



“Will You Be There for Me?”

Bill Haslim // April 16-17, 2016

Every Kid needs to grow up in the security of loving relationships that feel supportive and reliable. Research has shown that relational security is not just a nicety but a real necessity for healthy human development. Sadly, however, kids today are experiencing lower levels of relational support in general than previous generations. As followers of Jesus, the gospel of God’s love brings each of us personally into an experience of real unconditional love from the One who is always there for us. That should shape and guide how we offer our presence, compassion, and love to those around us –especially to those who need it most. **IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY AND PRIVILEGE TO MAKE GOD’S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE BELIEVABLE AND TANGIBLE FOR OUR KIDS.** Yet, our busy schedules and stressful pace of life make it difficult to be as relationally available as we would like for the kids in our lives. If you are a parent raising kids right now, this calling is worth every bit of struggle it will demand. If your kids are grown, it’s never too late to be there for them in new ways. If you are simply a part of our church community, you are invited by God to look for ways to offer support and encouragement to the kids in our spiritual family.

Warm It Up:

When you were growing up who were they key people in your life that were really “there” for you? Were there people outside your family who were there for you?

Looking back, were there people who should have been there for you that were not?

Talk It Over:

Take a look at the following promises of God’s presence, support, and love:

- **Read Deuteronomy 31:8**
- **Read Matthew 28:20**
- **Read Romans 8:38-39**

1. God has promised that he is and always will be there for us. Has that felt more like a reality or a wish in your spiritual journey? How have you experienced God’s unconditional love in your life?
2. Bill said that unconditional love needs to be demonstrated or proven to our kids –even before it gets really tested. How convinced do you think the

kid(s) in your life are that you are really there for them? What challenges or obstacles have made it difficult for you to show that you are there for them?

Read Psalm 139:7-10 & John 14:18-20.

3. God has always been present and available to his people, but how have Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit changed our experience of God's availability to us?
4. How are you managing the busyness struggle to be available for the kid in your life? And how would like to work toward being more available for them? Are there ways you want to be more available for down time, fun time, or meal time?
5. What does it mean to be "attuned" to someone, and why is that an important part of "being there" for them?

Read Psalm 139:1-4.

6. Is this passage comforting or concerning to you? Is there anything about you that God does not know or understand?

Read John 11:35. (You might want to read the larger section around this verse if you are unfamiliar with the events leading up to this.)

7. Why did Jesus weep at Lazarus' death if he already knew he was going to raise him from the dead? What does that tell us about how Jesus relates to our pains and sufferings?
8. We will never completely understand what our kids are experiencing, but what can we do to better connect with their hopes, longings, and struggles?
9. Why is it important for kids to feel that we are anchored in our relationship with them?
10. How had God anchored His relationship with us?

Read Hebrews 5:15.

11. What does this passage tell us about the shame and guilt that makes us feel like God might turn away from us?
12. What sorts of things might your kid feel and fear they could never tell you?
13. How might you convince your kid that you would never give up on them and that you can really handle anything they bring to you?

Pray It Out:

Your group might want to share one concern in this area where you need God's support. Be sure to thank God for being a perfect parent to you and for always being there for you. Ask God for help and encouragement to help you to be there for the kids in your life in new ways.