

Reflections Chapter 1

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. What words jump into your mind when you hear the term “mid-life”?
 2. How do you feel about being in this season of life? What scares you? Excites you?
 3. The word “crisis” is often linked to mid-life. Why do you think this is the case? Would you use it to describe your own experience?
 4. How does your relationship with God affect the way you deal with change?
 5. What helpful lessons for real life do you find in the following Scriptures: Hebrews 13:18; Isaiah 40:28-31; Psalm 27:13-14; Colossians 3:1-2; Philippians 3:13-14.
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Reflections Chapter 2

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. What difficult transition have you encountered in mid-life? How did you handle it?
 2. What or who was helpful to you when going through
 - the loss involved in farewells;
 - the sense of disconnection and loneliness of *fallow time*;
 - the awareness of a fresh beginning.
 3. What factors were sources of stress to you?
 4. How did you manage your stress? How do you manage stress in your life right now?
 5. List the stress reducers you find in the following verses from Psalms: 9:9-10; 18:1-3; 25:1-2, 4-5, 15; 34:15-18; 37:5-6.
 6. How are you growing personally and spiritually at this time in your life?
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Reflections Chapter 3

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. What signs of growing older did you notice first? What was your response?
 2. How do you think your view of yourself is affected by our culture’s emphasis on youth and beauty?
 3. Because of the high value our society places on looking young and fit, the process of growing old can lead to a diminishing sense of self-worth. Do you have a plan for personally overcoming this?
 4. What helps do you find in the following Scriptures at this time in your life? Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Psalm 92:12-15; Proverbs 31:30; Isaiah 46:4; 2 Corinthians 4:16; Colossians 3:1-2.
 5. What steps do you need to implement today as you think of caring for your body now and in the years to come?
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Reflections Chapter 4

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. How did you feel about your husband when you were dating? What attracted you to him?

2. Would you rate your marriage as fulfilling, frustrating, or somewhere in between? What makes you feel this way? Be specific.
 3. Use a word picture to describe your marriage now. Use another word picture to describe how you long for it to be. What bridges need to be built to go from one to the other?
 4. List the instructions found in the following verses: How could applying those help you build those bridges? Ephesians 4:29-32; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16; Hebrews 12:1-3; James 1:19-22.
 5. Read Romans 12:1-2. Try to detail how society's view of marriage and men has influenced you. How can you reclaim a Biblical perspective?
 6. What activities draw you and your husband closer? Begin to put at least one idea into practice each week.
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Reflections Chapter 5

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

What aspect of motherhood have you enjoyed most?

1. Do you struggle with releasing your child? If you do, try to identify what you are feeling. If you don't, what's helped you in this process?
 2. Make a list of fears you wrestle with regarding your child. What effect do they have on you? How can you handle them differently?
 3. How do you view yourself if your child doesn't live up to your expectations? What changes do you need to make in your thinking about yourself, your child and how others view you?
 4. In what ways do you still try to control your young adult children? What boundaries do you need to impose on yourself so that they are free to become fully responsible for their own lives?
 5. If you could design an ideal relationship with your adult children in the years to come, one in which they are free to grow as individuals, what would it be like? Pray about it and ask God to show you what you can do to bring this about.
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Reflections Chapter 6

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. What experience have you had with losing an elderly family member? How did you feel about it?
 2. Who took care of your grandparents in their later years? What effect did this have on your attitude toward caring for your parents?
 3. What words flash into your mind at the thought of your parents dying? Describe the emotions you feel. How do your own fears of mortality influence these thoughts?
 4. What memories evoke negative emotions of anger, fear, resentment or hurt? What have you done with these feelings? Do you need help forgiving your mom or dad for old hurts? If so, who will you talk with about this?
 5. What warm memories do you have of your parents? Recall these times with them. List specific ways your mom or dad influenced your life. Whenever you can, encourage them by describing how their character and personality affected your life.
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Reflections Chapter 7

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. Do you have any regrets that spring to mind? How would you describe their effect on your life?
 2. What thoughts and feelings do your “if onlys” evoke? How do you handle them?
 3. How does Paul’s response to the past, described in Philippians 3:12-14, challenge you?
 4. What’s your tendency—to look at mud or stars? Why?
 5. Can you identify with Pam’s story of anger, bitterness and blame? Is there someone you still blame? Do you blame yourself? Could you be blaming God?
 6. What lessons from Joseph’s story (Genesis 37-50) can help you let go of blame?
 7. Which of the steps do you need to take in order to receive power to let go of the past? Reject blame and bitterness; forgive the offender; discern between real and false guilt; get to know God better?
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Reflections Chapter 8

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. What new experiences have you encountered in the last few years? In the last year?
 2. How did you feel as you contemplated them? Excited, fearful, peaceful, eager?
 3. What self-talk did you encounter? Did it spur you on or cause you to shrink back?
 4. In what areas of decisions do you say, “I can’t do that”? Is it true? What could happen, both positively and negatively, if you said, yes?
 5. Do emotions have much power over your life? In what ways do they help or hinder your growth?
 6. What choices do you need to make that will honor God and satisfy your urge to grow?
 7. How does God’s view of you, as described in His Word, change how you view yourself?
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Reflections Chapter 9

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. Think back again to the early dreams you had for your life. How do they compare to what actually happened?
 2. How have your life experiences changed you?
 3. How would you describe your personality? How do you think others would describe you?
 4. What do you appreciate about who you are today? How would you like to fine-tune this person?
 5. Where do your strengths lie? In people, data, or object skills? Describe a satisfying job or activity where you use these skills.
 6. Of all the roles you’ve experienced, which ones were most fulfilling? Why?
 7. If you’d had the option to do anything different with your life, what do you think would have brought you the most fulfillments?
 8. If you were free to do anything you wanted to do from now on, what would it be?
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Reflections Chapter 10

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. When have you felt God guiding you? How did this happen?
2. What choices have you made through the years specifically because you’re a follower of Jesus?
3. Have you ever thought your life was dull and aimless? What was missing from your life? How did the situation change?
4. Describe a time when you felt exuberant after some experience. What made you feel so excited?

5. What is your understanding of spiritual gifts? If you've already found your area of Christian service, what fulfillment does it give you? If you haven't, where might you begin to serve in order to discover how God has gifted you?
6. How would you describe what stirs you deeply? What has this passion moved you to do in the past—get involved, share with others or give financially?
7. What area do you feel God is challenging you to get involved with? What's your response?
8. As you consider Jesus' clear focus and sense of purpose, what changes do you need to make to accomplish your life purposes?

Reflections Chapter 11

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. What formed the core of your life twenty years ago?
2. Reflect on two or three major changes that have occurred since that stage of your life. How have these changes affected the way you live today?
3. As you fantasize about aging, what do you picture yourself doing at sixty, seventy, eighty and older? Where would you like to be living?
4. If you had to suddenly take charge of financial, legal and medical matters affecting your future years, could you do it? What will you do about those areas that need attention?
5. What hopes and desires do you have for your retirement years?
6. If you have a husband, what are his hopes and desires? Do your desires mesh or differ?
7. In thinking about the retirement years, what changes to your routine and relationship do you and your husband anticipate? When would be a good time to start talking about your future?
8. How have the issues and changed relationships mentioned in this chapter affected your thoughts and plans regarding the later years?

Reflections Chapter 12

The following questions are for your own reflection or to use as a basis for group discussion.

1. What have you chosen to do in the last few years that pushed you beyond the familiar and comfortable?
2. How would you describe where you are spiritually? What do you wish were different? How could you make this happen?
3. What do different friends contribute to your life? What do you add to their lives?
4. Describe the warning signs that signal you're getting stressed, about to blow a fuse, or headed toward burnout? What have you learned to do in order to take care of yourself?
5. Your body and your mind are gifts from God. How are you nurturing them?
6. Think of a situation that catapults you into a negative frame of mind. If you changed your attitude and actions, how could this help you to have a positive frame of mind?
7. What work has brought you the greatest satisfaction? Where will you invest your energies in the years that lie ahead?