



# *The Beauty of Broken*

By Elisa Morgan



## Book Club Discussion Questions

### *Chapter One: I Come From a Broken Family*

1. With what parts of Elisa's story do you relate?
2. How do you respond to Elisa's suggestion that God can bring beauty into the broken in our lives?
3. In what ways is Elisa's story also *your* story?

### *Chapter Two: Our Broken Families*

1. How have you seen the brokenness in families impact the people around you?
2. How have you believed the myth that there is such a thing as a perfect family?
3. What investments have you been making to ensure that you make a perfect family? Are there any expectations you'd like to reevaluate?

### *Chapter Three: God's Broken Family*

1. God's family fell and broke early after its beginning. Describe the process of how it "broke" and how its fall affected all families going forward.
2. Isaiah 53:4–5 describes a suffering Messiah who will redeem people from their pain. In what ways will he release his people?
3. Elisa suggests four specific responses of God to the broken in our world. List these responses along with the Scriptural reference for each. Which response hits home today for you?

### *Chapter Four: Broken Family Values: Commitment*

1. Elisa describes commitment as "no matter what" love. Where have you been called to demonstrate this kind of love in your life?

2. If you are a mom, has God ever asked you to turn your child over to him? If so, describe that time and how you responded.
3. Read Thomas Merton's prayer at the conclusion of the chapter together—out loud. What phrases particularly touch you? Why? How do you need to adjust your mindset in order to take the truth of the prayer “home” in your heart?

### *Chapter Five: Broken Family Values: Humility*

1. How do you respond to Elisa's admission of pride in her life?
2. Elisa quotes Brennan Manning: “Most of us *pretend to believe* we are sinners. Consequently, all we can do is pretend to believe we have been forgiven.” How has such pretense affected you in your relationship with God? With others?
3. Have you ever heard God directly say to you, “*I love you* \_\_\_\_\_.” Can you take a moment right now to try to listen to such a phrase—first person—God to you?

### *Chapter Six: Broken Family Values: Courage*

1. Imagine your child doing exactly the opposite of what you tell them to do, of how you have raised them, of what is in their best interest. How might you respond? How does God respond to us when we too respond in opposition?
2. At one point after one of her daughter's crises, Elisa asks, “Why do we try to cocoon our children from the lives they live—from the very things that led us to Christ ourselves—from sin? Eventually, isn't it sin—their sin, all of our sin—what makes us *want* Jesus?” Respond to this question for yourself. Do you try to cocoon others from their sin? Why?
3. Elisa suggests that there is no “off ramp” in parenting. Instead, she calls us all toward courage. Where in your life have you responded to a crisis in courage and watched as God grew more of you for all you were facing?

### *Chapter Seven: Broken Family Values: Reality*

1. Are you most naturally a romantic or a realist? What's your default response to most situations—optimism or pessimism? How do your answers affect your relationships?
2. Elisa describes God's foresight of Nathanael in John 1:48. How does knowing that God “sees” your loved one when you cannot shift the way you go about your relationships?
3. What dangers exist when we deny reality in our relationships?

### *Chapter Eight: Broken Family Values: Relinquishment*

1. Elisa mentions two stories of lost sons in Luke—chapters 7 and 9. Read those stories together and talk about what is similar and different in each.

2. Elisa states that she learned that the main weapons of addicts are anger and anxiety. Process together how these weapons strike home in our hearts and affect our own health.
3. Quoting Sarah Young in *Jesus Calling*, Elisa shares, “If you let a loved one become an idol in your heart, you endanger that one as well as yourself.” Can we love someone too much? Can we really hurt them and/or ourselves through love?

### *Chapter Nine: Broken Family Values: Diversity*

1. What has surprised you about your child/husband/sibling/friend as you have watched them grow and change in life? What response has emerged from within you as a result? How have you felt called to change—or not change—yourself?
2. How has God reminded you that he is ultimately responsible for the people you live alongside?
3. Diversity is a catchy characteristic in today’s culture. How does God call us to embrace diversity as an element of his love for others?

### *Chapter Ten: Broken Family Values: Partnership*

1. Elisa describes her tendency to control rather than connect during crises in her family. Can you relate to this? Why or why not?
2. What might we miss when we insist on controlling rather than risking in partnership?
3. Elisa’s husband, Evan, shares a sacred moment where God intervened in his life, revealing that from where God sits, “it all lines up.” How does this story impact you? Have you ever experienced such a provision of insight from God in your own life?

### *Chapter Eleven: Broken Family Values: Faith*

1. Elisa’s friend, Karen, told Elisa that while the pain of losing a baby was *awful*, that she should watch for God to show up. How would you have responded to these words?
2. How do you see that God did, indeed, show up in the crisis of the loss of Baby Malachi? List all the ways you can remember.
3. In what crisis in your life have you seen God “show up?” How has his provision strengthened you? In what ways is God asking you to remember his work in your days—past, present and future?

### *Chapter Twelve: Broken Family Values: Love*

1. Why can relationships with siblings be so contentious?
2. Elisa learns that while her sister and her are very different, they are also the same. What principles does she discover that help her navigate her adult relationship with her sister?

3. Read the quote from Judith Viorst about “Necessary Losses.” How have necessary losses shaped your life?

### *Chapter Thirteen: Broken Family Values: Respect*

1. Elisa says that her best friend—other than her husband—is gay and loves Jesus. How does this sentence sit with you?
2. What does Elisa mean when she says, “We don’t have to believe the same, feel the same, do the same in order to be intimately close?”
3. How does Elisa’s story about her relationship with her brother shape your understanding—and response to—those who experience same sex attraction?

### *Chapter Fourteen: Broken Family Values: Forgiveness*

1. Luke 7 speaks deeply to Elisa about the need to receive forgiveness in order to be able to offer it to others. How does giving and receiving forgiveness affect our relationships?
2. How would you define or describe forgiveness? Similarly, what would you say it *is not*?
3. Who do you need to forgive right now and how can the words in this chapter help you move ahead?

### *Chapter Fifteen: Broken Family Values: Thankfulness*

1. Elisa is *challenged* by her boss to “thank God in all things”—from I Thessalonians 5:18. How do you think you would have responded to this urging from a boss?
2. Elisa says, “The way we wait expresses the extent to which we trust the One we’re waiting for.” Can you share what this sentence means in your walk with God?
3. Think of one “no thanks” moment today. Be still and try to thank God for it. Is your attitude or perspective changed somehow?

### *Chapter Sixteen: A Beautifully Broken Legacy*

1. How has this book spoken to your life? What lessons will you take forward?
2. God loves the broken. In what ways is God inviting you to embrace his love for broken you? For your broken family and broken friends?
3. God uses the broken. In what ways has God further equipped you to contribute to his world through the brokenness in your life?