

Run With The Horses Discussion Questions

There are more questions in this guide than we will have space for on our discussion night. Use them as a guide for your deepening thoughts as you navigate the book.

Pre-amble Questions

1. Overall impressions of the book (rate 1-10)?
2. What were some of the things you most appreciated? Feel free to share a quote.
3. What was something you struggled or disagreed with? Feel free to share a quote.

Chapter 1

4. Peterson states "The difficult pastoral art is to encourage people to grow in excellence and to live selflessly, at one and the same time to lose the self and find the self." (17) How do we resolve the tension between these two truths?

Chapter 2

5. This chapter explored the concept of names and true identity even stating, "Jeremiah kept on doing what everybody starts out doing, being human. And he didn't stop." Does your name have a meaning that you are helped by? How would you define being fully human?

Chapter 3

6. Peterson states "The word saint did not refer to the quality or virtue of their acts, but to the kind of life to which they had been chosen" on page 39. Do you think this concept is something which we should reclaim or is there a flaw in the practice?

Chapter 4

7. If Peterson is right that we need to deeply embed the two visions of Jeremiah, summed up on the bottom of page 54, in our outlook on the world, where do we lack such imagination or conviction? Why?

Chapter 5

8. What are the images without substance we can be tempted to hold individually? Within western christian culture today?

Chapter 6

9. I have observed a tendency to avoid the kneading, pressing, pulling

inherent to the process of God's formational work in my own life. Why do we avoid such things and what is forming us in its place?

Chapter 7

10. On page 81 & 82 Peterson brings out the conflicting expectations people can have about the purpose of church community. How do people have such varying views of the intent of life in the Christian community? How can we better invite people to the formative/restorative process of spiritual formation (feel free to use examples from the rest of the chapter or your own observations)?

Chapter 8

12. What part of Jeremiah's prayer and God's response resonated most with you?

13. Do you agree with Peterson's statement, "Prayer is the secret work that develops a life that is thoroughly authentic and deeply human." (103)

Chapter 9

14. Eugene, through the story of Jeremiah, explores the inconsistent and frail nature of the human heart in this chapter. How can we cultivate persistence in our own lives?

Chapter 10

15. What is the message of scripture you cling to that that cannot be destroyed? What are the things you once held on to that you have let go of for good or for ill?

Chapter 11

16. Where have you observed the tendency to make big what couldn't be made beautiful in the Christian expression around you? What are the downsides of the crowd?

Chapter 12

17. On page 148 Peterson states "Jeremiah's letter is a rebuke and a challenge: "Quit sitting around feeling sorry for yourselves. The aim of the person of faith is not to be as comfortable as possible but to live as deeply and thoroughly as possible--to deal with the reality of life, discover truth, create beauty, act out love." Do you agree with this quote? Why or why not?

Chapter 13

18. Which of the three people interacting with Jeremiah stood out to you most? Why?

Chapter 14

19. Eugene briefly explores the concept of judgement within this chapter as an entry point for God's grace in our lives. Have you seen judgement in this way before?

20. What could "biblical hope" look like in your life?

Chapter 15

21. How can we better learn from the wide world of Christian exploration in God without stepping into relativism?

Chapter 16

22. Eugene beautifully ends the book with this statement, "Life is ambiguous. There are loose ends. It takes maturity to live with the ambiguity and the chaos, the absurdity and the untidiness. If we refuse to live with it, we exclude something, and what we exclude may very well be the essential and dear - the hazards of faith, the mysteries of God." Why is this a beautiful promise instead of a disheartening fact?