

Precedent

Discussion Guide

1. A precedent is “something done or said that may serve as an example or rule to authorize or justify a subsequent act”. Which characters or actions serve as precedent-setters for this story? Consider these: Brad and Jack, Chuck and Shannon. Brad and Bobbi. Are there others? Are there emotional precedents that factor in?
2. The storyline in *Precedent* is a wrenching one. How are the challenges to Chuck and Bobbi’s marriage different than in the previous two books? Are they better equipped to face them?
3. Several of the characters wrestle with the devastating effects of guilt. Discuss the reasons Chuck, Jack and Shannon feel guilt and whether or not it’s justified. Is there a place in a believer’s life for guilt? Can it ever serve a positive purpose?
4. Discuss how Bobbi’s grief changed once Shannon left home. Why was Shannon’s presence so critical for her own healing?
5. There is no doubt Dylan Snider preyed on Shannon. How did he accomplish it? Does this represent the typical method Satan uses to prey on us? Could Shannon have protected herself?
6. When Chuck and Shannon’s relationship fractures, she accuses him of bringing a curse on their family because of his affair years earlier. Is there any merit to that accusation? Is it possible to live under a curse and under grace at the same time?

7. Toward the end of Chapter 8, Glen Dillard uses a mosaic analogy to try and explain how our sins figure in to God's sovereign plan. Does the analogy hold up? Is Glen correct that our responses to our situations are the key? Discuss how Chuck, Bobbi, Shannon and Jack respond to their situations. How does God work even when they respond poorly?

8. Ed Reynolds tells Chuck that seeing Jack will give him a sense of peace and forgiveness, then meeting Jack face to face, Jack shows him "Jesus' kind of love." Think of the ways God has used Jack. Does he exemplify the way God can redeem our sins? How would the Molinsky family be different without him?

9. At one point, Bobbi clutches the telephone, praying that if Shannon would call, she would see a doctor to treat her cancer. The phone doesn't ring. Did that mean God didn't want her to treat her cancer? Is that type of approach and prayer wrong? Why or why not? Have you ever prayed similar prayers? Were they effective?

10. When Bobbi tells Jack she has decided not to treat her cancer, he fires back with the accusation that her pain has become her god. Is he right? How do things change when Bobbi realizes that God Himself lost a Son to murder?

11. In chapter 20, Bobbi reads a section from Brad's notebook on a passage from Habakkuk 3. Here is Brad's paraphrase: *"Even though I have nothing now, no hope for tomorrow and no prospect that anything is ever going to change for the better, I WILL CHOOSE to rejoice in God, my God, my salvation. He is my strength and He enables me to walk through these fires with confidence, like it was my natural habitat. I WILL CHOOSE."* How necessary is it for us as believers to choose faith and joy in all our circumstances? Do you agree with Bobbi that knowing the "right" response doesn't always make it easier to live out?