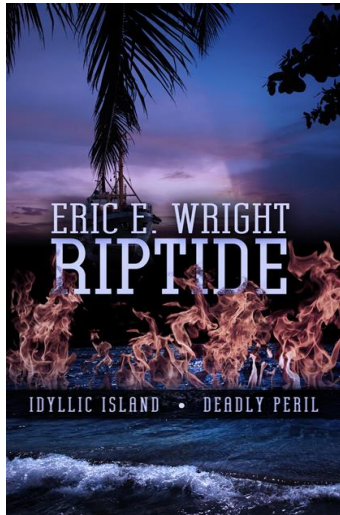


## Discussion Questions

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### **RIPTIDE**

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### **About the Book**

Ashlyn Forsyth believes she and her husband have come to idyllic St. Simons Island to restore romance to their flagging marriage. Then, without warning, Craig hands Ashlyn, divorce papers. In shock, Ashlyn watches him drive off with a female colleague from his office. She soon discovers he is being pursued by the Russian mafia and investigated by the FBI for money-laundering.

Abandoned on St. Simons Island, Ashlyn faces not only emotional turmoil but financial ruin, the shipwreck of her career, harassment by the FBI, and pursuit by the Russian mafia. Even as her ordered life plunges into chaos, she finds herself increasingly attracted to Remy Jeandean, a shrimp boat captain.

Will she find the spiritual resources needed to overcome adversity? Will attraction blossom into romance?

TITLE: Riptide

Discussion:

Question 1: In short order Ashlyn lost her credit cards, bank accounts, car, home and husband. Why do bad things happen to Christians?

Answer 1: Answer: Bad things happen to Christians because we, like everyone, live in a fallen, sinful world full of selfish and many cruel people. Terrible things happened to Job, although he did not deserve them. Paul, although one of the greatest and most godly men, wrote:

Question 2: Ashlyn went from being a highly respected and in-demand professional counselor to being the waitress in a small restaurant. As she got to know her new colleagues, Lottie Jane, Claudeâ€”the cookâ€”, she realized she'd felt superior to those in the serving professions. Do we treat lawyers, doctors, financial consultants, pastors better than waiters, farmers, factory workers, mechanics, plumbers, etc.? How does God think of them? How can we avoid snobbery?

Answer 2: Society seems to exalt certain professions above others. It is our fallen nature to think highly of ourselves, to be proud, and to look down on others. If we're not careful we will absorb that attitude instead of the attitude of Christ.

Question 3: As a separated woman, Ashlyn was afraid of being gossiped about, looked down on, and ignored by her home church. How can we create a welcoming atmosphere in a church for divorced women, single moms, etc.

Answer 3: We need to remind ourselves of Jesus treatment of the woman caught in adultery, of Mary Magdalene, and of the demoniac. If possible we should encourage groups to minister to the divorced, single mothers, etc. We should endeavor to include them in our events and in our own hospitality. If Jesus can forgive a woman caught in the very act of adultery, who are we to reject forgiveness. We should hate the hypocrisy that makes us think certain overt sins are blacker than the hidden sins of pride, gossip, lying, pilfering from work, making inaccurate statements on income tax, hating people, or being prejudiced about certain races or classes. We must ask God to help us to look at others as he does. Does he accept them into his kingdom? Then we must too.

Question 4: Did Ashlyn have biblical grounds for divorce; for remarriage?

Answer 4: Answer: Since her husband Craig committed adultery with his colleague, Marlee, Ashlyn has biblical grounds for divorce.

Question 5: To avoid the boomerang effect of linking up with another romantic partner during a time of vulnerability, how long should the innocent party in a divorce, or an abandoned person allow for grieving before dating again?

Answer 5: This is difficult to gauge, but wisdom indicates that one should not become romantically entangled while one is still grieving a breakdown in marriage. Surely, at least six months or a year, hopefully more, should elapse before one begins to consider another romance.

It would be wise for the divorced party to seek the counsel and fellowship of a close same-sex friend who can see things more objectively.

Question 6: What can we do to encourage people such as Ashlyn?

Answer 6: We all need encouragement.

Question 7: Why should we rarely say,

Answer 7: This may be a cliché that will sound jarring to the person, unless we have really gone through similar circumstances. Better to say something like,

