

Discussion Questions
***Though Mountains Fall* by Dale Cramer**

THE DAUGHTERS OF CALEB BENDER, Book 3

1. Rachel kept secret from Jake the fact that he'd killed a man. The Amish insist that Jake is guilty of murder even if he isn't aware of it, even if he did it to save Rachel. In what ways do you agree or disagree with this belief?
2. When Domingo tells Caleb of his plans to marry Miriam, he's not surprised when Caleb refuses to give them his blessing. Why would Caleb refuse? Why did Domingo feel he could never become Amish?
3. Miriam finds a sympathetic ear in her sister Emma, who thinks rules can be bent in the name of love. Was she wrong? Where should a child of God stand when the church says one thing and one's conscience says another?
4. When the men arrange to post lookouts in the high places, they keep this information secret from the women. Why? Can the Amish teach us anything about the roles of men and women?
5. With the troops arriving in Paradise Valley, Caleb says, "This is good." But Domingo's uncle Paco responds, "Maybe. We will see." It seems Paco knows something Caleb doesn't. Were his suspicions accurate? In what way?
6. Levi Mullet is staunchly legalistic in the beginning of the story, but over time he begins to experience grace. Who and/or what are the instruments of change in his life?
7. At a certain point Caleb begins to feel that God has turned his back on him. What's the cause of Caleb's malaise? What is it that finally opens his eyes?
8. Amish pacifism is a recurring theme in *Though Mountains Fall* and a touchstone throughout the series. Ultimately the execution of two soldiers is the beginning of the end for the Paradise Valley settlement, bringing even capital punishment into question. Whether we agree with them or not, the Amish are consistently nonviolent. What are your thoughts concerning this issue?
9. Domingo is the first to become disturbed by the hypocrisy of José Reyes Vega, and eventually Father Noceda is driven to abandon the priesthood because of it. (Note: Vega was a real person whose behavior was well-documented.) What are your thoughts on the issue of violence in the name of God? What did Christ teach with regard to violence?
10. Caleb wonders why Emma is watering trees when they're about to leave Mexico, but Emma reminds him of his own words: "A wise man once told me, 'Do what today calls you to do, right up until the day you can't do it anymore.'" This scene was symbolic of Emma's life. What was her legacy?

11. Emma's demise drives Caleb to a deeper understanding of grace, yet it makes Levi revert back to legalism with renewed vigor. What is it that causes people to have completely different reactions to the same event?

12. In the final chapter Caleb gives the width of a peso to the law and everything else to grace, but then he takes the peso one step further. Discuss the significance and meaning behind that last peso.