

Dear Reader,

You have just finished reading the fascinating allegory *The Last Sin Eater*. The secrets, traditions, and fears of the families in the quiet valley are but a shadow of mankind. We hang on to that which is familiar—right or wrong. We often take the path of least resistance. And we keep the dark secrets of community hidden deep within—for we know our own hearts are black too.

But praise God! There is hope for us all in Christ Jesus. He bids us come and be rid of our secrets, our traditions, our ignorance, and our fears. He invites us to be washed, cleansed, and to walk in His Truth. As you discuss the characters of this story, may you discover for yourself what needs to come into the light of God's Word and find renewed joy as you walk with Him.

Peggy Lynch

The time is coming when everything that is covered up will be revealed, and all that is secret will be made known to all. Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be shouted from the housetops for all to hear! LUKE 12:2-3

1. In your opinion, who or what caused the families in the valley to believe in a sin eater? Why do you think these people went along with such an idea? What consequences occurred because of their fear? How did they respond when confronted with the truth?

2. What traditions or patterns in your life might be holding you captive? What are some ways fear might prevent you from experiencing truth?

For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

MATTHEW 7:8

3. What things were revealed about Brogan? How were they revealed? What excuses did he offer for his actions? How did he respond to truth?

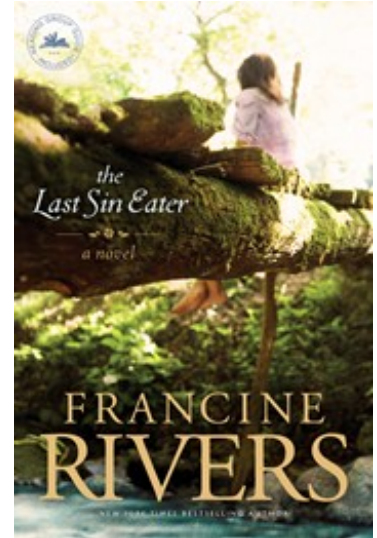
4. What kinds of excuses do you use to cover up your secrets?

Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God at all. In their blind conceit, they cannot see how wicked they really are. Everything they say is crooked and deceitful. They refuse to act wisely or do good. They lie awake at night, hatching sinful plots. Their actions are never good. They make no attempt to turn from evil. Your unfailing love, O LORD, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds.

PSALM 36:1-5

5. What revelations were made concerning Sim? Who revealed them and why? How did Sim respond to the truth? What actions did he take?

6. How do you respond when confronted with the truth? Are you a reactor, an action taker, or do you just ignore it? Explain.



Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you. He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn, and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun. Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act. Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes.

PSALM 37:4-7

7. Contrast Iona and Bletsung. What was revealed about each woman? What motivated each one? Upon hearing the truth, what course of action did each woman take? What lifestyle did each choose thereafter?

8. When facing difficult choices, what motivates you to either act or do nothing? Be specific.

Hatred stirs up quarrels, but love makes up for all offenses.
PROVERBS 10:12

But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.
MATTHEW 5:44-45

9. What was revealed about Cadi? about her mother, Fia? How did their guilty feelings keep them apart? What role did Lilybet play? Compare Cadi's and Fia's actions and resolve regarding truth.

10. How has tragedy impaired your relationships? What have you done to promote healing in others? Who comforted or counseled you?

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you.
JOHN 14:16

11. Discuss Fagan's relationship with "the stranger." What was missing in his relationship with his father? What was revealed to Fagan about his family? How did Elda encourage him?

12. How do you deal with rejection? To whom do you turn for encouragement?

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."
MATTHEW 11:28-30

God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other.

1 JOHN 4:9-11

