

BEYOND THIS MOMENT

Reading Guide Discussion Questions

Spoiler Alert: Questions contain key plot points to the story.



1. Have someone in the group read the opening paragraph of Ch 1 aloud, then consider these questions: Have you ever experienced the feelings Molly felt here? That uncertainty of where to go or perhaps what to do next? That sinking feeling of having failed at something? Or having failed someone? If you're comfortable doing so, share that experience with the group.
2. Read the last sentence of Ch 4, and consider these questions: Do you believe Molly was truly "alone" in what she was about to do? Have you ever made a decision and knew full well it wasn't what God desired for you to do, but you did it anyway? Please share the consequences of that decision.
3. Molly Whitcomb, a woman determined to hide a secret, meets James McPherson, a man sworn to uphold all that's right and true. Perfect combination for romance! And conflict! In Ch 5, Molly and James come face to face for the second time, and the slippery slope of her lying begin. What struck you most about their interaction in this chapter? After reading the last two paragraphs of this chapter, what options do you think she had? Everything considered, what would you have done differently?
4. Near the end of Ch 8, Molly vows never to ask James another direct question unless she really wants his answer. What did she ask him? What was James's response? Are you "direct" by nature, like James? Or do you find it difficult to speak the truth to someone? Why do you think that is? What does the Bible say about speaking the truth (see Ephesians 4:15)?
5. God's grace is amazing. He gives us what we don't deserve. At the opening of Ch 10, Molly is given a *gift*. What is it? How does she respond inwardly to this gift from God? As you read this section, what thoughts came to mind about undeserved blessings in your own life? Read Matthew 7:10-12. What does the Bible say about God as a gift giver?
6. In Ch 13, Molly invites someone to attend the school while she and James are having dinner. Who is it she invites? Molly was raised in the South and yet she doesn't have the same biases as some others in town do. What experiences (or who) helped reshape her

belief system regarding racial equality? Also, how do James' beliefs differ from hers at their core? Or do they?

7. Read the last six paragraphs of Ch 17. Do you think God was meting out justice, as Molly thought? Sin always has consequences. Considering Molly's thoughts here in this section, name some ways that sin robs from us.

8. In Ch 20, nearing the end of the chapter, the section concludes with a flashback to the moment of Molly's *mistake*. Was her choice really made in a *moment* in time? Or was it a series of decisions? Or a series of indecisions?

9. As the story progresses, something happens at the end of Ch 30 that prompts Molly to finally come clean and tell the truth. What is it that happens? Has this ever happened to you? How would you define your experience in hearing God's "voice?"

10. Just when Molly's decided to tell James the truth, James goes and does something incredibly sweet, making it even harder for her. What does James do? Why is it, once you've decided to be honest about a wrong you've done, does it sometimes seem like events start conspiring against you, making it harder to tell the truth? In Ch 32, how does Molly handle the previous pledge she made to God to tell the truth?

11. In Ch 42, James and his sister, Rachel, have a confrontation that involves James revealing something to her about his past. What does he reveal? How does Rachel react? Do you have "secrets" like this in your family? Secrets that, perhaps, everyone knows about but no one discusses? What are the pros/cons of guarding these family secrets?

12. Once James knows the truth, he tells Molly he needs some time to sort things through. Did that seem like a reasonable request to you? Do you understand why Molly, in turn, felt like leaving Timber Ridge was the best thing she could do for Josephine? And for James?

13. *Beyond This Moment* is a story of second chances and of undeserved grace. We all sin, we all fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We ought not sin so that grace may increase (Romans 6:1), but we must extend grace to one another *when* we sin. In light of Romans 8:1-4, discuss how living according to the Spirit changes our outlook

on sin and on forgiving one another. Read also Matthew 6:15. Do we have a choice whether to forgive or not?

14. In this story, a character from a novel in a previous series made a cameo appearance. Who was it? Hint: what couple was it?

15. What was your favorite scene in *Beyond This Moment*? What was your favorite passage? Who was your favorite character and why? Through your eyes, what was the take-away message of this story, and what events/characters in the book led you to that conclusion?

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