

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Highs and Lows in the Life of a Pastor's Kid

with Barnabas Piper



FOCUS VERSE

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

John 14:27

DISCUSSION

1. When you were growing up, do you remember your parents practicing what they preached? Were they generally the same in public and in private, or was there a big difference between the image they presented publicly and what they were like at home? How did that affect your development as a child and teenager, and how has it shaped your worldview as an adult? *Proverbs 11:3*
2. In what ways are you similar to your father, and in what ways are you very different? Did those differences cause any friction between the two of you while you were growing up?

3. Thinking about Barnabas' reflections on the "arrogant, abrasive" person he was in his 20s, when were you at your worst? Not necessarily the most sinful period in your life, or your period of biggest failure, but the time when you acted the worst toward other people and had the most negative or arrogant attitude. Where do you think that behavior came from? If it was spawned by insecurity, what inner doubt or inadequacy do you think you were trying to cover up or compensate for? *Romans 5:8*

4. How important is it to you to be right—to have the right answer, to be the smartest, to be on the winning side of an argument? Are there times when that desire has become too consuming and you've pursued "rightness" at the expense of good relationships with other people?

5. Think about one of the most emotionally devastating things you've ever experienced—not an "act of God" or freak accident, but something you had some level of control over—and how it affected you. Then think about how your life would be different if that hadn't happened. Are there any good things, lessons, or gifts in your life right now that you might not be blessed with had that earlier hurt never happened?

6. How easy is it for you to own up to the insensitive or unkind things you've done and apologize? If you find it difficult, what do you think is the biggest thing standing in your way? Have you ever damaged a relationship by taking too long to say you were sorry? *James 5:16*

7. If you've been divorced, what part of the aftermath was the hardest for you to deal with? Did you feel shame or embarrassment, and did that cause you to shy away or not participate fully in social situations? Did you have any close friends or family members who helped you deal with those feelings of awkwardness and embarrassment and engage more fully with your life and relationships?