

ANGRY

Discussion Guide

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ANGRY DISCUSSION GUIDE

Ephesians 4:26-27 (MSG). *Go ahead and be angry. You do well to be angry—but don't use your anger as fuel for revenge. And don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry. Don't give the Devil that kind of foothold in your life.*

Chapter 1

1. Emma says she's looking for a thrill or trying to get attention. Do you ever feel as though something is lacking in your life? What do you do to try to fill that void?

Romans 15:13 (MSG). *Oh! May the god of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!*

Habakkuk 3:18 (MSG). *I'm singing joyful praise to God. I'm turning cartwheels of joy to my Savior God.*

2. How does God say we're supposed to fill ourselves up, and where are we supposed to find excitement, joy, and acceptance?

Chapter 2

1. Emma struggles with how she should handle the fight she thinks her mom and dad had. Have you ever heard your parents fight? How did it make you feel?

Read Romans 5:3-5 (MSG). *We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next.*

Psalms 55:22 (MSG). *Pile your troubles on GOD's shoulders—he'll carry your load, he'll help you out.*

2. Who can you always go to with problems? How will He make you feel?

Chapters 3–4

1. There is something that really excites Emma and changes the way she approaches almost everything. What is that?
2. What is the thing that puts a spring in your step? The thing that helps you escape your problems and stresses and brings you great joy?

Read 2 Timothy 1:6-7 (MSG). *The special gift of ministry you received when I laid hands on you and prayed—keep that ablaze! God doesn't want us to be shy with his gifts, but bold and loving and sensible.*

1. Corinthians 12:7-8 (MSG). *Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the spirit, and to all kinds of people! The variety is wonderful.*

Romans 12:6 (NASB). *Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly.*

Ephesians 1:11-12 (MSG). *It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.*

3. What is your special gift?
4. According to these passages, how does God want you to use your special gift?

Chapter 5

1. How does Emma's dad make her feel? Has anyone ever made you feel guilty or uneasy when you haven't been at fault?

Read 1 Peter 3:9 (CLB). *Don't repay evil for evil. Don't snap back at those who say unkind things about you. Instead, pray for God's help for them, for we are to be kind to others, and God will bless us for it.*

Romans 12:21 (NASB). *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

2. What does the Bible say about handling people who aren't acting kindly?

Chapters 6–8

1. In these chapters, Emma is finding out about and reacting to the disruptive news of her parents' divorce. Have you ever felt as if your world had been turned upside down? If so, when?

Read Psalm 34:4 (CLB). *I cried to him and he answered me! He freed me from all my fears.*

Psalm 46:1-3 (MSG). *God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need him. We stand fearless at the cliff-edge of doom, courageous in seastorm and earthquake, before the rush and roar of oceans, the tremors that shift mountains.*

Philippians 4:19 (MSG). *You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus.*

2. According to the above passages, where can you go if your world is crashing down?
3. How will God take care of you?

Chapters 9–10

1. In this chapter, we meet Natalie. She is not Emma's favorite person, partly because of her personality but also partly because Emma is jealous of Natalie's singing talent. There will always be people we meet who get under our skin. Is there anyone who drives you crazy? Keep the name to yourself, but imagine the person in your head.

Read James 3:16 (NASB). *Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.*

Galatians 5:26 (MSG). *We will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.*

2. After reading these passages, how should you deal with your feelings about the person you imagined in question 1?
3. How would you counsel a friend to handle someone who drove them as crazy as Natalie drives Emma?

Chapters 11–12

1. Emma asks God how He could let her dad cheat on her mom. Sometimes life deals us some pretty crummy cards. Read and ponder the following:

1 Corinthians 1:9 (MSG). *He will never give up on you. Never forget that.*

1 Peter 4:19 (CLB). *If you are suffering according to God's will, keep on doing what is right, and trust yourself to the God who made you, for he will never fail you.*

James 1:2-4 (CLB). *Is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy, for when the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it grow, and don't try to squirm out of your problems. For when your patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, strong in character, full and complete.*

2. How do you think God wants us to handle the tough times?

Chapter 13

1. How does Emma feel when she gets the part?

Read Philippians 4:13 (NASB). *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

2. When was the last time God did something great for you (it could be something as minor as getting a great parking spot on a rainy day or something huge like making a team or getting a job)? Did you acknowledge that the greatness was because of Him? If not, take a minute now to thank God for something great He has done or is doing in your life.

Chapter 14

1. Emma feels as though she should pray but that she doesn't have time to in the midst of all the craziness swirling around her. Have you ever felt too busy to pray? If so, describe that time.

Read Romans 8:26 (MSG). *If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans.*

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (MSG). *Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.*

Romans 12:12 (MSG). *Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder.*

Philippians 4:6 (NASB). *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

2. What does the Bible say about finding time to pray?

Chapter 15

1. Melissa goes out on a limb by offering that she would pray with Emma. Melissa is usually timid and Emma is clearly in a snit. Describe a time when you felt you should pray with someone but were intimidated.

Read Romans 1:12 (CLB). *Then, too, I need your help, for I want not only to share my faith with you but to be encouraged by yours: Each of us will be a blessing to the other.*

Acts 1:8 (NASB). *You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*

Acts 4:20 (MSG). *As for us, there's no question—we can't keep quiet about what we've seen and heard.*

Matthew 18:19-20 (MSG). *When two of you get together on anything at all on earth and make a prayer of it, my Father in heaven goes into action. And when two or three of you are together because of me, you can be sure that I'll be there.*

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (MSG). *Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind.*

2. How do you think Melissa found the strength to offer prayer?
3. The next time you feel God nudging you to pray with someone, how will you act?

Chapters 16–18

1. Emma's attention is grabbed by the Third Day song "My Hope Is in You." What does the word *hope* mean to you?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:13 (MSG). *Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly.*

Hebrews 11:1 (CLB). *What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead.*

Philippians 3:14 (MSG). *I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.*

2. God sees that hope in your heart. What are you truly hoping for right now? Can you share it?

Chapters 19

1. Emma is scared to eat dinner with her dad, angry at him for all he's done, confused about how she feels toward her mom, and lonely and sad about how all of this makes her feel. Is it okay to get upset?

Read Psalm 55:5 (NASB). *Fear and trembling come upon me; and horror has overwhelmed me.*

Job 3:24 (NASB). *My cries pour out like water.*

2. King David and Job were both in anguish. Read on to see how they handled it:

Psalm 55:16 (NASB). *As for me, I shall call upon God, and the LORD will save me.*

Job 1:22 (MSG). *Not once through all this did Job sin; not once did he blame God.*

3. According to the following passages, how should we handle our grief?

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NASB). *My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.*

Romans 8:31 (NASB). *If God is for us, who is against us?*

Chapters 20–21

1. Emma feels defeated and abandoned. Money's tight. No one seems to notice her exciting role in *Les Mis*, even though it means everything to her. She challenges God's grand plan when things continue to go downhill.

John 16:33 (NASB). *These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.*

2 Corinthians 12:10 (MSG). *I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become.*

2 Corinthians 4: 8-9 (CLB). *We are pressed on every side by troubles, but not crushed and broken. We are perplexed because we don't know why things happen as they do, but we don't give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us.*

2. How are we instructed to handle God's plans when everywhere we look appears bleak?

Chapter 22–23

1. Things have been really tense in the household. Laughter, started with a silly comment from a five-year-old, breaks the tension. Can you name a time when things were stressful and something funny totally changed your mood?

Romans 12:15 (MSG). *Laugh with your happy friends when they're happy.*

Job 8:21 (MSG). *God will let you laugh again; you'll raise the roof with shouts of joy.*

2. What does God have to say about laughter?
3. How can you bring more laughter into your life?

Chapters 24–25

1. Emma hears God telling her, "I don't care what you've done. We're going to start right here, right now. I will give you the gifts to help you get to the next place—not silver, but what you need, and I will trust you to do what's right. Don't worry; you'll make some mistakes. But I'll help you get back up when you fall. All I ask in return is that you love Me."
2. Insert yourself into this conversation and listen to God telling *you* these same words. Do you believe Him? Do you believe that He will completely forgive you?

Colossians 1:21-23 (MSG). *You yourselves are a case study of what he does. At one time you all had your backs turned to God, thinking rebellious thoughts of him, giving him trouble every chance you got. But now, by giving himself completely at the Cross, actually dying for you, Christ brought you over to God's side and put your lives together, whole and holy in his presence. You don't walk away from a gift like that! You stay grounded and steady in that bond of trust, constantly tuned in to the Message, careful not to be distracted or diverted. There is no other Message—just this one.*

Ephesians 2:4-5 (MSG). *Immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us!*

3. Do you believe He'll give you what you need?

2 Thessalonians 1:2 (MSG). *Our God gives you everything you need, makes you everything you're to be.*

Jeremiah 30:22 (MSG). *You'll be my very own people, I'll be your very own God.*

Romans 10:11 (NASB). *The Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."*

4. Do you believe that all He asks in return is for you to love Him?

Matthew 6:33 (NASB). *Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

1 John 4:17 (MSG). *When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us.*

Romans 10:9 (NASB). *If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

5. After reading these passages, name somewhere in your life you need God to take care of you. Turn it over to Him.

Chapter 26

1. Emma blows her rehearsal, gets home late, and has dishes to do, but none of it bothers her tonight despite how usually high-strung she can be. What kinds of things drive you crazy?
2. Did you know that no matter how insane life gets, God can calm you down and give you the same kind of peace He gave Emma?

Read Romans 8:37-39 (NASB). *In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

3. What are the empty spaces in your life that you cannot fill by yourself?

Read Psalm 121 (NASB). *I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun will not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul. The LORD will guard your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever.*

Ephesians 3:18-19 (CLB). *May you be able to feel and understand, as all God's children should, how long, how wide, how deep, and how high his love really is and experience this love for yourselves though it is so great that you will never see the end of it or fully know or understand it. And so at last you will be filled up with God himself.*

4. Take a minute now to pray to God that He will fill in all the crevices in your life and that you will allow Him to.