

FROM NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

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Discussion Guide

Topic: Love

1. Unable to have a biological child, Jack and Molly made the decision to adopt their son Joey. If you or someone in your group has adopted, describe the process they went through. The Bible tells us God adopts us as His sons and daughters, that He chose us. How do you feel about being chosen?
2. Wendy and Molly both love Joey with a fierce yet tender love. How does having that kind of love for someone lead you to make life-altering choices? Can you describe a time when you felt that kind of love from someone?
3. Twice Wendy makes the decision to surrender her child because it's the best thing for him and his future. What do you think gives her the courage to do this? How do you respond when you're challenged to love sacrificially?

Topic: Fear

1. Most of our fears have to do with the unknown. What are some of the fears adoptive parents feel, and how were they shown in the film? How and when does fear prevent us from experiencing greater joy? Does it get in the way of us taking a risk that might make our lives even more fulfilled?
2. Jack is used to being a winner, to getting everything he wants. At what point does he hit the bottom and where does he turn for help? Where do you turn for help when you've run out of options?

Topic: Grace

1. Rip has been a loser. He's an alcoholic and abusive husband. How does he show that he's changed? What hope does Wendy have that he's a different man, and what motivates her to give him another chance?
2. Rip is surprised that Wendy chose to stay with him, but she shows him grace and mercy when he doesn't deserve it. Do you ever feel like Rip, undeserving of another chance? How does it feel when someone gives it to you?
3. Allyson Bower has a tough job to do – decide what's in Joey's best interests and try to be impartial. Where do we see her discomfort with her assignment? What kinds of situations push the boundaries of our ability to have grace for others?

Topic: Choices

1. Beth believes reporting her sister's actions is the right thing to do, that Molly should obey the law. Why does her husband tell her she made the wrong decision? Have you ever made a decision that was morally right but considered legally wrong? What brought you to that decision?
2. Jack and Molly make a decision that is illegal – to flee the country permanently. Imagine their life ten years in the future. How do you think it would be different if they had completed their plan? If you were in a similar position, how would you decide what to do?
3. Wendy makes the choice to stay with an abusive husband rather than leave him. Do you know someone who's in a similar situation, and would you encourage them to stay or to leave? At what point is leaving the best thing to do?

Topic: Relationships

1. Beth asks Jack and Molly if she can take Joey to church with her family, which offends Molly. Why do you think Molly is offended? When can invitations offered out of good intentions bring offense?
2. Jack and Rip both long for a son of their own and each have a chance to be Joey's dad. How does each man show his ability as a father? Who did you learn your parenting skills from?
3. The three couples in this film have different relationships and struggles. If you're married, which couple's relationship do you feel most closely resembles that of yourself and your spouse, and why?
4. How does Jack and Molly's relationship change because of this crisis? In times of crisis do your relationships grow stronger or weaker?