God. 4.) All worship is acceptable to God.

21. Is what you believe about God simply a matter of where you grew up? When people connect religious belief to a geographic location they demonstrate: 1.) Religion is a cultural fluke. 2.) Evidence for truth is lacking. 3.) There is no exclusive path to God.

22. Why do Christians sometimes doubt their belief in God? Doubt is normal; even people in the Bible had doubts. Doubt can be good if we deal with it right and it leads to deeper faith.

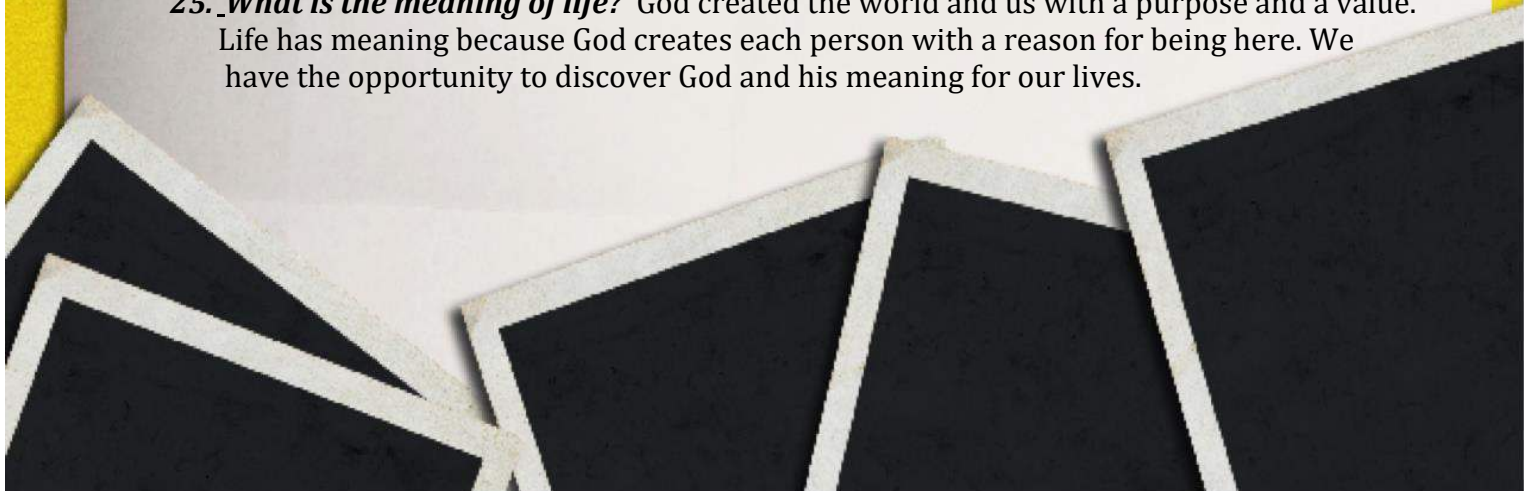
23. How do we know God hears and answers prayers? The Bible tells us that God hears and answers our prayers. The Bible doesn't promise that God will answer our prayers the way we hope. We know God is good and He always does what is best for us, even when we do not understand.

24. How can we develop a relationship with a God we can't see or hear? We develop a relationship with God through 1.) Learning who He is. 2.) Learning what He does. 3.) Learning who we are in relation to Him 4.) Learning about His deep love for us.

Part 5: The Difference God Makes

The 3 keys to impactful conversations about the difference God can make are: 1.) Explain the shift in conversation from facts to how we live our daily life. 2.) Emphasize living consistently. 3.) Talk about what your kids want to learn next.

25. What is the meaning of life? God created the world and us with a purpose and a value. Life has meaning because God creates each person with a reason for being here. We have the opportunity to discover God and his meaning for our lives.



26. Do we really have free will? Humans have the ability to make their own choice and are accountable before God for the choices they make. The most important choice a person can make is to believe in God and accept his Son as Savior of their lives.

27. What should we do with our lives? We have a direct connection with God. Our belief in Him should impact what we do with our lives. Our knowledge of Him and His word should change who we are and what we choose to do with our lives.

28. What is our responsibility to other people? All human lives are valuable and equal to God. We are all created in the image of God. As Christians, we believe in equal human rights and a moral responsibility to care for others. As we care for the physical and social needs of others we can share the hope of salvation to meet the spiritual need of every person.

29. How should we make sense of evil? The problem of evil exists for both people who don't believe in God and those who do. Those of us who believe in God can recognize evil and face it with the hope of God's goodness. Understanding there is a good God can help us understand the truth that there is also evil in the world.

30. Why does Biblical hope matter? We have a hope that we can put our trust in Jesus in our lives and in eternity. Since we can have good reasons to believe God exists and that He personally created and cares for us, we can have personal hope.

- *This is a very short "snapshot" of a great book. This is an extremely quick overview of 30 rather deep questions and concepts. This is written to give you a glimpse of this book's approach and theology. Please pick up this full book at your local bookstore or online soon. This is a resource that is more than a quick one time read, but something you will refer to over again as your children mature in life and faith.*