

1. How did you like this book? Did you enjoy reading it? Why or why not?
2. The story starts with Father Tim being pursued by a large dog, whom he eventually names Barnabas. Why do you think Father Tim does not want Barnabas? Have you ever had a pet choose you rather than you choosing the pet?
3. Dooley appears on the scene untamed and uninvited. What is it that makes Father Tim and Dooley aware that they need each other? How does Dooley contribute to Father Tim's life?
4. For someone in such a civic position, Father Tim prefers to live an introverted lifestyle. In the beginning he wishes Barnabas would leave him alone, when Miss Sadie gifts the church a painting which might be famous, he worries about the attention the church will receive, and when Cynthia comes along, he struggles to open himself to a relationship. Is this a strange reaction for someone you would normally expect to be extroverted and less anxious (pastor of a church)? Do Father Tim's reactions to life events influence your opinion about his character?
5. There is a large cast of characters in the book. Who were your two favorite characters? Why?
6. It appears that Miss Sadie may be related to Olivia Davenport. What do you think about this connection? Do you think that this connection might change their lives?
7. At the end of the book, the relationship between Father Tim and Cynthia is left without a full resolution. Were you left wanting more? How would you have ended the book in regard to their relationship?
8. There many Bible verses and several salvation experiences throughout the book. Name your favorite verse and its application in the book OR name your favorite salvation experience. Why did you make this choice?
9. In a pivotal conversation with Absalom Greer in Chapter 14, Absalom asks Father Tim, "Are you too exhausted to run and too scared to rest?" Father Tim realizes he is, in

fact, too scared to rest. Why is this true for him? Does it ring true to you in your own life? Have you experienced this fear of resting even in exhaustion?

10. When a stranger shows up at Father Tim's church, Father Tim tells the man, "I believe the question you may want to ask (about God) is not, "Are you up there?" but, "Are you down here?" He expounds on this by saying that another name for God is Immanuel, which means God with us. Has there been a time when you experienced the very real presence of God through someone else actions or an extraordinary event?

11. What role does prayer play in Father Tim's life? What role does/should prayer play in your life?

12. Is this a humorous book? If so, what was funny?

13. This is a very charming book—from the people to the place to the small-town drama. Would you want to visit Mitford? Do you know of a place like Mitford or a community like the one in Mitford?