

**THE
CRAZY
RACE
FOR
MAD
GOLD**

A NOVEL BY RUTH E. MEYER



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Chapters 1–3

1. Grace is a single mom. Discuss the role her kids play in her meeting and getting to know David. What are the pros and cons of having them around? How would this chapter have played out differently without the “aid” of Katie, for example?
2. We get a glimpse into both David’s and Grace’s backgrounds. How does this knowledge affect your impressions of them? To whose story can you better relate? Why?
3. What are your hopes for Grace as the story unfolds? for David?

Chapters 4–6

1. Explore David’s response to Grace’s comment about not being church material at the end of chapter 4. Was his answer too theological? not theological enough? How would you respond to such a comment?
2. We meet Olivia for the first time in chapter 5. Grace is not a Christian, but her sister is. Do you have family members or close friends who are not believers? Elaborate. What tension does that cause?

Chapters 7–9

1. Take a moment to explore David’s interaction with each of Grace’s children thus far in the story. How is he reaching out to them as individuals with different personalities and different interests? What do you think each of them thinks about him?
2. We don’t see much of Freddie until chapter 9. How are he and Jackson different? How is Freddie’s character shaped by his older brother?

Chapters 10–12

1. Discuss both of Grace’s confrontations with Jackson. Do you think she handled them well? Could the second one have been avoided had she pushed him more when she initially approached him?
2. Does David’s response to Jackson surprise you? Do you think he goes too far in making Jackson come to church with him? Explore the merits and disadvantages of such a “demand.”

Chapters 13–14

1. Read 2 Corinthians 6:14. Clearly David is aware of this verse and is trying to obey it. What do you think of the way he goes about the faith discussion?
2. What might each of them be thinking or feeling at the end of chapter 14? Did David hurt or harm his cause for their relationship? for Grace's spiritual well-being?

Chapters 15–16

1. Olivia is not one to mind her own business. Is that personality trait advantageous when she confronts Grace? David? Can "butting in" be a loving thing to do for someone? Discuss why or why not.
2. In chapter 16, we get another glimpse into Grace's past. Talk about her bad experience with church. How did that shape her view of Christians and the Church? Is that a fair assessment to make in just one visit?

Chapters 17–19

1. Discuss the argument between Freddie and Jackson at the beginning of chapter 17. Freddie is out of character in standing up to Jackson. What does this tell you about Freddie?
2. Grace takes a big step in asking David to help her understand the Bible stories she's reading. How does it impact Grace to know the flaws of the Bible characters, as well as God's grace shown to each of them despite their sins?

Chapters 20–21

1. How well do you think Pastor responded to Grace when she told him about her past? Is his answer what she needed to hear?
2. Grace shares her story first with Pastor and now with David. Which conversation has higher stakes? Explain.

Chapters 22–24

1. How does Grace react to her mother's confession? Considering the implications of what she's just learned, can you blame her for her response?
2. Does Pastor overstep his bounds in his discussion with Grace? Is he being too nosy, or is he taking his role as shepherd seriously?

Chapters 25–27

1. Compare and contrast the way David and Grace deal with the startling news from their mothers. How might their relationships with their mothers be different after such a revelation?
2. Look up the Bible passage Pastor references in his talk with David, Ephesians 1:3–10. How does it affect you to know the same truth applies to you?
3. Grace refers back to the lemonade stand as a pivotal moment. Share with the group a time when something otherwise insignificant turned out to have a tremendous impact on your life. In your experience, does God more often work through climactic events or everyday moments?

Chapters 28–31

1. Take a moment to share the mental picture you formed of Bob prior to this chapter. Does meeting him change your first impression of him? What do you make of his side of the story on page 238?
2. Families play an important role in shaping an individual. How are David's and Grace's families similar? How are they different? How does meeting their respective families help you understand either of them better?

Chapters 32–33

1. Grace feels bad "accepting charity." Discuss why this is such a difficult thing for people to do. Might that be why many people reject the Christian faith—because it's hard to admit we can't save ourselves?

2. Things come to a head with Faith in these chapters. When she first snaps at David and then at her mom, both adults more or less ignore her attitude. Might things have gone differently had either of them dealt with the situation head on? Why or why not?

Chapters 34–35

1. Compare Faith's behavior from the previous night to her attitude with Gramps. How is this hospital visit good for both her and Grace? Explain how this facilitates reconciliation more than a day at home would have.
2. There are a lot of complicated mother-daughter relationships going on here, with all four generations of women: Edna, Carol, Grace, and Faith. How do each of the daughters struggle with how to honor their mothers under the circumstances?

Chapters 36–37

1. Family members see one another at their best and at their worst. How do these chapters reflect that?
2. Faith and David have a much-needed talk. How does Faith's admission help you better understand her inhibitions regarding David?

Chapter 38/Epilogue

1. Does this book have a satisfying conclusion? What parts of the story did you predict from the beginning? Were there surprises along the way?
2. How has Grace grown through the course of this story? How has David grown?