

Directions: Answer the questions from each chapter on a separate sheet of paper. Explain your answer. Your response must completely answer the question to receive full credit, and grammar counts.

Chapter 1: Cast Away

1. At what time, other than being abandoned at an orphanage, might someone feel so desperately lonely that he or she could say, “The only one left to hug me was me”?

Chapter 3: The Tornado

2. Why did Robby stop calling Joyce “Mommy” and start calling her “Mother”? What is the difference?

Chapter 4: Different

3. The author says that kids he knew in the Home “preferred poverty if they were loved, rags if they were cared for, and homelessness if someone they loved wanted them.” Do you think this is typical of children? Why or why not? Younger kids at the Home believed their lives would get better if they could return to their families. If you were counseling them, what would you say?

Chapter 5: Kidnapped

4. How would you describe Robby’s relationship with God at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 6: The Doctors

5. How would you respond to Robby’s observation that “boys must be easier to throw away than girls”?

Chapter 7: Gigi’s Gift

6. If you’d been in the author’s place, what decision might you have made about foster care? Why?

Chapter 8: The Choice

7. What does Gigi mean when she says, “Class ain’t about cash, but the character”? How would you define class? How would you define character?

Chapter 11: Why?

8. The chapter ends with, “the fire of my rage burned hotter than ever.” Where would you predict the author would end up as a teenager and an adult? Why?

Chapter 12: Earning Power

9. Robby decided that “money would save [him].” Do you think this attitude is typical in our culture?

Chapter 13: Reunion

10. The author writes, “the lion of my anger shredded the lamb of my sympathy.” Have you ever experienced a similar struggle? Has your “lamb” ever overcome your “lion”? What have you learned from these battles?

Chapter 15: The Rebel

11. What was happening inside Robby that the “ordinary” or “regular” kids didn’t understand? What hurts might be felt by the people around you in your neighborhood, church, job, or school that you wouldn’t realize occurred? What first step could you take toward understanding?

Chapter 16: A Losing Season

12. “If I have to hurt like this, then other people will have to hurt as well.” What does this tell you about the causes of some violence in our society, especially among teens?

Chapter 17: The Lifeguard

13. Judging from what Robby told the girl in the canoe, how did he feel about God? How do you relate to that viewpoint?

Chapter 18: Are You Real?

14. What didn’t Robby experience after he prayed? Nevertheless, what did he know had happened?

Chapter 20: The Freshman

15. Have you ever found it difficult to slow your mind down to listen to God? How have you dealt with this?

Chapter 23: Into Africa

16. Do you agree with the definitions of judgment, mercy, and grace? Why or why not?

Chapter 24: Forgive?

17. Why did Rob doubt he could forgive some of his relatives? If you were Rob, would you have found it easy to forgive? Why or why not?

Chapter 25: Pauline

18. Have you ever had to forgive someone when you felt you couldn’t? Did the process resemble the one Rob describes? Explain.

Chapter 26: Father

19. How did the attempted suicide of Rob’s father affect other family members? “You can’t save someone who won’t let you save them.” What does this mean?

Chapter 30: The Relationship

20. How did Susan respond when Rob told her about his past? How would you have responded?

Chapter 32: Fear of Family

21. The author lists several people who influenced his vision of what it means to be a man and father. What three people have most shaped your view of a “real” man or woman? How did they do that?

Epilogue

Based on this story, what do you think is the best road to healing for someone who’s been wounded by his or her past? What principle from this book would you most like to practice during the coming year?