The Power of Teachable Moments
Discussion Guide

**Introduction**
The book opens with author Marianne Hering’s description of a very busy time in her life, when she didn’t see a lot of opportunity to talk with her daughter about spiritual matters. Does the description sound at all similar to the current situation in your house? Are you busy and wondering how to make time to have meaningful conversations with your children?

What do you hope to get out of reading and discussing *The Power of Teachable Moments*?

**Chapter 1: What Is a Teachable Moment?**
What do you see as the role of parents in building a child’s faith?

The authors describe the ideal “teachable moment” as having 3 essential components: a good relationship with the child, a catalyst to launch the conversation, and a biblical truth to teach. Which of these components is the easiest for you to achieve or find? Which seems the most challenging?

What is the value of a teachable moment versus the value of a more formal approach, such as Sunday school or family devotions?

**Chapter 2: Being Available—A Matter of Priorities**
Take the short quiz on pgs. 14-15 to help gauge your current availability to your children. How did you score? Are you doing well, or is there room for improvement?

If necessary, what changes can you make in your schedule to spend more time with your child?

What are your personal obstacles to spending more time with your child? What do you stand to lose by making your child a higher priority? What do you stand to gain?

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 says, “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” How does this Scripture passage apply to teachable moments?

If the concept of teachable moments has been around for all these centuries, why do you think it seems like such a new idea to some of us?

**Chapter 3: Parenting with a Purpose**
How will the Holy Spirit help you make the most of teachable moments with your children?
What are some keys to credibility when it comes to talking to your kids?

What are the consequences of not giving children a solid spiritual foundation? Is it ever too late to start?

**Chapter 4: How to Teach without Preaching**
What is the difference between “teaching” and “preaching”?

Why is it important to wait for a calm, peaceful time to teach, rather than trying to do it in the heat of an unsettling moment?

Why is having a catalyst (conversation starter) so important? Why not just launch straight into the lesson?

Do you agree that asking questions is a better strategy than simply stating the truth? Why or why not?

**Chapter 5: A Good Relationship: The First Component of a Teachable Moment**
When is the last time you had a really good conversation with your child?

Do you find your child easy to talk to? Is it sometimes awkward or difficult to get him or her to open up to you?

Does the ease of conversation depend on the place, time, or situation? What are some factors that “set the mood” for conversation?

Do you believe in “choosing your battles” with your children? Which issues in their lives are nonnegotiable? Which seem less critical?

Think back to your childhood. In what ways would you like to emulate your own parents or guardians in your relationship with your child? In what ways would you like it to be different?

**Chapter 6: The Catalyst: The Second Component of a Teachable Moment**
Think back over the last few weeks. Were there any events that made (or could have made) good catalysts for teachable moments? What were they, and what did you do (or wish you had done) to turn them into teachable moments?

What were your favorite childhood books or stories? Would they make good catalysts for conversations with your child? If so, track down copies at a library or bookstore.

Review the family activity built around *The Princess Bride* and found on pgs. 122-123. Is there a favorite movie you could use in a similar way to create teachable moments with your children?
Chapter 7: Truth: The Third Component of a Teachable Moment
Review the list of age-appropriate biblical truths identified on pgs. 133-142. Are there any that you need to make a special effort to teach your children or reinforce in them? Start thinking of ways to do that.

Is there ever a wrong time to deliver a lesson? What types of circumstances are not conducive to a teachable moment?

What are some ways to help your child get the most out of his or her Sunday school or children’s church lessons?

Chapter 8: The Challenge and Privilege of Being Vulnerable
Do you remember what it was like to be your child’s age? Use the questions at the top of pg. 168 to help you remember.

If there has been a serious mistake or trauma in your past, when it be best to explain it to your child? When would it be best to wait? What are the risks of telling? What are the rewards?

What are some practical ways in which you can be accountable to your children?

Chapter 9: Milestone Moments
Why are milestone moments important in the life of a family?

What spiritual milestone moments do you remember from your own life? Were you pleased with how they were celebrated or commemorated, or do you wish they had been handled differently?

What are some milestones that are coming up in your family? Brainstorm some meaningful ways to acknowledge and celebrate them.

Chapter 10: Parents’ Questions Answered
Review the questions raised in this chapter. Are there any additional questions on your mind? Discuss them with the group.

Chapter 11: 101 Common Opportunities for Uncommon Teaching
Review the ideas for teachable moments described in this chapter. Which seem especially appealing or appropriate for you and your child?

Do you agree that the Five Milestones listed on pgs. 240-244 are highlights in your family’s life and worthy of special acknowledgment? What other “passages” would you add?

Having read *The Power of Teachable Moments*, do you plan to make any changes in the way you teach your children? If so, what do you plan to do differently? What do you plan to keep the same?