

Discussion Questions

Introduction

The discussion questions are related to the content that is found in the chapters listed in bold below. In most cases, the author recommends that the discussion questions include a discussion of the subsequent chapter as well - most of the time, Annie & Alex are trying to figure out how to put the principles into practice in the chapters that come after their meetings with Sara.

Lost & Found

- Have you ever lost something valuable to you? How did you feel?
- Have you ever lost a relationship that was valuable to you? How did that feel?
- Did you find or restore that relationship? What was that like?
- Do you believe that God cares whether you have a relationship with him?
- Do you believe that God cares whether other people have a relationship with him?
- What do you feel about other people's relationships with God?
- How do you feel about involving yourself in the spiritual lives of those around you?
- What people are in your life who you might be able to pray for?

All Consuming Calling

- Who are the people in your world who are your enemies?
- How can you love them in practical ways?
- How do you feel when you think about loving them?
- How can you pray about how you feel and what you do?
- What do you think the ministry of reconciliation is?
- What relationships are broken in your own life?
- How can God restore those relationship?
- What relationships are broken in your world?
- How can you be an agent of reconciliation and restoration in that world?
- What takes the place of primary importance in your life?
- How can you change what is primary for you?

The Barrones vs. the MacDougals

- What messages have you seen in the media this week about Christians? Were they positive or negative?
- Have you had any recent conversations with people who were hostile to the church? To Christians? To you?
- How did you respond to that hostility?
- How did you relate to the person?
- Did you engage the hostility or avoid it?
- If you engaged it, did you try to reason against it?
- Why did you choose the strategy you used?
- If you don't want to engage hostility directly, but you don't want to avoid it, what can you do?

In but not Of

- Who are your friends? Do they share your faith?
- Who do you know who doesn't share your faith? How close is your relationship with them?
- How close should you be to people who don't share your faith?
- How do you measure your own spirituality? What external actions do you use? What internal measures do you use?
- What lifestyle choices do you adopt that separate you from the greater culture?
- What are your reasons for those lifestyle choices?
- How do you talk about those lifestyle choices with others?
- Do your lifestyle choices and the way you talk about them alienate people who make different choices?
- What are you naturally interested in? What activities do you like?
- What types of people do you naturally connect with?
- Where or doing what might you find people you'd naturally connect with?
- How can you befriend people who are different from you without making people feel like they're your projects?

Peace Child

- What things do you notice about today's culture that are different from when you were younger?
- What is everyone talking about right now that might reveal what the culture values (environmental responsibility, health care, etc)?
- How might those values and conversations relate to spiritual things?
- Do those things relate to your spirituality?
- Can those values provide a foundation for spiritual conversations?
- Are there stories our culture tells that relate to spiritual truth? What spiritual truth do they illustrate?

Emotional Barriers

- What do your conversations about faith with others look like?
- What barriers to increased faith or surrender to God do you see in other people's words or actions?
- What barriers to increased faith or surrender to God do you see in your own life?
- What do you think might show barriers? Sara talked about things that are either talked about all the time or that are avoided. Are there other things that might hint at barriers?

One Story at a Time

- What do you think about the ideas to use stories to engage with people's emotional barriers to faith?
- How have you worked through your own barriers to faith in your own life?
- What stories have been meaningful to you in working through your own barriers.
- What Bible stories do you know that might resonate with someone who is
 - struggling to believe that God is good?
 - struggling to believe that God love them?
 - struggling to understand how God could allow suffering in the world?

- Are there stories from your own life or about how God has worked within your heart that could also resonate with people in the situations listed above.
- What do you think about Annie's question about transitioning to tell stories? How might you direct conversation toward telling a Bible story or a personal story?

The Gospel Message

- What ways have you been encouraged to share your faith in the past?
- Have you ever tried them? What happened? How did it feel? How did it affect your relationship with the person you were talking to?
- What do you think about the gospel as story? Do you think that works?
- What part of the gospel story speaks to you the most?
- What part of the story do you think would resonate with your friends the most? Why?
- How do you know when the right time to share the gospel story is? Do you think it's ever necessary? Why or why not?
- What other resources do you need before you feel you will be able to tell the gospel story within a relationship?

The Works of God

- What things do you do out of love for God?
- Are any of your normal activities "works of God" that someone might be able to join?
- Have you ever invited anyone to work alongside you?
- What kinds of conversations do you think it might spark?
- What do you think about Josie's questions for Annie? How would you have answered them?

A Map for the Journey

- Thinking back over your own spiritual journey, what have been the times in your life when you were most open to spiritual conversations?
- What times were you most closed to spiritual conversations?
- Why do you think you were open or closed during those times?
- How can you begin to look for the special events in people's lives around you?
- What can you do to be available to have spiritual conversations at the times when people are most likely to ask questions or want to talk?