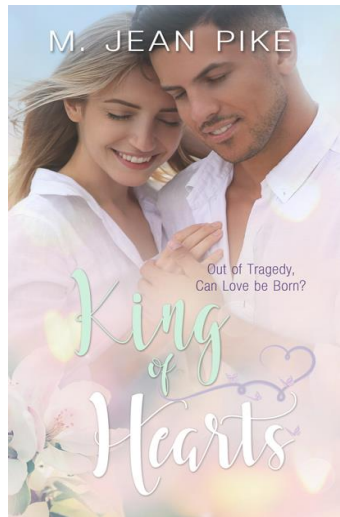


## Discussion Questions

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### **KING OF HEARTS**

Redford's Crossing

Author: M. Jean Pike

ISBN (e): 9781522304586

Imprint: White Rose Publishing

Publisher: Pelican Book Group

Pages: 206

eBook SRP: 5.99

### **About the Book**

After keeping a secret promise to a friend, Harper Blessings's life is spiraling out of control. Her food truck barely pays the bills, she's raising her rebellious brother and caring for her forgetful aunt...and she's four months pregnant.

When Aunt Clara wanders off at a carnival and hires the carousel operator who rescues her to do odd jobs, Harper's house-of-cards life begins to topple. The last thing she needs is a handsome drifter complicating her already problematic life. Or so she thinks.

Drifter Dalton Kingston has a few secrets of his own. Growing up as a child of privilege, he wanted for nothing...except love. Then an unspeakable tragedy causes him to walk away from it all, pushing love as far away as possible. Until love pushes back in the form of a beautiful woman who desperately needs his help, and the God he's not sure he can forgive.

TITLE: King Of Hearts

Discussion:

Question 1: Do you know anyone like Harper, who is going through a hard season in their life? As Christians, what can we do to help?

Answer 1: The best thing we can do for another person is to pray for them! But in a hands-on sense, offering our friendship through a card or note of encouragement, an invitation to lunch, or even an offer to wash the dishes or catch up the laundry can go a long ways to let someone know they are not alone.

Question 2: What do you think is the main theme of this book?

Answer 2: God has a plan for each and every one of us, even when we are facing dark times. (Jeremiah 29:11) Through His love and grace, He is able to bring beauty out of the ashes of our circumstances.

Question 3: Did you like Redford's Crossing, Ohio? Is it a place you would like to live? Why or why not?

Answer 3: Small towns definitely have their own unique personalities, blessings, and challenges. Unlike living in a big city, it is more difficult to be anonymous in a place where everyone knows you. But when times are tough, small-town people tend to pull together. When I moved to Southern Ohio ten years ago, I fell in love with its small towns and its people. Though it is not a real place, Redford's Crossing borrows characteristics from many of them.

Question 4: Harper and Dalton both have tragic secrets in their past. What happens when we bury our hurts deep inside?

Answer 4: When we hold onto our pain and guilt, they tend to grow. They can lead to stomach problems, high blood pressure, and depression. Even worse, the painful secrets we guard can make us feel distant from God and others. When Dalton shared his pain with both God and Harper, he was finally able to heal.

Question 5: What do you think motivated Babe Wayland? Do you think she redeemed herself in the end?

Answer 5: We all know someone like Babe, who seems selfish and manipulative, set on getting their own way. But sometimes there are reasons behind people's actions. As the story unfolds, we come to understand that Babe's motives for wanting to adopt Harpers baby stem from regrets about herself as a mother and the desire for a second chance. In end, Babe learns to give to others.

Question 6: Ashley went to extreme lengths in order to have a child, even if it meant betraying a lifelong friendship. Have you ever been betrayed by a friend?

Answer 6: I don't think there are many things harder to bear than the betrayal of someone you trusted. Throughout the book, the theme of forgiveness is repeated again and again. It takes a lot of prayer, soul searching, and perseverance to forgive the people who have hurt us. It is not easy, but with God, all things are possible!

Question 7: Though her own life had been turned upside down, Harper felt a sense of obligation to keep her Aunt Clara at home and care for her. Have you ever had a time when you had to stand by someone, even when it was hard?

Answer 7: Be it caring for a spouse or a parent with dementia, showing patience with a mentally or physically ill family member, or taking time to listen to a distraught friend, it can be hard to pour into others day in and day out, especially if our own lives are in tatters. Thankfully we don't have to do it alone. I think the key to comforting others is carving out quiet moments to be alone with God, to ask Him for His strength and guidance. He knows what you are going through – and He cares! (1 Peter 5:7)

Question 8: We learn that throughout her life, Clara used her baking for the glory of God. What special talents do you have that can be used for God's glory?

Answer 8: In First Corinthians 12 we read that God gives each of us special gifts and talents. Whenever we exercise these gifts and share them with others, whether it be writing a beautiful poem or story, baking someone a loaf of bread, growing flowers and giving a bouquet to someone who needs encouragement. When we seek ways to use our gifts for good, God is glorified!

Question 9: How did Harper change from the beginning of the story until the end?

Answer 9 In the beginning, having been betrayed by the people she loved most, Harper was fearful about the future. She was overwhelmed with trying to handle her situation by herself, and unable to fully trust others. By the end of the story, she learned to trust Dalton, and was willing to try and rebuild her shattered relationship with her father.

Question 10: Job 23:10 says "But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. " How did the Dalton's trials refine his faith?

Answer 10: At the beginning of the story, Dalton was unsure of his relationship with God. He was filled with pain, anguish, guilt and bitterness because of all he'd lost. Throughout the story, we saw God drawing him near, and in the end, restoring what was lost. By crying out to God in his anguish, Dalton was able to make peace with himself, his past, and his heavenly Father.

