

## Discussion Questions

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### **FINDING MIA**

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ISBN (e): 9781611164442

ISBN (tp): 9781611164459

Imprint: Harbourlight Books

Publisher: Pelican Book Group

Pages: 264

eBook SRP: 4.99

### **About the Book**

Isobel is on the hunt for her missing muse. What she finds instead is an abandoned toddler who is sunburned and close to death. Dr Liam Brigham keeps little Mia alive, but needs Isobel to save the girl from a far greater danger--a killer with an agenda for kidnapping.

With Mia's life next in line, Isobel and Liam have to put aside their differences, face their past and throw their trust at the only One able to save.

TITLE: Finding Mia

Discussion:

Question 1: Isobel's creativity, particularly her ability to paint, had been jammed up by the trauma she'd experienced in her past. Explain why.

Answer 1: The underlying premise of Finding Mia is that the enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy, but Jesus came so we can have abundant life. What Isobel experienced stole her ability to flow with her natural, God-given artistic talent. Being creative requires one to 'let go', but after being violated, Isobel was unable to let her walls down as subconsciously, she feared that she'd fall apart emotionally.

Question 2: Facing hospital was a huge issue for Isobel - first when Liam Brigham asked her to take Mia and later when Ben broke his arm. Hospitals filled her with dread. As Believers, do you think irrational fears like this should raise a red flag to be investigated? Why, or why not?

Answer 2: Irrational fear can almost always be traced to a root experience or event. Sometimes it is something small and insignificant, yet other times it is tied to a significant event or occurrence that, when confronted, could be dealt with. Jesus paid a dear price for our freedom. His desire is to see us free from anything that would hold us back from the abundant life that He has planned.

Question 3: At the exact time Isobel decided to pack up and leave town, Rochelle called asking her to come and teach a craft class. Would you describe this as good luck, pure chance or Divine intervention?

Answer 3: I wrote this as Divine intervention out of experiencing God break into my life and rearrange my circumstances in ways that turned out for the best (even though I didn't always see it that way at the time!) Rochelle is a naturally, supernatural Believer, flowing easily amongst people from all walks of life, yet completely Spirit-led. Imagine if we all lived simply tuned in to Holy Spirit? Soft to His promptings, obedient to His urging... many broken lives would be touched!

Question 4: In Art Class, Isobel struggled with drawing her shattered reflection in the broken mirror. She was confronted with her brokenness in a way she couldn't handle. Art, in all its forms, has the ability to touch and move the hardest heart. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Answer 4: There is something about creativity in all its forms that has the ability to bypass the logical processes of the brain and engage the emotions and heart of the audience. The arts communicate across languages barriers and cultural differences. God Himself is a Creator, with us made in His image - creative too. When we flow in creativity, He shines through in all His loving beauty - irresistible to a softened heart.

Question 5: The night that Isobel spent on the beach, God spoke to her through the sunrise with the promise that His Light had overcome the darkness. Isobel understood that to mean that the danger was past - that Liam was delusional in his conspiracy theory. Yet, there was still much

pain and suffering ahead of her before the breakthrough. Do you think she misunderstood what God was saying to her? How can we avoid doing that?

Answer 5: When God speaks, we often receive it colored through our circumstances, hopes and desires. Isobel interpreted it to mean that the danger was past. The truth is - she still had a journey to walk, but God's promise to her was that the darkness would not prevail. Her only (very human!) failing, was to doubt what He'd spoken to her when things didn't work out as she was expecting them to. The Bible tells us that even when we are faithless, He is still faithful as He cannot deny Himself. Our challenge is to see Him in control and at work beyond our current circumstances, to believe in His inherent Goodness - no matter what is happening around us, because He will come through on every promise He makes.

Question 6: During the craft ladies' intervention, Isobel argued that she felt more 'together' than she had in years. The ladies saw it differently, saying that previously, in spite of the challenges, the pain that she was facing - she was gloriously alive, real and present. Do you think Isobel 'getting herself together' was a good thing or a bad thing? Why?

Answer 6: Isobel was getting her life 'in order' under Roric's direction. She began ignoring her motherly instincts when it came to Mia, relying on his rules to bring order. Mia's response to this harsh treatment was to shut down. Roric's motivation for the advice he offered was twisted, intending to rob Isobel of her confidence. Real life, lived in love, is messy but glorious in kindness and understanding, with lots of room for mistakes and learning. The craft ladies could see that the changes in Isobel were not healthy, but damaging. So while Isobel felt more in control, in reality she was shutting out her instincts and the gentle leading of the Holy Spirit that leads to peace, joy and righteousness. Relationships don't flourish under prescribed rules, but on connecting with each other in love and understanding.

Question 7: The craft ladies took it on themselves to shadow Isobel, Roric and Mia as they could see the negative effects that he was having on Isobel. Do you think they were out of line?

Answer 7: My feeling is that true friends will go out of their way - even to the point of offending you - to look after your best interests. It may not be welcome at the time, but it is genuine, authentic, real love.

Question 8: In this story, Mia was the key that unlocked Isobel's heart enough for the Holy Spirit to begin healing her from the past. Mia was also the one thing she was desperate to avoid. At the beginning of the book, she didn't like children and most certainly would never have considered taking one in. This was a setup planned in Heaven, why do you think God works like this - bringing us face to face with what we don't want?

Answer 8: Human hearts can only cope with so much before they shut down. Isobel had her first baby stolen from her. It left a gaping wound that consumed her. Her only means of coping with the pain and emotion was to shut down that desire. To lock it away so deeply that she convinced herself that she never wanted a baby in the first place, that there was no space in her heart or life for children at all. Jesus brought Mia along to take off that hard scab, allow all the pain and disappoint to come out so her healing could begin. He is an expert at working with our hearts!

Question 9: While waiting to see the social workers, Melindi confessed how concerned she was that Roric had deceived her so easily. Isobel used her handbag's broken zip to illustrate how being broken by circumstances allows things in and out of one's life that you never would have before. She said that Jesus doesn't replace the zip, but becomes the zip. What do you think she meant?

Answer 9 When you make the choice to believe in Jesus, you literally believe 'into' Jesus. Your life becomes hidden in Him. Therefore whatever comes your way is filtered through Him. If something is not meant to touch your life, it will not get past. He also allows the things that would be toxic for you (bitterness, unforgiveness, hatred...) to filter out to stop them festering inside causing long-term damage.

Question 10: Mia's name means Mine. The closing lines of the book unfold the newly discovered 'mines' in Isobel's life. Belonging. Why do you think belonging is such a fundamental need in all people?

Answer 10: We are created to be connected, to belong - it comes straight from the heart of a Father who longs to connect with us. He does not hold Himself aloof, watching from a distance. He delights in tackling challenges with us, coaching from the side or carrying us when we can't anymore. In times of heartbreak, He is closer than breathing, carefully holding our hearts, carrying the pain with us until we can smile again. He laughs with us through the fun, shares wisdom for each situation, lovingly wipes tears, puts us back on our feet when we fall. He is our fierce defender, strong deliverer, tender lover of our souls. In every way, His Life is entwined in ours. I can imagine Him leaning over to Gabriel, pointing down and saying, "You see that one? She's Mine!" In the same way, He places people in our lives for us to love deeply, defend fiercely and share life with. As we do that, live like He does, our lives will shine His Life bright and glorious - bringing the broken, lost and lonely into His family for Eternity.

