

## Discussion Questions

1. Elliott Belvidere is a North Carolina native determined to remain loyal to the Constitution even when his state secedes and joins the Confederacy. What do you think of his refusal to bear arms for the Confederacy, even to the point of death? What do you imagine you'd have done in his position?
2. *Les Misérables* was popular with both Union and Confederate troops during the American Civil War, but they identified with the story in different ways. How does Tom's reaction to the book differ from Minnie's? Where have you seen examples of people interpreting the same words through different eyes and hearts?
3. How does Minnie attempt to ensure that her family's wishes regarding the land deeded to Obadiah and Martha Tate will be heeded? In what ways is she held back by the constraints of her time? How does Celia try to help, and what barriers does she encounter, even so many years later?
4. After his parents died when he was only six years old, Joe stopped believing God cared or had the power to stop such things from happening. How does his faith change over the course of this story? Which characters influence him along the way? Who has played a pivotal role in your own journey of faith?

5. Black Americans who served in WWII generally received more respect and better treatment by foreign governments and societies than they were used to at home. Were they right to expect that race relations and treatment would have improved when they returned to the US—Double V for Double Victory? What did they discover upon returning? How do you think that affected them then and in their future?
6. What do you think of Britain's early policy regarding the adoption of "brown babies"—children born of black American soldiers and white British women and placed in orphanages? Why do you think Britain did not want to recognize paternal rights of the biological fathers? Do you think their decisions were based on issues of race, politics, prejudice, or something else?
7. Alma, later called Granny Chree, willed her life savings to Marshall, but neither Granny Chree nor the Tates told Marshall that she was his great-grandaunt. Why do you imagine he was not told? Why do you think Olney didn't want to talk about slavery days or reopen the question of his family's land?
8. The GI Bill, signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on June 22, 1944, provided returning veterans with unique opportunities to procure higher education, housing, low-interest loans to start businesses, and a year of unemployment compensation. Black veterans, while not strictly excluded, were not as able to take advantage of those benefits as white veterans. How did the ability or inability to take advantage of the GI Bill affect different people? Did those advantages or disadvantages affect your family? In what way?
9. Celia knows that "in No Creek, there were things you just didn't ask, opinions you dared not give voice to, unless you were sure of the person." How is this demonstrated in both the Civil War and WWII eras? In what ways does No Creek change in the intervening years?

10. Joe believes that “sharing a good time and good food always helps. It sets the stage for harmony.” Is he proven right through the community pasta dinner? Have you experienced a time when food and fellowship broke down barriers?
11. Grayson Belvidere never told his daughter, Hyacinth, about her aunt Minnie or the work she did to transport enslaved people to freedom and to share the family’s land with the freed men and women of Belvidere Hall. Why do you think Grayson never revealed this history to his daughter? In what ways is Minnie’s legacy still realized in Hyacinth? In Lilliana? In Celia?
12. The title *A Hundred Crickets Singing* calls to mind a line from Minnie’s diary where she laments trying to make sense of the conflicting voices all around her. But Celia eventually likens all the voices and prayers across the decades to “a choir, a hundred crickets singing a chorus of praise.” Discuss that change in perspective. Where have you seen God work—over many years or even many lifetimes—to bring harmony out of what might at first seem like chaos and discord?