

Goodnight to My Thoughts of You

Small Group Discussion Guide

Introduction:

This devotional guide provides discussion questions for small groups or book clubs that are reading the book *Goodnight to My Thoughts of You*. The guide can also be used as a resource for individual reflection.

Feel free to print this document so you can write down your thoughts. Answer the questions that interest you. Some are deeper than others.

Look inside your heart, and pray for wisdom from God. I pray that you will make it through every hardship in your life and that you will become a stronger person because of it. I also pray that you will share your own story one day and hold someone else's hand as they walk through the valley.

Introduction for Group Leaders:

Girls love to talk. Especially about guys, friends, school, parents, and themselves. Girls learn from one another by listening to each other and allowing their peers to share their inner thoughts, opinions, and feelings in a safe environment where there is no fear of reproach.

Below you will find a list of 7 optional materials you can provide for each girl to help her remember what she and her friends are saying, as well as 10 suggestions for how to use this book with your small group of high school girls.

Optional Materials List:

1. Discussion Questions
2. Prayer Request Journals
3. Note Cards
4. Extra Sheets of Paper
5. Pens/Pencils
6. Watercolor Paints (Chapters 31-33)
7. Envelopes and Stamps (Chapters 34-36)

How to Use This Guide:

1. Print a set of questions for each person in the group.
2. Plan to meet with your small group weekly. Start each session with prayer.
3. Read *Goodnight to My Thoughts of You* to your girls. You may want to read one, two, or three chapters per week. There are 10 questions for every three chapters.
4. After you read, let the girls respond.
5. Read the questions for the section you just read out loud.
6. Have each girl choose one or two questions she would like to answer.
7. Let them talk; help them stay on topic.
8. Ask each girl to share one prayer request. Have everyone write down all the prayer requests in their prayer journals.
9. Go around the circle, each person praying for the person to her left.
10. Encourage the girls to write out more answers at home and bring them next time.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 1-3

1. Does anything stand out to you in Chapters 1-3?
2. What is your dream car?
3. What does a person's car tell you about their life? For example, a family van or a Porsche? What does your dream car say about your dream for your future?
4. Think of a person you know who is infatuated, or head-over-heels in love, with a guy. How does she act?
5. Have you ever felt like you could not control your feelings for a guy? Who was he? What was he like? Have you ever liked a guy who you knew was off-limits or out of reach, whether a famous actor or singer or a guy at school? How did you feel?
6. What is your most embarrassing moment?
7. Has God ever told you "no"? What was one of your prayers that God answered with the word "no"?
8. Think about a time when you went on a trip with friends or family. Why does a vacation or service project help you bond with others?
9. Do you think Miriam is crazy in these chapters or can you relate to her? Why?
10. **ACTIVITY:** What qualities do you look for in a friend? Write them down on a note card. Try to live out those qualities this week.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 4-6

1. What stands out to you in these chapters?
2. What feelings stir in your heart when you see your dad (or a photo of your dad)?
3. Has anyone ever called you when you didn't even know they had your number? Who was it and how did it make you feel?
4. What do you think Paul wants to talk to Miriam about after the Good Friday service? What does Miriam assume he wants to talk about?
5. Should Miriam have gone with Paul to City Walk? Why or why not? What would you have done?
6. What kind of clothes do you wear when you want to look really good? What do your clothes say about you?
7. Think of a guy who you like. What kind of clothes does he wear? What do his clothes say about him?
8. Have you ever experienced a dark force or spirit? If so, describe the situation and what happened.
9. If Miriam had not seen the strange evil spirit on the pier in Santa Barbara, how might the date have ended?
10. **ACTIVITY:** Miriam had already kissed a few guys, but then she read *Passion and Purity* and decided not to kiss another guy until her wedding day. Do you think she will live up to her promise? If you have a purity ring or a purity pledge, what have you decided that you will save for only you and your future husband? Draw a large circle, a ring, on a sheet of paper and write your pledge inside the ring. Be specific about where you choose draw the line with a guy, especially a guy you could see yourself marrying.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 7-9

1. Does anything stand out to you in these chapters?
2. If you found out you were pregnant at this time in your life today, what would you do?
3. When was the last time you talked to your mom? Does she know how you really feel these days? For example, what guy you like? Or what hurts you?
4. Do you have a job? What can you do to earn money for the things you want to buy?
5. Think about your life goals. Where do you imagine yourself working in ten years?
6. Do you think Miriam's mom loves her? Why?
7. What is the perfect prom dress for you? What color, style, and fabric? How much does it cost? If you already went to prom, describe your dress, hair, and makeup.
8. What is Miriam's reason for why she and Paul do not talk while he is away?
9. Choose a line or a few lines from one of Miriam's poems that describe how you feel today.
10. **ACTIVITY:** When Miriam feels emotional, she writes poems and stories. How do you express your emotions? Have you ever tried writing down your prayers in a journal? Write your requests and praises to God on a sheet of paper right now.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 10-12

1. What stands out to you in Chapters 10-12?
2. Name the people who you would love to have at your graduation.
3. How do you feel about using strong words, like curse words? What is a curse? Are curses real? What does the Bible say about curses?
4. Miriam ends her friendship with Lana instead of apologizing and mending it. What would you do if another person came in and damaged your relationship with someone you loved?
5. Where do you go when you need a place to be alone and rest?
6. Do you think Miriam should keep hoping and trying to make it work with Paul, or should she let him go? What signs has God given her?
7. Why does Miriam like Paul? Why is it so hard to force yourself to stop liking a guy?
8. What is your favorite movie?
9. What do you look for in a guy? Do you find yourself drawn to unpredictable guys? Steady, reliable guys?
10. **ACTIVITY:** Who is your best friend? List all of your past and present best friends and put a smiley face by the ones you still talk to, and a sad face by the ones you don't see or talk to anymore. Draw a heart by the names of people you want to keep in touch with for the rest of your life.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 13-15

1. What stands out to you in these chapters?
2. Have you ever wished you were never born? Have you ever thought about ending your life? What was going on in your life that made you feel that way?
3. Do you know anyone who has cut herself on purpose? Is she struggling with something that makes her feel unloved or alone? What can you do for a girl who cuts herself?
4. What thoughts go through your head when you know another girl likes the same guy you like?
5. Miriam confides in Kelly when she feels tempted to starve herself in order to lose weight. Who can you trust to listen to your struggles and pray for you?
6. What is your favorite food? Would you say you have a healthy relationship with food?
7. Miriam loves ballet. What do you like to do for exercise? Do you make time to do it?
8. Do you think you are pretty? Why is that such an awkward question? What makes you feel pretty?
9. Tell about one day, event, or circumstance when you knew, without a doubt, that God was real.
10. **ACTIVITY:** Dina knows she needs God after she is raped; the experience is too traumatic for her to handle on her own. Jesus promises to come into your life and help you with your struggles. With a quiet heart, pray right now, and ask Jesus to help you understand how he is a part of your life. How does he want you to live your life?

Discussion Questions for Chapters 16-18

1. What stands out to you in Chapters 16-18?
2. Where do you want to go to college? What do you think about getting a master's degree or a doctorate?
3. If you were moving into a college dorm room tomorrow, what item would you bring with you to remind you of someone special?
4. If Miriam is in love with Paul, why does she start dating Tyler?
5. What are your memories of your worst haircut ever?
6. Have you ever had a moment with a teacher or parent when all of the sudden you realized they were a real person? Who was it, and what happened?
7. Why does Miriam want to scream at her mom?
8. Miriam misses a few clues that she and Paul are not meant for each other. What are some of the clues?
9. What is the worst "bad news" you have heard in your life?
10. **ACTIVITY:** Can you relate to anything that Miriam is going through in her life? Write about it in your journal. Then write a prayer for each person in your family.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 19-21

1. What sticks in your mind from Chapters 19-21?
2. Are you the type of person to hide how you really feel, or do you typically say or show how you feel?
3. Bianca tells Miriam that Paul is too old for her anyway. What do you think about someone your age dating a person ten years older? Ten years younger?
4. Do you know any funny jokes? Have you ever been the victim of a bad joke? How did it make you feel? Have you ever offended a friend with a bad joke? What happened?
5. Have you ever dated someone even though you knew you weren't right for each other? Who was it? Why do people do this?
6. Do you like to run? Would you consider training for a marathon or some other event that was outside your comfort zone and tested your endurance? Why or why not?
7. What does it feel like to cross paths with someone you idolize?
8. Why does Miriam resist getting help from a counselor? Explain how it feels to have someone tell you that you need counseling.
9. Is Miriam glad she went to counseling? What does the counselor help Miriam to see?
10. **ACTIVITY:** Who or what is on the throne of your heart? On a sheet of paper, draw a heart. Write down what you care and think about most inside the heart.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 22-24

1. What stands out to you in these chapters?
2. What is your personal choice about drinking alcohol?
3. Who has gorgeous eyes? Why are girls drawn to guys with nice eyes?
4. Bryson made Miriam think he liked her, but really he wasn't interested in her at all. Why would a guy do this? What are signs that people give each other to let them know they are interested? How can you be sure?
5. Why can't Miriam and Paul continue a friendship after he gets married?
6. Why does Miriam's confusion about life start to clear up after she commits to not date anyone? Would this work for everyone? Or just people who date too much?
7. Miriam and Tyler are still friends a year after they break up. Miriam and Paul don't talk at all. What's the difference? Are you still friends with any guys you dated?
8. Charlie had three college friends surprise him with a birthday cake. What does this say about him and/or the people who made the cakes?
9. Tell about a time you received a surprise note or gift from a guy friend. Do you think he liked you?
10. **ACTIVITY:** Describe your dream guy. Then draw a line through all the qualities that are not required for success in marriage and parenting. Write the important qualities on a note card and tuck it into your Bible.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 25-27

1. What stands out to you in your reading?
2. What's your opinion on who should pay for a date?
3. What is your favorite kind of flower?
4. Why was it weird for Miriam to go to Santa Barbara with Charlie? Why was it good?
5. What is your favorite coffee shop? Your favorite drink?
6. What was a surprise gift that you received that meant a lot to you? Who was it from?
7. Miriam goes to a New Year's Eve party at Charlie's house and everyone sleeps over. She almost makes the move to hold his hand, but then she decides not to. If she had held his hand before she knew for sure that she liked him, would it have messed up their friendship? Why or why not? How does your thinking change after things get physical?
8. What little things does Charlie do to show Miriam he cares for her?
9. Would you date a guy who is shorter than you or has crooked teeth? Why or why not?
10. **ACTIVITY:** What single guys do you know who will make great husbands and dads? Forget about how they look on the outside. Who do you know who loves Jesus? Is a hard worker? Loves children? Is upright and honest? List the guys' names here. Circle the names of guys who you love their spirit.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 28-30

1. What stands out to you in these chapters?
2. If you could go on a road trip with your friends for spring break, where would you go?
3. What is your favorite kind of music?
4. What fun traditions do you and your friends have?
5. Are your parents together or divorced? What words would you choose to describe their relationship?
6. Who do you know who has a great marriage? How do you know? What would happen to your faith in marriage if they got divorced? What do you think are the elements of a great marriage?
7. Charlie confesses to Miriam that he made mistakes with his ex-girlfriend. He says he is “ruined.” Is he really ruined or is that a lie that he believes about himself? Do you feel like you are ruined? What is the truth about the cleansing power of Jesus Christ?
8. When was the first time you learned about pornography? How old were you?
9. What does “Goodnight to My Thoughts of You” mean to you?
10. **ACTIVITY:** Where is your favorite place to go hiking? Plan a hike with your small group this week.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 31-33

1. What stands out to you in these chapters?
2. What states or countries have you visited?
3. What are some interesting customs in the different places you have traveled to?
4. What is your favorite ice cream? What is the worst ice cream flavor you can think of?
5. Where were you on September 11, 2001? How did you feel when you heard about the national crisis?
6. Who do you know who has been in a bad car accident? How old was the driver? Did anyone die?
7. Why do you think the kid who punched Miriam would become her favorite kid at camp?
8. Talk about a time in your life when you felt lonely. Who in your life will be there for you when you feel alone?
9. Have you ever had a vision from God? Or a dream that was like a vision from God? What was it? What do you think it means?
10. **ACTIVITY:** Grab a set of watercolor paints, a piece of paper, and a cup of water. Paint a picture of something that makes you smile every time you see it.

Discussion Questions for Chapters 34-36

1. What stands out to you in these chapters?
2. What do you think Jesus means when he says: “First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye,” (*Matthew 7:5*)?
3. Where is your computer? Is it located in a private or public area? What is something you do while you are on the computer that you probably shouldn’t do?
4. What makes you feel special and loved the most on your birthday? When someone makes you breakfast (acts of service), gives you a meaningful gift (gifts and surprises), writes you a card full of compliments (words of affirmation), gives you a big hug (physical affection), or spends the day with you (quality time)? (This question is inspired by Gary Chapman’s book *The Five Love Languages*.)
5. Is it okay for Miriam to be mad at her mom for writing in her sketchbook? Why or why not?
6. Miriam and Charlie decide to stop seeing each other for a while when Miriam returns from Vancouver. If they love each other, why do they stop seeing each other?
7. How do you know if someone really loves you? How does Miriam know that Charlie loves her?
8. Do you want your fiancée to pick out your engagement ring and surprise you, or do you want to choose it yourself? What is the significance and purpose of an engagement ring?
9. **ACTIVITY:** Write a letter by hand to someone you love. Tell them why you love them. Put a stamp on it and send it by mail.
10. **ACTIVITY:** Write a letter to God. Tell him how you feel today, what you are worried about, and what your dreams are. Seal the envelope, put it in your Bible, and write today’s date on the envelope. Then write the date one year from today. In one year, open the letter and read what you wrote.

Follow-Up Questions

1. Name five things in Miriam's life, from when she was 17 to 24 years old, which help her mature and prepare for marriage.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

2. Go back through the discussion questions and see if there is anything you would like to share or pray about that you didn't get to talk about earlier in the study.

3. Look back over the prayer requests from earlier in the study. Has God answered the prayers of anyone in your group? Thank God for hearing and answering your prayers.

4. **ACTIVITY:** Write a letter to your anonymous future husband. First, write a prayer for him. Then write a prayer about your future marriage and children. Finally, tell your husband the kind of wife you hope to be. Tell him your dreams and goals for your future. Seal the envelope and keep it in a safe place until your wedding day.

5. What are the next steps for you in your walk with Jesus? Check all that apply.
 - Get baptized
 - Pray and ask Jesus to enter your life
 - Talk to someone privately about something on your heart
 - Commit to reading the Bible every day
 - Commit to praying every day
 - Hang out with people who love Jesus
 - Find a church home
 - Seek professional help for a specific problem
 - Get rid of something that is ruining your life
 - Confess your sins
 - Learn more about how to live your life for Jesus
 - Apologize to someone who you have hurt in the past
 - Forgive someone who hurt you in the past
 - Find some good books that will strengthen your faith
 - Find a mentor who can meet with you weekly
 - Find a group of girls who you can meet with weekly

 - Other: _____