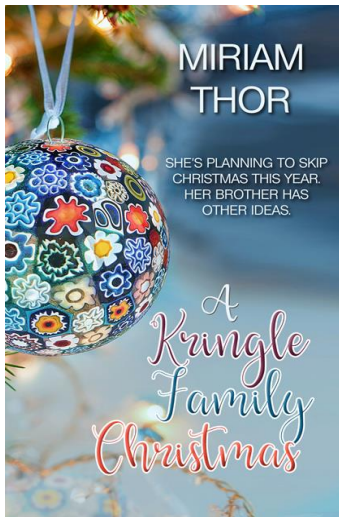


Discussion Questions



A KRINGLE FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Christmas Extravaganza 2024

Author: Miriam Thor

ISBN (e):9781522304807

Imprint: White Rose Publishing

Publisher: Pelican Book Group

Pages: 163

eBook SRP: 4.99

About the Book

Bethany Kringle is planning to skip Christmas, like she has both years since her mom died. She thinks it's the perfect plan...until her brother, Matt, tells her he's taking leave from the Navy to come home for Christmas. And he's bringing his friend, Jay, with him. Now, Bethany must fight through her grief to give them the best Christmas possible.

Jay MacDonald is afraid that God wants him to leave the Navy, the only place he has ever belonged. He's also nervous about spending Christmas with his friend's family, until he meets Matt's sister who helps put him at ease. Jay immediately notices the grief Bethany is trying to hide and resolves to help her in any way he can.

As Jay supports Bethany, the two can't help being drawn to each other. Could God use this Christmas to bring them both peace and possibly bring them together as well?

TITLE: A Kringle Family Christmas

Discussion:

Question 1: Bethany learned to do many things without her mom, but she couldn't bear to celebrate Christmas without her. Why do you think Christmas, specifically, was so hard for her? Have you ever experienced anything similar?

Answer 1: Of all the holidays, Bethany's mom went out of her way to make Christmas the most special. She established a lot of traditions and did much of the work to keep them going each year. After Bethany's mom died, Bethany wanted to continue the traditions for her family's sake. That meant Bethany not only had to deal with constant reminders of her mom's absence, but also with fulfilling her mom's role in many of the traditions. This made celebrating Christmas particularly hard and stressful for her.

Question 2: Why did Jay have trouble believing he would be welcome at the Kringle home, despite Matt's assurances? Have you ever struggled to believe you belonged somewhere? How did you deal with it?

Answer 2: Growing up, Jay bounced between foster homes without ever finding a "forever home." He constantly felt unwanted, so as an adult, it was difficult for him to accept that people wanted him around. He trusted Matt, but since he hadn't met his friend's family, he struggled to believe they would actually want him to spend Christmas with them.

Question 3: Bethany put a lot of pressure on herself to do things the same way her mother did. How could she have handled her situation in a healthier way?

Answer 3: After her mom died, Bethany prayed about moving home to support her dad, but after that, it would have helped if she continued to pray about how she should handle all the responsibilities that had previously belonged to her mom. She also could have talked with her dad and brother to determine what traditions and responsibilities they wanted to continue and how they could share the workload for those things.

Question 4: Why was Jay hesitant to leave the Navy even though he felt God was leading him to do so? Has it ever been difficult for you to do what God led you to do?

Answer 4: The Navy was the first place Jay ever felt like he belonged, and he planned to make it his career. Giving that up was difficult, especially because God hadn't told him what He wanted him to do next.

Question 5: Why were the Kringles' ornaments so special to them? Do you have any ornaments that are special to you?

Answer 5: As Matt said, the Kringles' ornaments told the story of their life. The ornaments had sentimental value because they reminded them of different events their family had experienced. They particularly cherished the glass ball that had been passed down as a family heirloom.

Question 6: What advice did Chap give Jay when they talked at the veterans' home? How did heeding this advice help Jay?

Answer 6: Chap told Jay that he needed to find his identity in Christ and that he should do whatever the Lord led him to do. Heeding this advice helped Jay to take a leap of faith both in his career and in his relationship with Bethany.

Question 7: Why was it special to Bethany that Jay took her to skate at Leo's ice rink rather than at the convention center? What is something special someone has done for you?

Answer 7: While Bethany, Matt, and Jay were looking through the photo album, Bethany mentioned how much she loved skating at Leo's when she was younger. When Jay chose to bring her there, he showed that he was paying attention and being thoughtful toward her.

Question 8: What techniques did Jay use to help Bethany calm down when she was panicking? What techniques do you use to deal with panic, anxiety, or other difficult emotions?

Answer 8: Jay had Bethany follow his breathing pattern to help her slow down her breathing. When she was calmer, he used grounding to help her focus on what she could perceive with her senses.

Question 9: Why did it mean a lot to Bethany that her dad and brother decided to order pizza for dinner? Has anyone ever done something unexpected to make things easier for you?

Answer 9: Bethany's mom always insisted her family not eat delivery pizza. By deciding to order pizza, Bethany's dad and brother showed that they were willing to change some of their family traditions to help reduce how much work Bethany felt the need to do at home.

Question 10: How did God help Bethany understand that it was okay for Christmas to be bittersweet for her now?

Answer 10: Through Scripture, including John 1:1, John 1:14, and John 3:16, God shows Bethany that while the first Christmas was joyful, it was also the beginning of the Father and Son being separated in a way those Persons of the Trinity never had been before, which was undoubtedly difficult. He gives her peace that if Christmas could be bittersweet for Him, it was okay for her to feel that way, too.

