

Discussion Questions  
***River to Redemption***  
by Ann H. Gabhart

The cholera epidemics of the 1800's brought panic to town populations. With our advanced medicines and health knowledge, do you think it's hard for us to completely understand the fear people might have felt when they heard cholera had broken out in their area?

Adria was orphaned by the 1833 cholera epidemic when she was seven. Later she has a hard time pulling up the memory of what her parents looked like but she never lost the way they made her feel. Do you think that was because she was so young or do you think that is simply a normal progression of grief when there are no photos to help one remember?

Why do you think Adria formed such a strong relationship with Louis and Matilda?

Ruth wanted to be a mother to her own child but when that option was shattered, she was hesitant to accept someone else's child into her life. Have you ever taken in a child who wasn't your own? Do you think you could if challenged to do so by events as Ruth was? Was Ruth right to tell Adria to call her Aunt Ruth instead of mother?

Adria had a close relationship with Aunt Tildy (Matilda). What did you like best about Matilda? How would you describe her relationship with Adria?

Louis told Adria the best way to pray was to pray believing. Is that sometimes hard to do? Why do you think that?

Prayer is one of the central themes in the story. Besides Louis praying believing, he also tells Will that God always answers prayers, but sometimes not as we want or expect. Do you struggle with that truth when your prayers aren't answered as you hoped? Was there a specific time when that happened and then things turned out better than what you had envisioned while praying?

Ruth and Adria bonded in their early days together through reading to one another. Do you think reading aloud to a child is a good way to feel close? Have you ever read a book aloud to an adult?

Will had his faith tested by the death of his wife. Do you feel that was particularly hard for him because he was a preacher? Have you had times when your faith was tested?

Was there one particular character you liked best in this story? One you didn't like? Why?

Were you disappointed that Adria made the choices she made at the end of the book or do you feel she did the best thing for her future?

Are you glad to know this story is based on the true event of a town going together to buy a slave's freedom in 1845? This book doesn't cover the next time cholera hit the town in 1854, but once more Louis cared for the sick and buried the victims of the disease.