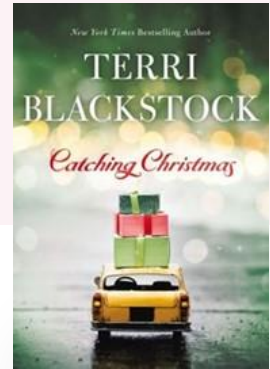




PARTICIPANT GUIDE

CATCHING CHRISTMAS BY TERRI BLACKSTOCK



"This time with Callie hasn't been wasted. My life is changed from knowing her. It's changed from knowing Sydney. It's changed from brushing against Jesus, who orchestrated a do-over for me."

FINN PARRISH



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Q. Finn, Sydney, and Miss Callie have incredibly different personalities, their traits ranging from grumpy and pessimistic - to sassy and joyful. Which character did you relate to the most and why?

2

Q. Finn begins judging Sydney before he has even met her. Being in his shoes, it is hard to imagine how someone could be so seemingly 'careless' with their elderly relative. Have you ever been too quick to judge another person's circumstances or actions? Why do we tend to do this?

3

Q. As the story unfolds, Finn learns that his quick judgements were unfair. What is the consequence of harsh or quick judgements?

4

Q. "When I raised questions like that as a seven-year-old kid, my mom got impatient and told me I was being disrespectful. But I really wanted to know. Eventually I stopped caring..." (p168)

Here we are given insight into little Finn, who asked his mother questions about the creator God and baby Jesus from a place of wonder and genuine curiosity - yet he was reprimanded and not answered. Why is it so crucial to always answer little one's questions about the Lord with patience, humour, and grace?

5

Q. Have you ever been in a situation like Sydney, where you've been expected to compromise your beliefs and values to 'win'? What did you choose to do? Can you empathise with Sydney's decision?

6

Q. "There's a lot of laughter during the meal, and I remember that first day I had to drive Callie. Never in a million years would I have expected to be here today, enjoying every second." (p205). Can you share a time in your life when God did something unexpected?

7

Q. "Thank you for including me in this beautiful Christmas, Miss Callie," I whisper. My tear falls onto her wrinkled cheek, and I wipe it away with my thumb... "And thank you, Jesus, for giving me a second chance" (p216). Miss Callie, her joyful spirit, love for the Lord, and her kind heart have a profound impact on Finn. What changes do you notice in Finn's personality as he suddenly decides that he wants to know Jesus?

8

Q. On page 239, Finn and Sydney listen to Callie's tapes. She says, "I'll be tickled to be with Jesus. We'll be catching up. Well, I will. He already knows all about me already, but I want to know every little thing that he's done since He left this earth. I'm going to ask lots of questions" p(239).

What is one question that you cannot wait to ask Jesus when you see Him face to face?

9

Q. On pages 259-260, Finn admits his shortcomings and heartbreaking response to his mother's illness and death. Sydney responds with compassion, yet he is still so ashamed and fearful that he begins to allow doubt and fear to creep back in again. It is not until Sydney comes running towards him and kisses him that he realises his prayers are answered and "maybe I really am what's best for her" (274). As the Lord answers his prayer, Finn gains some healing and self-worth again. He finally believes that he can offer someone something good, despite his past mistakes.

Describe a time in your life when God redeemed a mistake or regret.

10

Q. "As I drive home, I pray that God will work it all out for Sydney. This whole praying thing gets easier every time I do it. I feel like I'm getting to know Callie's Jesus a little better, even though I'm doing all the talking. But he speaks volumes in the way he listens" (p250). Prayer is a journey itself; it's a way we give praise and express deep gratitude, how we share our desires, hurts, and longings, how we develop a relationship with and talk to the Lord.

How has your prayer life changed over the years? Was it always easy? Or were some seasons hard, uncomfortable, awkward?



NOTES

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