

Discussion Questions for *A Bargain to Keep*

Before you begin reading, be aware that these discussion questions include spoilers!

1. Who was your favorite character in the story, and what made you relate to them? Was there a certain scene that really made you connect with them?
2. Name some of the themes that appeared in the story. Have you personally struggled with any of the themes you've listed?
3. In the beginning of the story, Ethan and Jeanne guess at one another's motives and build perceptions of each other that aren't accurate. Has there ever been a time in your life when you first met someone and felt prejudiced against them only to later discover that your opinion was wrong?
4. At what point do Ethan and Jeanne's opinions of one another begin to change?
5. In chapter 5, Florence Hoffman tells Ethan that there are different kinds of beauty and that there is a type that comes from within and reveals a beautiful character. What are some qualities that would create a beautiful character in a woman?
6. Throughout the story, Ethan mentions his Grandpa Becker and how he influenced his thoughts on marriage, love, and even going into the law. Has there been an older person in your life who has influenced the way you think and the decisions you make? How?
7. In chapter 7, Jeanne tells Ethan that her papa wanted her to be happy when he made her marry Irving McAllister, but his ideas were different than hers. Later Ethan tells her that his parents chose Mamie for him to marry because they thought the two of them would make a perfect couple. Rather than forcing their own wills on Ethan and Jeanne, how could their parents have done better at helping them to navigate their decisions?
8. Throughout *A Bargain to Keep*, Ethan struggles to deal with his fear that surfaces from past experiences. Did he have a right to be afraid? Did he have a right to let that fear control his thinking?
9. The verse at the beginning of the story says that God directs a man's steps (Proverbs 16:9), and in the last sentence of the book, Jeanne reflects on how God had created a perfect answer to all their needs, even if she and Ethan hadn't thought they needed each other in the beginning. What was one time in your life when your plans fell apart and left you in despair, but you later realized that God's plan truly had been for the best?