

The Crossroad Discussion Questions

1. Susanna's way of dealing with conflict is to take the bull by the horns and show 'em who's boss. Can you think of some times when she does this? How effective do you find this approach?
2. Back in New York, Philip discusses with a coworker how everyone is craving a simpler life, a slower pace--an earthy, back-to-basics approach to things. Do you find this to be true? In what ways, if any, does a simpler life appeal to you?
3. At one point it is noted that a grieving person can become "stuck," and focused "on the grief event," as a result of dependence on a grief-counseling group. While Rachel does not belong to such a modern-style group, are there ways in which her community has functioned like one? Have those who surround her inadvertently helped to keep her "stuck" in her moment of grief? Discuss.
4. Older Order Amish don't mark birthdays with parties or celebrations. Why do you suspect this might be?
5. Rachel prays blessings over her daughter, Annie, till such time as Annie herself could give her heart and life fully to Jesus. What are some other things Christian parents can do to raise their children into "the full stature of Christ"?
6. The Amish keep their ailing and elderly at home, under their own roofs, until they die. What are the advantages of this? the disadvantages?
7. Esther speaks of the "many curses folk unknowingly put on each other" through things like jealousy, gossip, and rejection. Why do you think she chooses to describe them in this way?
8. Rachel comes to believe that the darkness had to be exposed so that the way, the truth, and the life could flood hearts that had been hardened by tradition and deceived by the devil. Are there areas of darkness in your community that require exposure? How might we as Christians go about bringing such things to the light?
9. When Rachel confesses to Lavina that she has been "standing on God's promises" for her healing, Lavina encourages her to "Rest in the Lord. Wait patiently for Him. You don't hafta remind your heavenly Father 'bout things He's said He'd do." What do you think of this? Does her advice differ from Esther's? What have you been taught regarding divine healing?
10. The People consider Lavina to be simple minded and slow, but Rachel

figures you had to be a bit slow in some areas to be as quick as Lavina Troyer in others. Have you known people who have exemplified this? How has knowing them affected you?

11. Lavina asks her cousin Ben if the "Lord God heavenly Father ever put somethin' strong in your heart, so powerful-strong you knew you best do something 'bout it?" Have you ever had a similar experience? How did you know the urge was from God? Discuss.

12. While the Plain community does a wonderful job of supporting its widows and orphans, they also expect widows and widowers to eventually remarry, if possible. What do you think of this societal pressure? How do you think it compares to the expectations Englishers have for those who have lost spouses?

13. Rachel's painful life experience has taught her not to take life's blessings for granted. What blessings in your life do you need to pay more attention to?

14. Rachel remembers her husband's home-going to heaven as a very poignant, powerful moment--"How very precious the death of God's children..." Have you, like Rachel, been present at the death of a loved one or someone else? How did that experience affect you? Do you think it taught you anything about that person's or your own relationship with God?

15. Philip is initially hesitant about pursuing Rachel because he's of the mind that One of the essential ingredients for a good marriage was similarity of background and interests. Do you also believe this to be true? Do you know any couples who are exceptions to this?

16. Both Rachel and Philip have their own "crossroad" to face in this book. Talk about the path each takes to this place of decision and what has happened to each to prepare them for this day.