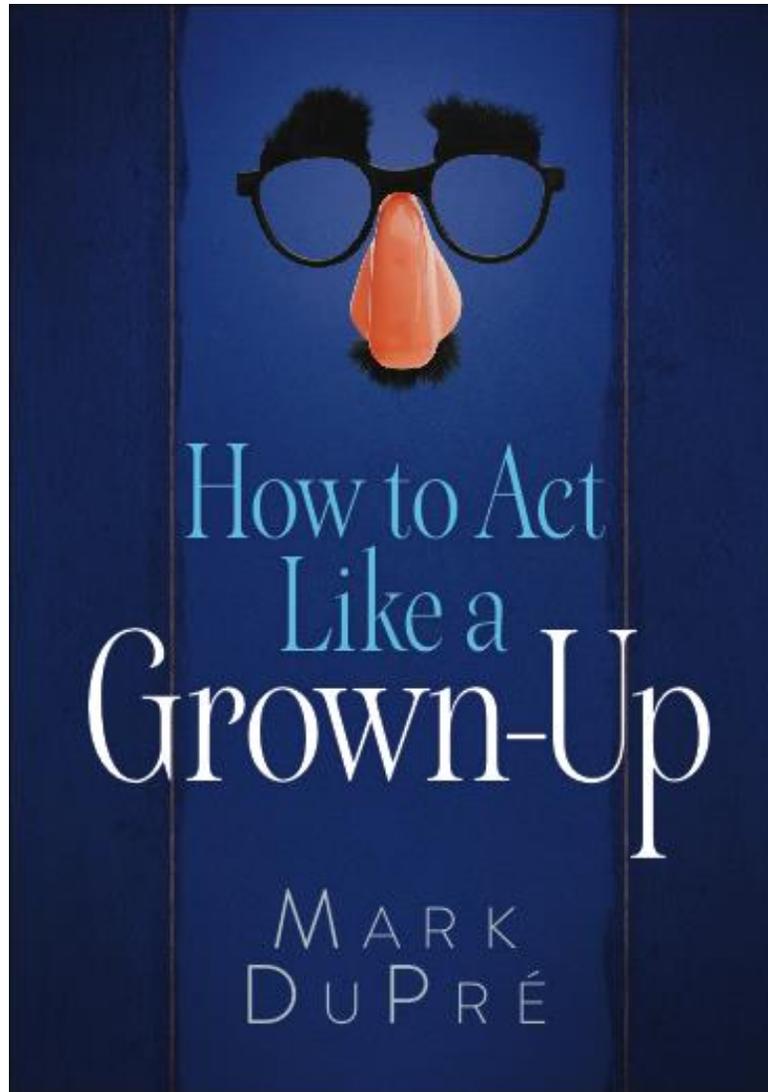


Christian Discussion Guide to



How to Act Like a Grown-up

By Pastor Mark DuPré

How to Act Like a Grown-up is meant to be an enjoyable read and a springboard for some really good discussions. Even though it's directed at a general audience, its ideas are from the Scriptures.

These questions are meant to be starting points for group leaders or for groups wanting to dig in to the topics covered in the book and the Biblical principles behind them.

The questions are not meant to be completely covered unless the leader or group wants to use them all. You can choose one question to discuss, and then find the conversation taking another direction. Or you may ask the people in your group to take one of the questions, think about it, and then come with some thoughts prepared. I'd be interested in hearing what works for you and what I could do to help with the discussion.

Enjoy!

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Quotes Page

Reread the quote from Lincoln. Do you feel you have to follow in the footsteps of an older family member? If so, who, and why do you feel that way?

Lev. 19:32 says, “Stand up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord.”

Scripture also says that He formed each of us in our mother’s womb in secret, we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139), He knows the number of hairs on our head (Luke 12:7), and our gifts are chosen by God (Romans 12:4-8 and I Peter 4:10) to serve others and to glorify the Lord in our using them.

Can you see how you can find God’s path for your life (Proverbs 16:9) while still honoring and learning from the older generation (parents, teachers, spiritual leaders)? Do you believe that the older generation can help you find your path? (Check out Joel 1:2-3 to see what God sees as their responsibility to those people who are younger.)

Preface

How do you handle criticism? Do you just react to it, or do you stop and consider that the other person might be on to something? After the “reaction phase,” are you open to the Lord’s using their comments to speak to you?

What kinds of criticism have you heard older people say about your generation? Do you think they have a point sometimes?

Did you ever hear a criticism that you completely rejected at first, and then later came around to agreeing with? What was it?

Proverbs 13: 18 says that “Poverty and disgrace come to him who ignores instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is honored.” Proverbs 12: 1 goes even further: “Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.” Proverbs 12: 15 says “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.”

Are you open to receiving wisdom/advice/direction from older people?

Do you think experience counts for anything? If so, what?

Job says in 12:12 that “wisdom is with the aged.” Thoughts?

What do you think you could do to get the most learning from older people? Brainstorm and come up with a few good ideas.

Do *you* make fun of younger kids or older people? If you do, don’t forget Galatians 6:7. And Matthew 7:12.

Remember that it’s a challenge for parents to figure out how to work with their children toward independence. How can you make it easier for them?

Be a Real Winner

Do you feel like a loser if you lose a game or a competition?

Do you think that winning at something makes you a better person?

Do you think you're worthless, or do you know anyone who does? If you feel like you're worthless sometimes, *when* do you feel that way?

How would you help someone who feels worthless not to feel that way?

Do you agree with the author that everyone has worth and is deserving of respect? Why or why not?

Are you OK with the idea that there will always be people who do some things better than you?

Does trying to be the best *you* that you can be sound silly to you? Discuss the benefits of thinking that way.

What do you have or do that makes you different, and maybe unique? How could that be made into a good thing?

How does having a real relationship with Jesus Christ make us winners? How is this different from what the world would call winners?

Genesis 2 says that we are all created in God's image. Though sin has compromised that image, it hasn't completely shattered it. Can you see that everyone has human dignity, whether they are Christians or not? What does that mean to the way you should think and the way you should act?

Take a look at what comparison did to Jacob and Esau (Genesis 27, and don't forget to check out Esau's wives, where they came from, etc.) What contributed to that rivalry?

Being on Time

Are you generally on time, a little late, or quite a bit late? Would others agree with your assessment?

Try this exercise, preferably in the group:

Make a list of all the “ingredients” that go into being late or being on time in each of the following categories:

- What “machines” do you need?
- What do you regularly do?
- What do you need to do?
- What do you need to have?
- What information do you need?
- What decisions do you need to make?
- What is helping you or hindering you from being on time, e.g., in your home or dorm room or apartment?

Now think about or talk about what you can do the night before. (Note: It’s more fun and more helpful to do this as a group exercise, even if you’re just discussing one person or one situation at a time.) Think about what’s necessary to do and what isn’t.

What could you change if you’re regularly late to some things? Or put another way, what things might you have to do differently to get to places on time? What’s the hardest part of making those changes? Why?

Decide what you need to do. See you if you can work with someone to help you actually make it happen.

How is being on time showing love to others?

Being Wrong

How big a deal is it to you to be wrong? Is it hard to admit, and if so, why, do you think?

What do you tend to do when you find out you've been wrong? Are you happy to know the truth, or bummed that you've been wrong? If both, which feeling is stronger?

Do you take the time to reevaluate people and actions when you find out you've been wrong? Give some examples of how you've done this and how it made a difference.

Did you ever make a mess by acting on wrong information and then finding out later that you were wrong? What happened? When you found out the truth, what did you do? How hard was it to backtrack and make things right? Were you able to "clean up your mess"?

Leviticus 6 takes about making restitution for things that were stolen. The principle is that the stolen thing (or its value in money) must be returned, with one-fifth added to the value of what was stolen. If someone's reputation has been damaged in your mind by something that is later proven not to be true, can you make restitution in your own heart and mind, and can you restore that person to his/her "original value"? (Also check out the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19.)

Has anyone ever wrongly judged you and then found out the truth later? What did they do when they learned the truth? What can you learn from what they did or didn't do?

Buying Stuff at a Store

What crazy stories do you have of what people have done ahead of you in line (be nice here)? If it wasn't good, why not? If it was, why?

What's the worst or silliest thing you've ever done when you've been in line?

What's your version of the ideal person ahead of you in line at the store?

Have you ever paid for anyone else's groceries? Has anyone ever paid for yours?

I Corinthians 13:1 Love is patient....

Cell Phones

When's the last time you heard someone use a cell phone in an inappropriate way? Were they too loud, talking too personally where others could hear, or something else?

What do you think about letting the people you're with take precedence over whoever is calling? Do you think it matters? What's the best way to honor the people you're with when someone calls?

Can you see that how you answer a cell phone might be related to what kind of circumstance you're in—social, professional, etc.? How might that make a difference?

Do you feel like you have to answer your cell as soon as it rings? Why or why not? Does it bother you not to pick up?

Proverbs 27:10 closes with this: Better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away. There is a principle here of making sure to connect with the people you're near and not just those—even in your family—that are at a distance. How can that apply to phone calls when you're in a group?

We have dominion as God's people over the earth and all the animals (Genesis 1:28). We also have dominion over machines. Does the cell phone rule you? Do you obey its ring more than the call to love those we are with?

Clothes

Do you see how sometimes a person's clothes can *stop* people from seeing the real them? Do you have any examples from your own life?

Do you realize that you have a style of clothing? How would you describe it?

What is the role of clothing—seriously?

I Corinthians 6:19-20 says that our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit, and that we should glorify God in our bodies. How do you think that applies to the clothing we wear?

I Timothy 2:9 and I Peter 3:3-4 also address the issue of clothing. How does this apply to us—women *and* men?

Do you believe in “dressing for the occasion”? Why or why not?

What's the worst clothing choice you've ever seen—not in terms of fashion, but in terms of what was appropriate? Why was it so bad?

Comparison

Do you think of comparison as a good thing, a bad thing, or something else?

Do you compare yourself to others? How? Do you always come out on the losing end of your comparisons?

The Lord says we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139). Do you really believe that? Do you realize that if God didn't want to make you, you wouldn't be here?

The Lord tells us to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (II Corinthians 10:5). What are some of the thoughts connected to comparison that we have to bring into captivity?

How could how comparison be a positive thing? What constructive ideas or practices could you learn from a comparison to others?

How could you begin to "turn the tables" on the enemy of our souls (otherwise known as the father of lies) and allow the Lord to use comparison as a blessing to us?

Read these two scriptures from Philippians:

- Philippians 4:9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.
- Philippians 3:17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

Share a positive experience you had with comparison, and what you got out of it.

Crossing the Street

Do you ever cross a street without looking?

Do you ever cross the street without looking? Do you think you have a right to cross the street without bothering to look?

Do you have an attitude about walking across a street, or have you ever seen anyone with attitude when they were crossing?

Why might someone not be quick to stop when you're crossing? Come up with several reasons.

Proverbs 12:15 says "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise." How do you see this scripture applying here?

I Corinthians 10:23 says "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify." Thoughts?

Driving

Do you think that driving is a matter of personal expression, like your clothing or the way you sing or draw? If you think it is, do you think it *should* be?

What are all the things that you have to think about when you're driving?

What are some of the major distractions that would prevent us from giving our top priority to driving safely?

James 4:17 says, "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin." How does this apply to driving?

What do you really think about using seatbelts?

Do you know of anyone hurt or killed in a car accident caused by bad driving choices? What happened?

What things freak out pedestrians? What could you do as a driver not to freak them out?

Think about Luke 6:31, where Jesus said, "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise."

Does it bother you that statistics show that younger drivers have more accidents, and more fatal ones? If it does bother you, why?

Do you think it's an insult when someone tells you that you lack experience in something?

Entitlement

What do children feel entitled to?

What do you think you're genuinely entitled to? Why do you think that?

What would things be like if everyone felt that way?

What things did you feel entitled to when you were younger that you don't feel the same way about now?

Some people always feel entitled to receive something just because they always have. What are some of the dangers in that way of thinking?

Hebrews 13:5 says, "Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

Paul said in Philippians 4:11, "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content...."

How do these scriptures challenge your mind or your heart?

Facebook, etc.

How often do you use Facebook? What's the main way you use it?

Has it helped your personal relationships, or has it replaced personal connecting for you? For either answer, how?

What are the dangers to people who aren't smart about how they use Facebook? What can happen and why?

What's the funniest example of TMI you've seen on Facebook? What's the saddest example?

What's the absolute worst thing you've ever seen posted? Why was it so bad?

What could hurt a person that they post on Facebook that they might never know about?

Who do you know who uses Facebook in the smartest way? Why do you think that?

Do you think of posting on Facebook or tweeting as "speech"?

Proverbs 18:2 says, "A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion."

Proverbs 17:28 says, "Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; when he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive."

How could these two scriptures apply to using Facebook or tweeting?

Financial Independence

What's your definition of being financially independent?

Do you want to be?

What are some of the stages that you could go through between where you are now and complete financial independence?

Why might someone want to be independent from their parents? What reasons are good and what are not so good? Why?

What might be your next step toward financial independence?

Do you think your parents or guardians would be helpful in getting you to financial independence, or do you think you'll have to do it on your own?

Proverbs 3:9 says "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce." How can you do that now?

Proverbs 22:7 doesn't comment on the rightness of this truth, but just declares it: "The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender." How does this speak to you at this point in your life?

Proverbs 24:27 uses agricultural terms in telling us a principle about this: "Prepare your outside work, make it fit for yourself in the field; and afterward build your house." This can be interpreted to mean that we should set up a good financial base for ourselves before we get married. What are your thoughts on that?

Finish What You Start

Philippians 1:16 says that God finishes what He starts: "...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."
Can you take that as an example for yourself?

What does a determination to finish something bring to the way you do it? Do you have any examples?

What happens when you don't determine to finish something you start? What kinds of things could happen?

Did you ever start a big project without a strong sense of the goal in your mind? What was it, and what happened?

Think of the last time that you tried something that just fizzled out? Why did it fizzle out? What could you do next time so that something you try doesn't fizzle out?

There is more than one treasure in this verse from Ecclesiastes: "The end of a thing is better than its beginning; the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit." What can you pull out of that scripture for yourself?

Going to Class—High School

Do you think it's possible to popular with everyone? Do you think it's possible to have everyone like you? Why or why not?

Do you think it's possible to be nice to everyone? Why or why not?

Paul writes in Romans 12:18, "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men." Do you do that, or at least try to?

What's your idea of being a good student?

What do you think your teachers think is a good student? (Maybe someone could ask.)

If you're between 15 and 25, do you realize how much you've changed since a year ago? In what ways have you changed? What does that suggest for the next few years?

How do you think you'll get smarter about things a year from now, or five years from now?

What's the best and healthiest student-teacher relationship you've ever had? Why was it good? What did the teacher do to help? What did you do that made it work?

Titus 2:7-8 tells teachers, "Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us." Would you be willing to pray for your teachers using this scripture?

Luke 6:40 says that "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher." How would you like to be like a favorite teacher?

If you're in college or older, what would you like to say to high schoolers to help make their experience better?

If you're a high schooler now, what would be your best advice about relating to other students and relating to teachers that you could give someone just starting high school?

Going to Class—College

College students: If you occasionally skip class, why? Do you think it's a good idea—and why or why not?

Do you see going to class as an effective use of your time? Why or why not?

Do you generally listen in class, or does your mind wander? Do you surf the web, or text, or do drawings?

How can you get the most out of attending class with a bad or boring professor?

I Corinthians 4:2 says "...it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." If you're a college student, what are you stewarding, and how does a good steward show faithfulness?

Do you think your different professors would say that you're a good student? Why or why not? If you're not, what could you change to become a better one?

Do you think you're fully aware of how much money is being spent for you to attend college? (Remember that someone or many people are paying for your education, even if you aren't directly.) Who is paying for your education? Try to name them all.

Do you think you use your time well as a student? Do you think of time as your friend, or what you're working against? Where are some adjustments you could make to make time your friend?

Ecclesiastes 3 begins with the famous phrase "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven." Then it lists lots of things that have their appropriate times. What are the things a student does? Do you find or make the time to do them?

Did you ever connect directly with a professor when things were going badly in your life in a way that affected your classes? Did you ever connect with him/her when you were struggling with the subject? What happened?

Interviewing for a Job

What's the funniest/craziest story you've heard about a job interview?

Have you ever had a strange experience with a job interview? If so, what was weird about it?

Do you think that clothing, your hair, make-up, etc. can get in the way of an interviewer connecting with a person? How?

What are the best ways that an interviewer can see the real person (or the real you)?

The first part of II Timothy 2:15 says "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God...." How could you be diligent to present yourself approved to God as you're presenting yourself to an interviewer?

Ephesians 2:10 says that "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Is it possible that one of God's good works that He's prepared for you might be the job opportunity you're seeking?

After all your research, study and attention to your appearance, the most important action is found in Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." Can you release your thoughts and worries to Him, trusting that He will lead you and direct your paths?

Investing

Is the idea of investing something other than money new to you?

What do you think of as your investments outside of money?

What emotional investments have you made? What have been the good ones, and what bad investments have you made? If they were good, why; if bad, why?

Do you think of time as an investment? What are the things you invest most of your time in?

II Corinthians 9:6 says, "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." Can you see where your godly sowing and investing are sparing, and where they are bountiful? What is that?

What are some examples of investments that might be fun or emotional, but really don't matter much in the long run?

What are the most important investments you could make?

Have you ever found out you were wrong about something or someone after you had talked to others about it, or did something based on that wrong information? How did you find out you were wrong? What did you go through mentally and emotionally when you found out? Did you do anything in response to the new information? What happened?

Did you ever make what you thought was a good investment in a friendship and then found out that you shouldn't keep investing? What happened? How did you stop investing? Do you think you handled it right? What stages of emotions did you go through?

It's tough sometimes to break off an old friendship that isn't healthy for you. But remember God's words here:

I Corinthians 15:33: "Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits.'"

Proverbs 13:20: "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed."

Proverbs 14:7 "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge."

Do you have a story of applying these scriptures to your life?

Why is it so hard to divest sometimes from a relationship or belief? How would you go about divesting after realizing you've made a bad emotional or relational investment?

Do you feel like you always have to have girlfriend or boyfriend? (Ask your closest friend for a reality check if you answer no.) Can you see that it's not really healthy to feel that way?

Invitations

In what different ways have you gotten invitations? In person, by email, by phone, by Facebook? What are the expectations of the sender when they send you one?

Did you ever get a written invitation that said RSVP? Did you respond?

What are your stories of people you've invited to something—those who said yes and didn't come, or said no and came anyway, and who came but brought unexpected people with them? Or do you have a really crazy story? How did you handle that? What did you learn from that?

Genesis 29:26, I Corinthians 11:16 and Acts 16:3 all address the issue of custom, and the need to respect it. It's *customary* to respond to most invitations one way or another, even if it's inconvenient. What do you think of that?

Paul is specifically talking about the civil authorities in Romans 13:7, when he says, "Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." This tells us we have an obligation to certain people at times. But how does that principle apply here?

It's Not About You

What's your earliest memory of when you realized that you were not the center of the universe? What was your reaction to that?

Was that healthy knowledge brought to you through a difficult experience? Did that experience cause you to get a little cynical?

How is not being the center of the universe a good thing?

Colossians 1:15-18 says this about Jesus: "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence." This is powerful and poetic, but what does it mean to you personally?

Paul says in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Have you been crucified with Christ also? Have you experienced what Paul is writing about when he talks about Christ living in him, and living by faith in the Son of God?

How does self-centeredness show up in our thoughts and actions?

Philippians 2:3 says, "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." And Romans 12:10 says to "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another."

What systems do you become a part of "out there" in the real world as you step out of your home or dorm? How can you follow the words of Philippians and Romans (above) as you step out there?

Love

Have you ever been infatuated with someone? What was it like?

What's your definition of love? Has it changed over the years? What was it before? How do you think it might change in the future?

Do you see love as originating in God, or in ourselves?

Do you see how infatuation might be the first stage of a life-long love relationship? Do you see how it might not be? What might short-lived infatuation look like?

In what ways can time be a gift to a relationship? What can happen over time? What effect would it have on a relationship?

Do you sometimes live in a fantasy world when you begin a relationship? Do you avoid the challenges that living in the real world can bring to a relationship?

Were you ever "sure" that a certain person was "the one," and then found out later he/she wasn't? Do you feel you learned anything from that? Whatever you learned, was it a good lesson to learn?

What kinds of tests have you seen people give each other in a relationship? Do you think that was healthy to do that?

Be real: What's the most difficult part of giving the gift of time to someone you're in a relationship with?
Seriously—what is the rush?

Have you ever asked for the opinion of any of the three groups mentioned in the book: family, friends, advisors/counselors? Can you see how input from different perspectives could be helpful?

Do you have these three groups of people in your life? If not, how would you go about getting them?

Have you ever said that no one has ever been love in the way you have? Or that no one can understand your love relationship? Have you really???

Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

I John 4:10-11 says, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

How do these two scriptures that apply to us and our love for others?

Marriage

How do you feel about marriage, and why do you feel that way? Do you think your attitude is realistic? Do you think it's healthy?

If you want to be married sooner rather than later, why?

What do you think makes for a successful marriage?

Did you know that arranged marriages are generally more successful than other kinds? Why do you think that might be?

What do you think is the relationship between love and commitment in a marriage?

Do you think that being in love is enough to keep a marriage going and growing? Why or why not?

Prov. 24:27 talks about preparing your field first before building your home. This was first addressed to people in an agricultural society. But how does it apply to us today?

What would having a solid financial foundation bring to a new marriage?

Do you think the author is right when he says that two can't live as cheaply as one? In what ways can they? In what way can't they?

Would you consider some kind of premarital counseling before you got married? Why or why not?

Why might rushing into marriage hurt the marriage?

What could be the advantages of waiting?

Meeting People

Do you look people straight in the eye when you meet them? If you don't, are you afraid to?

What's your handshake style: limp, firm, too firm?

Philippians 2:3 says we are to esteem others better than ourselves. How does this apply to meeting and greeting someone?

Is it hard for you to make it "all about them" and "not about you" for a moment when you meet someone?

Romans 16:16, II Corinthians 13:12, and I Peter 5:14 all talk about greeting other believers with a "holy kiss." That's not always appropriate in our culture now, but what does it say about how we relate to other Christians?

How about Romans 12:10, which says "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another." How can we show preference to one another in honor when we see people we know? How about when we meet people for the first time?

Money and College

Do you think it's worthwhile to go to college?

Do you think that it is (or was) worthwhile for *you* to go to college? Why/why not?

Do you (or did you) avoid the topic of money when talking about college? Why or why not?

Would you rather not think about having to pay back the loans?

Psalm 37:21 says, "The wicked borrows and does not repay..." Have you ever not repaid anything you borrowed? If you are borrowing for college, are you fully aware of how much you have to repay—and over what period of time?

Proverbs 22:7b says "the borrower is servant to the lender." This is just a simple Biblical observation, but what are your thoughts on it for yourself?

Do you think someone else (family, the school, taxpayers) should pay for your education? Or part of your education? What's your reasoning here?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of going to a two-year school and then finishing your degree at a four-year school?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of working before going to school or taking breaks to work and earn money while you're going to school?

Talk to various people who feel they handled the college-and-loan question well in their own lives, and some who regret their decisions. What did they do? What did you learn from hearing their stories?

Owning Your Youth

How do you feel about being your age? What do you think are the benefits of being your age? What are some limitations about being your age?

What are the benefits of being older than you are?

I Timothy 4:12 is a famous verse: “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” Do you take challenge personally—to be that example?

Is your mind and heart always set on the next significant birthday (16, 18, 21, 25)? Why? If it is, do you see how that could stop you from enjoying your life right now?

What’s your best/most interesting/saddest/funniest story about someone older trying to act or look too young? What do you think about that?

What’s your best/most interesting/saddest/funniest story about someone trying and failing to act older than he/she was? What are your thoughts on that?

What do you think about that line from the movie *Juno*?

I Chronicles 12 describes King David’s army that was formed from the various tribes of ancient Israel. In verse 32, the “sons of Issachar” were described as people “who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.” How does that challenge and inspire people who live today?

Are you insulted when someone says you’re too young or too inexperienced? Since there is nothing wrong with being a certain age and not having experience in something, why were you insulted?

What are you not very experienced in yet? Are you OK with that?

How would you describe the *you* of three years ago? With that perspective in mind, how might you describe the *you* of three years from now?

What are the three biggest things you’ve learned in the last three years?

Does it bother you that some things take time? What are some of those things?

What don’t you know yet?

Sexuality

What do you think of teenagers who begin to show off their bodies as they hit a certain stage of physical development? Do you/did you do that?

What's the difference between thinking that you *are* your body as opposed to *having* your body?

How do movies and TV shows present dream worlds rather than reality when it comes to sex? What are the dangers of that?

How can you own your sexuality? How can it own you?

“Becoming a sexual being is a stage.” What do you think about that statement?

What are the biggest mistakes you can make with your sexuality?

Share a story of someone who seemed to forget that having sex can lead to pregnancy. What happened?

I Corinthians 6:9-10 is one of the most straightforward passages about sexual immorality in the Bible: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites...will inherit the kingdom of God.” Have you personally received this scripture as true?

V. 13 of chapter 6 says, “Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.”

Later in that chapter is another strong passage: “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (Vv. 18-20)

How does someone “flee sexual immorality?”

Do you believe that you are not your own because were bought with a price? Do you see your body as belonging to the Lord first, and then you?

Suicide

Have you ever seriously considered taking your own life? Or did you know someone who either did or tried to? What were some of the things that led to that?

If you were ever close to helping someone prevent a suicide, what helped him/her to not do it?

“When you get older, your life gets bigger.” What does that mean? Do you see how it can help to know that when things get hard?

What are some of the lies that would lead someone to commit suicide? What are the truths that counter those lies?

Psalm 34:17-18 says, “The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.” Do you feel able to turn someone who’s hurting to the Lord for help?

Do you see how suicide merely transfers someone’s pain to other people? Describe the ways that could play out with you or someone you know well. What would the effects be on the people in your life if you killed yourself?

To understand part of God’s heart and mind on this issue, see I Corinthians 3:16-20. If you’re a Christian, the Spirit of God lives inside of you, and you belong to Him, because you “have been bought with a price.” Do you see how valuable you are to God?

Did you ever see the movie *It’s a Wonderful Life*? What would be the possible effects on the people around you if you weren’t here? Listen closely to the answers of people who care about you.

The Trust Thing

“Parents want to feel confident (do you hear me—*feel* it right down to their toes) that you’re not going to hurt yourself” (p. 121). Do you agree with the author on this? How have you seen that in your life?

Did you ever get away with fooling your parents or guardian?

Titus 2:6-8 says, “... exhort the young men [and women, too] to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.”

In the light of the scripture above, what do you think your own reputation is—in your family and among your friends? Would you be brave enough to ask someone who’s not a close friend what your reputation is?

Why wouldn’t parents necessarily believe their kids when the kids say they can be trusted? Do you think it’s unfair that “...your parents are looking at your past at the same time you’re looking toward your future”? Why or why not?

Did you ever set a pattern of untrustworthy behavior? What was the result?

Proverbs 10:9 (ESV) says, “Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.” Have you seen this scripture played out in your life?

In what ways can you earn back trust after you mess things up?

1 Timothy 4:12 is probably the most common scripture used about young people: “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” Is this a personal goal of yours, or do you consider it pressure?

Voting

Have you voted in a local, state or national election? If you're old enough to, why did you or didn't you?

Do you think voting is a big privilege for you? Why or why not?

Deuteronomy 1:13 says, [Moses said to the ancient Hebrews,] "Choose wise, understanding, and knowledgeable men from among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you." What does that say to you for today?

Are you aware of what other countries have gone through to give people the right to vote? If so, share what you know.

Do you think it's important to vote? Why or why not?

Why would the author think that you shouldn't complain if you don't vote?

I Timothy 2:12 says, "Therefore I [Paul] exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence." Do you regularly pray for the "governing authorities" in your town, state and nation? Take another look at the focus of the prayers that Paul is exhorting us to pray—"that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence." Why do you think Paul would direct our prayers in that direction?

Proverbs 29:2 tells us that "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan." What are your thoughts about this truth?

Watching Movies

How is watching a movie at home different from watching it in the theater?

What's the "public whisper"? If you know, do you know how to do it?

What's the rudest thing you ever saw anyone do in a movie theater?

Luke 6:31 says "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise." If you put that thought front and center the next time you go to the movies, what might change?

Did you ever just sit back and let a movie take you for its ride, without commenting or communicating with others while you were watching? If so, what was your experience with the movie?

Talk about this thought: Movies are an art, just like a painting, and can be viewed as more than just entertainment. But to enjoy them at that level, you would have to view them like you would paintings—sitting back and studying them seriously.

Have you changed your movie theater behavior in any way as you've gotten older?

Psalm 101:3a says, "I will set nothing wicked before my eyes...." What does this mean to you for the kinds of movies you see, or should see?

Colossians 3:5 says, "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." Do you see how some movies can inflame these things instead of helping us put them to death? Can you name some movies that might *deal* with these things, but not in a way that can trip us up?

You're Not a Loser (Unless You Choose to Be)

Deep down, do you really feel that losing at something makes a person a loser?

What's *your* definition of a loser?

"If you lose at something, it means you're trying. And if you're trying, that means you're not a loser" (p. 131) What do you think about that thought? Do you agree with it?

The author think that someone is a loser is a person who stops trying or doesn't learn from their mistakes. What do you think about that definition?

Do you know other stories like the one about Edison and the light bulb? If not, Google some and share them.

I Corinthians 4:2 says, "...it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." That means that God doesn't have the same view of success as we do. It also means that as long as we're "faithful stewards" of what God has given us (time, talents, relationships, etc.), then we're a success in His eyes. Can you change your definition of success to include this scripture?

Do you think of mistakes as failures, or as an opportunity to learn something? What can you learn from making a mistake?

Do you know anyone who doesn't seem to learn from mistakes? What can you learn from that?

II Corinthians 2:14a says, "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ..." Do you really (really) believe that? Do you believe that with your genuine good deeds, mistakes and outright failures, that God will lead you into triumph? Can you believe it even if you don't feel it, or haven't seen it play out yet?

Do you think it's worthwhile trying to take in the thoughts in this book and change a few things in your own life? What are the biggest changes you think you need to make? Why those changes in particular? What areas has God touched the most?