

20 Questions to Open the Heart of Your Child

listening to gain understanding and bond with your child

The questions listed here can guide you in **bonding sessions with your sons and daughters to help deepen your relationship** and give you insights into their needs. Take time to get to know each of your children. Set aside time just to ask questions and listen. Don't teach or answer with your ideas, just ask more questions. If you need to, write their answers down. You could use a notebook for each child and record their answers in it.

- 1. What foods do you like or dislike the most?**
Goal: Break the ice and establish an easy, open atmosphere.
- 2. Who is your best friend?**
Goal: Discover who holds the greatest influence of their peers. (See I Corinthians 15:33.)
- 3. Who do you most want to be like when you grow up?**
Goal: Find out the type of character they are moving toward.
- 4. What embarrasses you most in our family relationships?**
Goal: Discover what you are doing or what is going on in the family that causes them to reject themselves.
- 5. What is the greatest fear in your life?**
Goal: Find out if Satan is binding them with fears. (See II Timothy 1:7.)
- 6. What is your favorite activity?**
Goal: Gain insights and ideas for activities and projects to do in a special time of fellowship with your children. These times can enhance your relationships with each other.
- 7. What is your favorite song? Favorite kind of music? Favorite group?**
Goal: Discern if they are embracing music with a destructive message.
- 8. Outside our family relationships, who has had the most influence on your life? How have they influenced you?**
Goal: Determine who influences your children as a role model.
- 9. What do you like to learn about the most?**
Goal: Gain insights into their gifts and interests and areas in which to train them.
- 10. What accomplishment in your life so far gives you the greatest sense of achievement?**
Goal: Discover how you can build up their self-worth and put a spiritual emphasis to it.
- 11. What irritation in our family bothers you the most?**
Goal: Learn about the problems in the family that you need to work on, and later teach the children how to respond to sources of irritation.
- 12. What makes you really angry?**
Goal: Find out areas where your children have not yielded rights and expectations to God. Help them address those areas. (See Philippians 2:3–16.)
- 13. What do you want to do when you grow up?**
Goal: Discover what your children are moving toward. Help them develop a sense of destiny.
- 14. What has been the biggest disappointment in your life so far?**
Goal: Learn what is hurting them at times. Explain God's purposes for disappointments.
- 15. If you had the power to change anything about the way you look, would you use that power? If so, what would you change?**
Goal: Find out if they are rejecting themselves. Gain insights for helping them see and appreciate God's design in their lives.
- 16. What do you appreciate the most about each member of our family?**
Goal: Focus on positive qualities in the family. Later encourage them to share with the others what they appreciate.
- 17. What biographies have meant the most to you?**
Goal: See if your children are learning life stories from Godly people.
- 18. What do you like to do the most as a family?**
Goal: Learn how you can have family fellowship that your children will enjoy. Later, plan an activity.
- 19. Encourage them to be honest. If you could change anything about me, what would you change?**
Goal: Discover where you are damaging your relationship with them.
- 20. When you get to the end of your life, what do you want to look back on and say that you accomplished for God?**
Goal: Discover if they have a purpose in life.

Take Key Steps to Follow Up

As we grow in our knowledge of God and love for Him, one of the most important roles given to a parent is to communicate the truths of God to our children. *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children..."* (Deuteronomy 6:5–7).

In order **to effectively communicate God's truth and love to our children, we must establish a healthy, loving relationship** with them. When our hearts are turned toward them and their hearts are turned toward us, we can grow together in our walks with God. (See Malachi 4:6.)

After your time of sharing, talk and **pray with your spouse** about the things you learned during your bonding session. Discuss some goals with your child or spend time talking about one of the questions. Develop projects or thoughtful responses based on what you learned about your child's interests. Demonstrate that your interest in them is not a one-time-only exercise. It is a **lifelong pursuit of fellowship** as you grow in following the Lord together.