



## Welcome to the *Created to Relate* Discussion Guide— a study filled with insights into our design and purpose!

*Created to Relate* describes the essence of human life and answers how and why we were created. This book brings clarity and new insight into the design of the human body, soul, and spirit. Its dissection of the human heart is groundbreaking. *Created to Relate* reveals the ultimate reason for our existence: to be joined to our heavenly Father in a trusting, loving, and fruitful relationship.

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### 1. Two Realms Sustain Us

Humanity began in the heart and mind of our heavenly Father as a desire to parent offspring. God desired to have children who would grow and develop under His loving care into His image and likeness—into reflective resemblances of His heart. So He created a natural time and space universe, a system of containments full of variables and developing progressions, as a place to birth and initially develop His offspring through the processes of experiential learning.

- 1. Why did God desire to create mankind?** God wanted to parent offspring... God desired a family of offspring, children who would resemble Him...
- 2. Why did God create the material universe?** A place and atmosphere for parenting offspring... To birth and begin developing us... Where is your favorite place to be outdoors? Why?
- 3. When God speaks and creates, does Scripture mean there was no making or finishing process?** In God's mind... In the earth... Creation was a spoken plan...
- 4. What is a heaven? Discuss the various heavens.** Dwelling locations both natural and spiritual... Depicts levels of closeness...
- 5. Who are angels and what is their purpose?** Spirit beings to serve God as messengers... They reveal insights, both natural and spiritual... Have you ever had a personal encounter with an angel? Describe.
- 6. Discuss the relationship between time and eternity.** We relate time to eternity as a slowed down progression... As you get older, does time seem to pass more quickly? Why or why not?
- 7. What are some of the activities of cause and effect?** Recklessness and accidents produce difficult effects... Photosynthesis produces growth... Describe something you did that had an unexpected effect.
- 8. Why does God allow contrary activity in our lives?** He created this environment for development... He allows choice... To build character...
- 9. Discuss how darkness comes into existence. How does evil exist?** Darkness is a lack of light and heat... Evil is a lack of God's presence and ways...
- 10. When bad things happen, should we get angry with God?** We need to be thankful in their midst but not for them. Discuss James 1:13-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Share an experience of something going terribly wrong. Did you get mad at God? Why or why not?
- 11. Are we created to experience life just in the natural realm? Why or why not?** Are we void of spiritual abilities... the spirit of life is much more than a battery that animates us...
- 12. Why is the big picture approach important?** Natural world was created for our growth and development so no reason to be mad at God...

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### **2. Body and Spirit Link Us**

God's first human offspring came into existence as God formed a body from the created natural realm and breathed or infused the physical body with an essence of His Spirit. The combination of our body and spirit links each of us to the influence and experience of both the natural and spiritual realms. Our five senses of sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing are tools that facilitate our body's interaction with the natural reality and our spirit's interaction with the spiritual reality.

- 1. What are the three basic components that comprise every human being?** Body, soul, and spirit...
- 2. What are the two foundational sides of every human being?** Body and spirit... Everyone has a body, a link to the natural... Everyone has a spirit, a link to God and the eternal spiritual realm...
- 3. Discuss some of the activity of our links to the two realms.** We came from both realms; we interact with, are nourished by, and will return to each...
- 4. What are the two unseen or non-physical components in our human make-up?** Our spirit and our soul... How can you tell when an idea is coming from your spirit or your soul?
- 5. What is the component in each of us that connects us to our heavenly source of life?** Spirit, which comes from God... We can interact with the spirit realm and with God...
- 6. We all began as a thought in God's heart! When does our personal consciousness begin?** In our mother's womb... What is the first memory you have as a conscious person?
- 7. Why do our five senses have two functional sides?** To sense both realms and to facilitate interaction with God... Compare your physical sense of hearing with your spiritual sense of hearing.
- 8. Why does our body appear to contrast with our spirit?** Both are foundational sides... Both are important... They are rivals seeking dominance...
- 9. Scripturally, what is the difference between our body and our flesh?** The body is our natural link... Our flesh speaks of our activity outside of God's will...
- 10. Why did God create male and female?** To be helpmates... To assist God in creating, making, and teaching additional offspring... What do you appreciate most about being a male or female?
- 11. Discuss how ignoring or nurturing our body and spirit can affect the quality of our life.** Health can be shortchanged by neglecting each... Life can be abundant by nurturing each...
- 12. Could our natural DNA (genetic code) actually have a spiritual side?** Don't we receive our body components from both parents? So why not our spiritual roots and makeup as well...
- 13. What enables each of us to relate to God and to spiritual realities?** Our spirit automatically connects us... Do you feel you are able to easily connect with spiritual realities? Why or why not? If not, what might help you to more easily connect to God and spiritual realities?
- 14. Discuss the difference between being a spiritual person and a religious person.** Everyone "is" spiritual in varying degrees. Religious speaks of systematic practices... Are you more of a spiritual person or a religious person? Explain.

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### **3. Conscious Soul Informs Us**

When God fused spirit into the first human body, a personal consciousness began. This third component in our “what” make-up is the combined activity of our mind, will, and emotion. The soul provides our personal awareness of self, others, and both realms of reality. Our soul consciousness observes, interprets, and absorbs what our mind thinks, our emotion feels, and our will comes to understand. The soul is our developing perception of reality. Our soul is what rejects or accepts God’s oversight.

- 1. What three components make up “what” we are as human beings?** Body, soul, and spirit...
- 2. Our soul consciousness is a blend of what three functions?** Mind, will, and emotion...
- 3. Share a few examples of the interaction between your mind, will, and emotion.** Our will draws from the activity of our mind and emotion to form understanding and resolve... Do you generally make decisions after much thought or do you make snap decisions based on how you feel at the moment?
- 4. Why is our will visualized as the crown of our consciousness?** Our will functions on understanding, our belief system... Our will is what makes choices and directs our actions...
- 5. How is our personal belief system formed?** Our life activity is interpreted by mind and emotion, which then forms our will. What are examples? (Told I’m stupid, so I don’t learn? Feel I’m a failure, so I don’t try?) What factors most influenced the development of our personal belief system?
- 6. Discuss how our formed will reacts to various situations.** It influences our thoughts and feelings... To accept or reject ideas and people... Affects all our activity...
- 7. Compare the influence of our mind to our emotion.** Mind reasons while the emotion feels... Depends on your bent as to which influences you the most... What factors most influence what you believe? What you were taught as a child? What you have read? Spouse? School? Friends? Co-workers?
- 8. Should our emotions, feelings, or desires be discounted or ignored?** Why or why not? The spirit can influence emotion... Emotion can support or fight reason...
- 9. Are sadness, fear, shame, and guilt mental thoughts or emotional feelings?** They can primarily be emotion or mental... Whichever begins the effect can then affect the other...
- 10. Is the agreement of each soul member important? Why or why not?** Produces stability, balance, and enduring commitments... A three-fold cord is very strong...
- 11. What should we do when an emotion or reason begins to falter in a commitment?** Take a second look at why... Seek to restore it or you may lose your marriage, your job, or any relationship...
- 12. What part of our being needs to be reconciled to God and each other? Why?** Soul—our mind’s reason, emotion/desire, and will/belief... Full reconciliation can take time...
- 13. As developing children, how do we become more like our heavenly Father?** What are some of the things you do to grow spiritually? Continue to develop by 1) Scripture meditation, 2) Listening for inspirational thought, 3) Interacting fellowship, 4) Speaking of and being a living witness of the Christ life.
- 14. Discuss why we should review our beliefs and perceptions of God, ourselves, and each other.** They affect how we think and feel... They influence our actions, what we do, and how we respond to God and to each other... How well are we responding to God? Are we as adolescents or maturing adults? Do we choose to harm or to bless? Are our beliefs scriptural? Should our past experiences and understandings keep us from further change? Do we relate to God more as Judge or Father? Compare God’s justice and mercy in Exodus 34:6-7; 20:5-6. (Mercy is 500x greater.) Do we respond to people based on their past only? What do we believe about another church or another faith approach?

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### **4. Expressive Heart Reveals Us**

The heart of mankind refers to the expressive activity of our full being: body, soul, and spirit with its five senses and soul consciousness. Heart is the expressive projection of our “what” components that identifies “who” we are as a person. Scripture connects our heart to the full range of human activity as a combination of our expressive character, attitude, and personality (CAP). God values our expressions more than anything else because they demonstrate how close we are to His heart.

- 1. A human being is an integration of what three interacting parts?** Body, soul, and spirit...
- 2. What is the added value produced by the functioning of our three-part being?** Our persona... “Who” we uniquely are as a specific person...
- 3. What does God see when He looks beyond “what” we are?** Our heart... Persona... Who we are... The degrees of His reflective resemblance... What three characteristics do you think God would use to describe your persona?
- 4. What does the acrostic “CAP” represent?** Character, attitude, and personality... Heart features... Our real self... Discuss the difference in CAP. Which of the three is dominant in you?
- 5. Compare “who” we are with “what” we are.** What we are is body, soul, and spirit... The activity of all three influences are who we are... Give a brief summary of “what” you are and “who” you are.
- 6. What kind of influences impact the development of our expressive heart?** Heritage... Environment... Our choices... Our experiences, natural and spiritual... What do you think has had the greatest impact on who you have become as a person?
- 7. How does our “hidden” heart become visible?** Our countenance reveals heart... The quality of our actions reflects who we are... The eye of our spirit sees each other’s heart...
- 8. Read and discuss the heart expressions of Galatians 5:13-16, 22-25.** The fruit of the Spirit... Fruit describes the expressive effects of God’s heart... We both possess and express fruit...
- 9. What do people see in your expression?** What is your heart countenance emitting to others? What do we project? Bless with eternal insight or worldly perceptions... Do we bless or curse? Are we motivated by God’s caring love or our selfish ambition?
- 10. Discuss the principle: expression is evidence of life.** A fruit tree without fruit is nearly valueless... Is faith without works dead (James 2:18-20)?
- 11. Discuss how our expressive heart is renewed.** As we communicate more with God, we become more receptive of God’s insights... We become spiritual, led by Spirit of God and His insight... We are more desirous of God’s presence, and our behavior (actions) becomes more heavenly...
- 12. How shall we describe “who” we are?** Our expressive persona through which we demonstrate values—godly (eternal) along with worldly (temporary) values...
- 13. What have you done recently to share God’s heart with others?** Through a smile, a hug, conversation, a caring, loving attitude... By being expressions of love... God is love!

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### **5. Relational Concept Connects Us**

Everything is relational: the natural and spiritual realms, what we are as beings, our expressions, our beliefs, and truth itself. No part of our function is independent of the influence of others. Sinfulness is a result of our first parent's decision to separate. The real counter to self-centeredness is relationship, which moves us from a "me" to an "us" perspective. God's love is an expression of His relational heart. We are intended to relate to God as our Father and to each other as siblings—family members.

- 1. What words are used in Genesis 1:26 which refer to God as a relational Being? Us... Our...**
- 2. How does God relate to His human offspring?** As a parent, Father (source)... As a Son (our example)... As Holy Spirit (abiding presence)... What role of God are you most comfortable relating to?
- 3. What is the first negative statement in Scripture?** "Alone" is not good... A lack of fellowship encourages deathly conditions...
- 4. What is the primary concept Scripture wants to teach us?** To love God and one another... To be relationally focused... To be neighborly...
- 5. We are all "offspring" of one heavenly Father. What makes us active "children" of God (John 1:1-4, 9-12)?** Believing... Fellowship... Responding to Father's teaching and training...
- 6. While everyone has a level of self-consciousness, when can it become unhealthy?** When we lose the equal importance of others... When we walk outside of God's fellowship and act as though "me" is always best... Are you comfortable with the person you see in the mirror? Why or why not?
- 7. Discuss how the words "reflection and resemblance" might be better than "image and likeness."** We are to grow and mature into... Never "was"... Could be better said as "reflective resemblance"...
- 8. Apart from all the activities we consider sinful, at the end of the day, what is sin?** What we do in separation from God's guidance... Missing the mark... Straying from God's relational intention... What type of sin do you have the most difficulty overcoming?
- 9. How do we experience eternal life in this world?** Fully love God and respectfully love one another... To have an "us" focus... (Read and discuss: John 17:3; Isaiah 57:15.)
- 10. Why does Scripture use different names for believers?** Relational functions... Relational focus... Relational terms... How do you most often refer to yourself as a believer? Why?
- 11. What does Scripture say is our remedy when we are weak or discouraged?** Turn to God... Turn to one another... Must we believe alike before we can walk together (Amos, Peter and Paul)? What do you usually do when you feel down?
- 12. Should we experience a close relationship with God? With one another? How do we do that?** God's strength becomes ours (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)... Israel refused and died in wilderness... We imitate God as reflective resemblances of His love (Ephesians 5:1-5)...
- 13. Discuss the importance of a relational approach/focus in life. What activity encourages maturity?** Compare self-centered focus w/relational. Does our love for one another trump our belief differences (Amos 3:3-6)? Discuss our renewed perception of others. When we talk about God, do we contrast belief differences, or do we encourage, strengthen, and build up one another's faith in love?

## **6. Father's Fellowship Nurtures Us**

God's spoken word came into this life as Jesus Christ to reveal two insights: 1) God is our Father, and 2) we are intended to respond to Him as children who learn to reflectively resemble His heart. God desires to dwell among us as a presence, so He can lead and guide us into the full truth of His CAP. The spirit of life in us comes from God and enables each of us to receive His insightful guidance. Our interaction with God fuels our ability to reflect and resemble His image and likeness.

**1. Which perception of God was lost and He wants to restore?** Jesus came to reveal God's fatherhood... as our personal Father... To restore our personal interaction with our heavenly Father...

**2. Discuss what Scripture means by our "adoption as sons."** When we respond to God as Father, He becomes more than our Provider... Our adoption speaks of our personal maturing response to Father...

**3. What view of God is best for us: Creator, Deity, Almighty, Lord, King, Judge, or Parental Father?** Why? When you pray, how do you usually address God? God is our Father, not our boss who can fire us and whose favor depends on what we do... Jesus, as Father's example son, is our elder brother... These views are more relational, more personal and intimate...

**4. While God is the Alpha and Omega, what is more important than He "who was" and "is to come"?** He who is the "I Am"... He who inhabits the present... Today's experience with Him...

**5. How do we realistically partake of the Kingdom of God that is "at hand"?** By seeking Father's guidance... We respond to God as a child who wants to emulate Dad, and we share with each other... Give an example of how the kingdom of God has come into your life.

**6. What is meant by the phrase "in His name"?** Name-identity... CAP... As extensions of our Father... His presence among us... When you pray, do you always end with "in Jesus' name"? Why or why not.

**7. Discuss how our "hearing and seeing" God can be a part of our daily life.** We want to be sensitive to His voice... Attuned to His inspiration...

**8. Why do we not always receive what we pray for?** We pray amiss, not according to His will... Mention something you earnestly prayed for, but God withheld. Why do you think it was withheld?

**9. What should our response be when "a belief" complicates a relationship?** Do we harm a relationship for a right (read Romans 14)? Is our fellowship in light more than in love? Do we love despite faults? Don't beliefs change due to new light? Offspring develop; children mature... In the Garden of Eden their mindset shifted from relational to self-importance, "my right" and "contrasts" became their guiding light... Do we value the relationship over the level of light?

**10. Why does our "truth" and "reality" vary?** Our environment and our life experiences differ... Amount and quality of our spirit activity differ... Our response to experience varies... We are all different...

**11. What is meant by, "You who are spiritual"?** Those who are responsive to God receive eternal insight and become godly expressions... Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (become more so). How can a person who is spiritual keep from becoming prideful?

**12. Discuss who are the "called" and "chosen" ones.** All are called... the faithful are the chosen...

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### **7. Will of God Directs Us**

We are all endowed with free will so we can make choices. God's spoken, written, and incarnate word declares and reveals His will. The will of God for our life is demonstrated in the relationship Jesus had with the Father. God desires that we respond as children and learn to be spirit-led: tutored, taught, and disciplined to reflect and resemble His heart. We are invited to learn of Him and receive the love, peace, and joy that His eternal perspective brings. We experience the will of God to the degree that we choose to submit and partake of His Father-to-child fellowship.

- 1. What in our beginnings did God declare to be His primary will for our lives?** Be His image and likeness as expressive children... To reflect and resemble God...
- 2. Where can we observe the will of God articulated and demonstrated?** In the life of Jesus Christ... In written Scripture... In God's still small voice... Share an example of how the will of God was demonstrated at your place of employment.
- 3. What is it about God that we can reflectively resemble?** His heart CAP (character, attitude, and personality)... To become mature expressions of God... What characteristic of God do people say you most resemble?
- 4. What is the difference between our response to God as offspring and as children?** Offspring become children under Father's care, as at a bar mitzvah... Adopted-placed... As adoring and responsive people...
- 5. Discuss how God reveals His will to us individually.** In dreams and visions... As a still small voice... Through mentors... Through Scripture.. How does God usually reveal His will to you?
- 6. Discuss the Scripture's perspective about how we receive maturing spiritual life in this world.** Our senses commune with God... The Word of God (spoken, written, and incarnate) feeds us...
- 7. What phrase does the New Testament use to identify the quality of our fellowship with God?** "Eternal life"... Eternal perspectives lend and support spiritual life in us...
- 8. Read John 5:24; 3:36; and 1 John 5:11-13. Then discuss how and when we experience eternal life.** As we believe and interact with God and Christ... Christ is the anointing of God's presence with us...
- 9. Discuss how past experience (our history) can restrict our ability to hear what God "is" saying today.** We settle for past insight... the old time religion/theology... We refuse revelatory (new) insight...
- 10. How can the will of God be supreme yet we have the freedom to choose or refuse?** God chose to make it so... It is a maturing feature... We learn to choose wisely... Such it is, with children...
- 11. How do we actually experience the will of God?** Seek God's fellowship... Partake of God's word... Submit our will to His... It is an ongoing choice... Give an example of how God showed you that something you wanted was not His will for you.
- 12. Read Galatians 5: 22-25 and discuss the fruit of Spirit.** Our expressions are a result of a godly spirit... What fruit of the Spirit do you think is most needed today in our country? Why?
- 13. Discuss how and when we experience eternal life.** We exercise our spirit senses in fellowship and communion with God... We receive insights God shares...
- 14. Share an experience you've had when God seemed to speak to you.** At home. At work.

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### **8. Purpose of Life Destines Us**

No one is purely a natural or a spiritual person. We are all birthed into this life to partake of both realms of reality. As such, we are called to know and love God as Father and love one another as siblings. We want to understand that our created design and primary purpose is to become mature children of God during this life. The clearer this perspective is, the more intensely we will seek God's presence and learn of His ways. We can be godlier people and become better expressions of His heart.

**1. Why do we exist and live on the earth?** To grow and mature as children of God... To learn to be expressions of His CAP...

**2. Is any person just a natural being or only a natural person?** We are all natural and spiritual people... Everyone is able to respond to the reality of both realms...

**3. What two perceptions did God seek to restore to us two thousand years ago?** God is our Father more than our Judge or our King... God wants to share His insights and guide us through life... Jesus invites us to accept God's presence among us and learn to reflect Him...

**4. What are you created to be? Who is God making and forming you into?** Mature children of God... Our heart expressions reflect and resemble His heart CAP... Do you have a sense of destiny? What do you think your purpose in life is?

**5. Discuss how the pattern God gave us in the life of Jesus Christ demonstrates how we are to respond to the people around us.** He wept for them... Cared for them... Tried to help them understand... Gave Himself for their welfare...

**6. If caring love is the primary motivation behind all God does, what should be your primary motivation?** Become more forbearing with each other... Caring for the downtrodden that God places onto our path (Samaritan)... All interaction is to help not harm, mirroring an eternal quality of life... Demonstrating God's heart CAP should be a feature of our attitude...

**7. Discuss the scriptural difference between belief and faith.** We can believe most anything... Faith comes from God and aligns us with Him and His will in situations...

**8. How well is your spiritual life functioning and maturing?** Are we grasping eternal perceptions—the importance of a relational perspective? Are we actively living it? Are we trying to maintain health? Are we improving and maturing or deteriorating and dying? How would your spouse (or children, or best friend) grade your spiritual maturity on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being most mature)?

**9. Are you consciously choosing to love and care for others?** Do we mentally think about it or emotionally feel it? Do we willfully accept each other with all our differences in loving ways? How truthful is our love? Do we really care for each other?

**10. Since we are all God's kids, are we sensing and being "family"?** Are we qualifying who is our neighbor? Do they need to be in my church fellowship? Are we drawing anyone closer to God by our love for them?

**11. Do you feel you can know, understand, and walk in the ways of God? Why or why not?** Everyone who seeks, knocks, and asks... Should not be hesitant to seek to understand and mature as God intends...

**12. Discuss some ways you can articulate your purpose in life.** Our purpose in this life is to learn to fully love our heavenly Father and become a loving expression of His heart CAP... Our purpose is to reflect as a mirror and resemble as a son the CAP of our heavenly Father wherever we are...

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### **In Conclusion**

Life is the means God has chosen to birth us into existence and progressively make us into His image and likeness. To become what we were created to be, we must submit to the process of becoming disciplined children. We all have a measure of the Spirit of God as part of what we are as a being (body, soul, and spirit), and each of us has five spiritual senses that enable us to see, hear, feel, and sense spiritual realities.

Our soul is our personal consciousness, a combination of the function of our mind, will, and emotion. What we think, feel, and believe develops our growing perception of the temporal and eternal realities. “What” we are as a being is a combination of our body, soul, and spirit.

Our heart, however, is the expressive feature of our composite being that demonstrates “who” we are as a person. Scripture speaks of our heart as the combination of our character, attitude, and personality (CAP). Heart is a blend of our expressive self.

Everyone can communicate with God and receive His insightful guidance. The fellowship of God’s presence is necessary for us to excel as expressions of His heart. God’s will is supreme, and we partake of His will by submitting our will to His.

Everything is relational, from what we are, to who we are, and our reason to be. Each of us can choose when and to what degree we receive and respond to His guidance.

We are expressions of God (as offspring) and are designed to become reflections and resemblances of His heart (as mature children). Our development as God’s children needs the interaction of our heavenly Father and the people God places in our lives. We are *Created to Relate*—to God as Father and to each other as family.

We hope your time with *Created to Relate* has moved you along life’s journey toward maturity but don’t stop here. Continue to learn and grow into better reflective resemblances of our heavenly Father. You will find the other two books in this series, *The Christ Culture* and *The Fellowship of His Presence*, very helpful.