

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Romans 1:16, the apostle Paul makes a bold declaration: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” What do you think it means to be ashamed of the gospel?
2. Is there ever a legitimate reason not to share the gospel? Can you give examples of what might be a legitimate reason and what would be an excuse?
3. Can you think of times you’ve been bold about sharing your faith and times when you’ve been reluctant—or even ashamed? Can you explain what motivated you either way? Do you think God wants us to share our faith, even if we haven’t been called to the “mission field” as it’s generally understood? What might be a broader definition of mission field?
4. First Corinthians 1:18 tells us, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” What do you think this means? Do the words make you feel more inclined or less inclined to share your faith with an unbeliever? And why?
5. Do you know people who see the salvation message as foolishness? Have you ever tried to explain to an unbeliever what the Christian life is all about, only to be ridiculed? Patronized? Made to feel defensive?
6. Have you ever tried to hold an unbeliever to the same

- moral standard as yours? Should you? Who or what brings a person to a saving knowledge of Christ? Without the mind of Christ, can that person even understand he or she is lost?
7. If you found yourself in Brill's circumstances, dialoguing with your attacker, do you think you would have the courage to share your faith? Do you think Brill's firm belief that when she died she would be with the Lord gave her strength?
 8. Why do you think Brill's persistence in the face of death made an impression on Merrick Fountain—was it just what she said about God, or was it more than that?
 9. Do you agree with Brill's assertion that everything happens for a reason—even the really difficult things? If so, can you give a Scripture that supports it? Have you ever seen evidence of this in your own life? Could you believe God would use it for good even without seeing evidence?
 10. Romans 8:28 makes a strong statement of faith: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." How did God use Brill's dire circumstances for good in this story? If she had been murdered, would that have negated the truth of Romans 8:28? Is it possible that a believer's suffering, even at the hands of a killer, might serve God's higher purpose? Is that hard for you to accept? Be honest.
 11. Vanessa's sinful choices resulted in an unwanted pregnancy, and her choice not to abort the baby resulted in a severed relationship. Both choices, one wrong and one right,

initially brought her sorrow. What was it that motivated her to make the right choice and not abort the baby? Do you believe she could have been happy for long if she had gotten an abortion? Or if Ty had changed his mind about breaking up with her?

12. Do you think God can use even our mistakes for His higher purpose? How did He use Vanessa's good and bad choices to bring Ty to the place of realizing he needed God?
13. Which do you think is the better teacher: blessing or suffering? Does God use both? Which has made a bigger impact in your life?
14. Which do you think is more important if we are to be ambassadors of the gospel—what we say or what we do? Or can the two be separated? Which do you think is more likely to offend an unbeliever—our sin? Our hypocrisy? Our apathy?
15. If you could meet one of the characters in this story, which one would it be? What would you talk about? What did you take away from this story?