

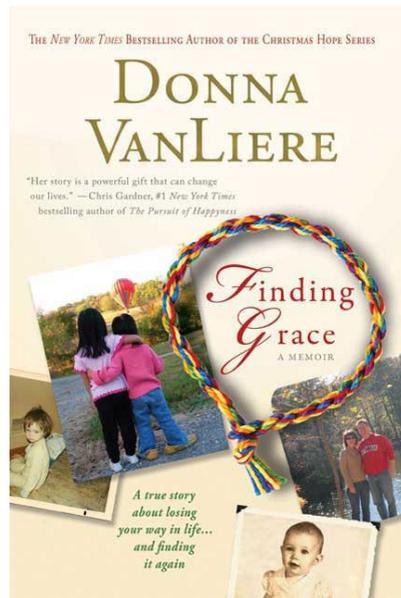
READING GROUP GUIDE

Finding Grace

By Donna VanLiere

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About this Guide

The following author biography and list of questions about *Finding Grace* are intended as resources to aid individual readers and book groups who would like to learn more about the author and this book. We hope that this guide will provide you a starting place for discussion, and suggest a variety of perspectives from which you might approach *Finding Grace*.

About the Book

Finding Grace is the powerful, often humorous, and deeply moving story of one woman's journey of broken dreams. It is the story of how a painful legacy of the past is confronted and met with peace. This book is for anyone who has struggled to understand why our desires—even the simplest ones—are sometimes denied or who has questioned where God is when we need him most. This story is about one woman's unlikely road to motherhood. Finally, it's a book about the "undeserved gift which is life itself." It's the story of "Finding Grace."

About the Author

Donna VanLiere is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* best-selling author. Her much-loved Christmas Hope series includes *The Christmas Shoes* and *The Christmas Blessing*, both of which were adapted into movies for CBS Television; *The Christmas Secret*; *The Christmas Journey*; and *The Christmas Hope*, which was adapted into a film by Lifetime. She is also the author of *The Angels of Morgan Hill*. VanLiere is the recipient of a Retailer's Choice Award for Fiction, a Dove Award, a Silver Angel Award, an Audie Award for best inspirational fiction, and a nominee for a Gold Medallion Book of the Year. She is a gifted speaker who speaks regularly at conferences. She lives in Franklin, Tennessee, with her husband and their children.



READING GROUP GUIDE

Discussion Questions

- 1) Donna relates that it wasn't until she was in college and breaking up with The Boyfriend that she really comprehended grace in her life. Can you identify your first comprehension of grace? Do you know what it is?
- 2) Mrs. Elrick told Donna that she could "hear the language of words" but it wasn't until many years later that Donna understood what that meant. Do you feel that you've fully grasped how you've been gifted? Are you living out that gift or still journeying toward it?
- 3) Gertrude Stein asked on her deathbed, "What is the answer? In that case, what is the question?" Donna said the most important questions she was asking at the time was, "How much does the job pay and how many weeks vacation?" Are you asking your life the really important questions? What is your life trying to tell you and how are you answering?
- 4) Donna kept the molestation from her childhood a secret until she was an adult. How can children be taught to share these experiences? Why do you think some adult victims are unable to share?
- 5) Uncle Remus said, "Boy, whatever you is and wherever you is, don't be what you ain't, because when you is what you ain't, you isn't." Can you relate to this? Have you ever asked yourself the question, "What ain't you?"
- 6) Donna and her husband describe their path to parenthood as their greatest pain but also their greatest joy. How does pain and disappointment shape us? What would it be like if we got everything we wanted when we wanted it?
- 7) Was there any story or event in the book that has caused you to reconsider a situation from your own life in a new light? What does that mean for you?
- 8) What is the wisdom of grace? How have you experienced grace in your own life?
- 9) Donna talked about wandering around in the desert of Missouri. What allowed her to continue to move forward through that period? Have you had a desert period or are you in one now? How did you get through it?
- 10) It was impossible for the Israelites to receive a gift when their backs were turned to the giver. Has there been a period in your life when you turned your back on an opportunity, a gift, or on God? What happened as a result?



READING GROUP GUIDE

11) Many years into her struggle with infertility Donna related how she finally took her hands off the wheel of the plan she'd been driving. She also described the man in AA who said, "What if God's will isn't any good? I mean, what if it isn't as good as mine?" Why do we so often think of God's plan and dream for our life as being inept? What will it mean in your own life if you take your hands off the wheel?

12) Russian author and dramatist, Nikolai Gogol wrote, "Great is the God who makes us wise. And how does He make us wise? By that very grief which we flee and from which we seek to hid ourselves." Is there wisdom that comes from broken dreams? When dreams have shattered, how can we dream again?

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