

On the Same Page – December 2021
Lost December by Richard Paul Evans

Description for publicity:

A modern-day, Christmas-themed retelling of the story of the prodigal son, *Lost December* is a powerful tale about hope, redemption, and the true meaning of love. As Luke Crisp, the prodigal, explains it, "It has been said that sometimes the greatest hope in our lives is just a second chance to do what we should have done right in the first place. This is the story of my second chance."

Questions for *Lost December*

1. How did the biblical story of the prodigal son influence your reading of the book?
2. Do you believe there are two sides to every story, as Luke's English teacher says in Chapter One? Or are some situations truly black and white?
3. Was it wrong for Luke's father to expect him to take over the company, especially when he originally encouraged him to go explore other options in life? Is Luke right that he should enjoy his life more, and not feel tied down to work?
4. Why is Luke so drawn to Sean, even when he knows he is a bad influence? Why does he continue to trust him and lend him money, even when Sean begins acting suspiciously?
5. Candace initially seems more sensible than Luke, warning him that Sean is a bad influence, yet she ends up ultimately leaving Luke when he needs her most. Why does Candace leave Luke? Do you believe her when she says she's not a "gold digger?"
6. What does Sean represent? Do you know any "Seans"? What does he mean when he says he has a "cardboard soul?"
7. Sean and Marshall are incredibly selfish individuals. Do you believe such people deserve the same forgiveness and second chance Luke receives? Do you think Luke should have paid Sean's gambling debt, or did he deserve to be left to his debtors?
8. After Luke is robbed and beaten, he begins to understand the "downward spiral of homelessness" for the first time in his life. Did his situation shed a new light on homelessness for you?
9. Luke spends a few nights on the streets and witnesses the harsh reality of homelessness firsthand. What would you do if you suddenly had no money and no place to stay?
10. Do you agree with Luke's father's adage, "The world only offers you what you don't need"? Why or why not?
11. Why does Luke feel the need to get an entry-level job and prove himself at Crisps? Have you ever reached a similar crossroads?

12. Why does Luke believe Henry when he says Luke's father has disowned him? Why does it take Luke so long to swallow his pride and return to his father? Is pride a vice or a virtue? Can it be both?

13. Do you see any other allusions to biblical parables or lessons in this story?

14. Insightful quotes from Luke's diary begin each chapter. How do these quotes influence or prelude your reading of the chapter? Did one stand out to you?

15. Luke's mother, Candace, and Rachael influence Luke's perspective on the world. Discuss the role of women in *Lost December*. What does Luke learn from these women?

16. After hurting his father so badly and being completely irresponsible, do you think Luke deserves what he got? Were you surprised by the ending?