

Discussion Questions

1. Stacy cares deeply for animals, even acknowledging that she prefers them to most people. Can you relate to Stacy's love for animals? Has an animal in need, like Xena, ever worked its way into your heart?
2. Though he's attracted to Stacy, Alex is wary about beginning a romance after his last relationship broke his heart and damaged his credibility as an agent. Has a past hurt ever held you back from starting something new?
3. Stacy and Alex quickly bond over their Cajun roots, even as they clash over the case. How connected are you to your hometown or state? How much as it shaped who you are?
4. Whitt's high IQ often makes him sound like an adult, even a "little professor," but his emotional immaturity can also make him seem younger than his age. Where do you see this tension as he makes decisions? What challenges do you think this will pose for Stacy as his foster mother?
5. Stacy is torn between a desire to serve and improve her neighborhood and a desire to give Whitt a safe home. Would you have encouraged her to stay or to move? Why?
6. Alex once had a relationship with God but has been distant from Him for some time. Stacy has a more active faith but still realizes she's not as close to God as she used to be. How do both characters change over the course of the story? Has there been a time in your own life when you found yourself distant from God? What happened?
7. Long before she began the legal process to adopt Whitt, Stacy took care of him when his parents abused and neglected him. In a similar way, Dexter and Eva Rayken stepped in to care for Alex after his own parents died. Is there someone who has served as a surrogate parent or mentor in your own life—whether in place of your parents or alongside them? How has that relationship benefited you?
8. While Stacy has living parents who love her, their relationship is still slowly rebuilding after a long-ago breach. She believes that forgiving her parents is "a choice, an act of obedience." Do you agree? Whom in your own life have you struggled to forgive?
9. Whitt struggles to believe in God as a loving heavenly Father. Why is this concept so difficult for him to accept? How does Stacy's role in Whitt's life impact his view of God?
10. What do you think is ahead for Alex, Stacy, and Whitt? Imagine their lives a year after they story's end—what do you see?