

CORE Deception Discussion Questions

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Fear

What is fear? What does the Bible say about fear?

How did Seth cope with his fear?

There are many types of fear. What kind did Seth struggle with? What kind of fear do you struggle with?

In addition to Seth, what other characters also experienced fear? What type of fears did they have, and how did they cope with them?

(For more on what God says about fear, consider Max Lucado's excellent book [Fearless](#).)

Seth

In chapter 19, Seth's dad says, "Don't let your pursuit of the thing you perceive as God's will get in the way of your pursuit of God."

- What does this mean?
- How did Seth fail to heed this warning?
- What's the difference in pursuing our perception of God's will versus pursuing Him?

In chapter 19, Seth prays, "God, you've got to help me fix this. I'm out of ideas." Later, he considers, *If this is God suggesting I use the portal—no, that can't be. He knows the devastation it already brought. Which is exactly why I need the IDs, the safe and sure way to achieve the same result.*

- Have you ever talked this way with God?
- How much of Seth's limited perspective influenced his thinking? It made sense to him to find the incognito devices. What additional factors was he overlooking?

In chapter 27, Seth tells Krystin, “Sometimes we need to settle for not being able to understand how God will work everything out.” He soon finds himself thinking, *Instead of trying to understand how God will work this out for Aliyana, [do I need to] just trust? But surely trust doesn’t mean doing nothing.*

- Does trust mean doing nothing? If not, how does one trust and yet act?
- Is understanding required to trust? Put another way, is there a certain amount of understanding we should have before we fully trust God?

Compare Seth’s praying in the first half of the story to the second half.

- Do you notice a difference in the frequency of Seth’s prayers and what he prayed?
- Do life’s circumstances impact how often you pray and what you pray?

Fear, control, and trust.

- If lack of control is at the root of fear, what might the presence of fear suggest about a person’s relationship with God?
- How does trust combat fear and the human desire for control?
- Can you tell by someone’s actions if they’re acting out of fear versus trust? Contrast examples of Seth acting with fear and acting from a place of trust.

Krystin

Near the end of chapter 12 (at the Autumn Rally) Krystin reasons, *It’s becoming obvious that if something is going to be done about it in time, it’ll be up to us. To me. Sometimes courage means not waiting when everyone else hesitates.*

- Given the context of her thoughts in this chapter, can you separate the truths and lies she believed?
- What Bible verses support those truths and argue against those lies?
- Who around Krystin wasn’t taking action when they should? Who took action when they should have waited or taken different actions?
- Is there a point when we should take action instead of waiting on God to fix things?

Trust and forgiveness. Krystin thinks Seth is too trusting of Notah (an example is near the end of chapter 9). After all, Notah admitted he was guilty of bad things, including a betrayal that affected Krystin very personally.

- Is Krystin right to distrust Notah?

- Is Seth right to be so forgiving?
- From a biblical perspective, how should we be discerning with our trust while still showing forgiveness, especially when it comes to someone who's broken your trust?

Krystin talks about accountability (an example is toward the end of chapter 27) and justice for the wrongs done to her family, but Seth thinks she's pursuing revenge.

- What are the differences between accountability, justice, and revenge?
 - Which one is Krystin actually pursuing? And can one seek more than one at a time?
 - Whose responsibility is it to ensure accountability, justice, and revenge take place?
- Include Bible references to support your answer.

In the first part of chapter 30 Krystin says of the evening's plans, *I hate that I had to deceive my partner in deception [Seth], but if he figured out why I kept Father out of our planning meeting in the street, he'd force me out.*

- How is her deception to her father and Seth different than deceiving the authorities?
- When is it right, if ever, to deceive? List Bible passages in support of your conclusion.
- The book ends before we see the ramifications of Krystin's deception to her family and friends, as well as the ramifications of her collaborative deception with Seth. Where do you think the consequences might lead?

Government, Society, and Worldview

The nation's motto is *Efficiency for Survival*.

- What are the ramifications of that motto—as seen in *CORE Deception* and in a broader sense?
- What truths and lies does the motto contain?
- How was the truth in that motto used for wrong?

The government in *CORE Deception* credits technology with enabling the nation to survive where the CE Ice Age made it hard or even impossible to live.

- How did the nation's technology lead to good?
- How did the nation's technology lead to harm?
- Is technology amoral?
- What role should government play in restricting or encouraging technology?

Controlling governments, like the one in *CORE Deception*, can rise to power when the populace decides safety is more important than freedom.

- When has this happened in history?
- What's an example of freedom without safety?
- In light of the Bible, what role should government and society play in allowing/restricting freedom and safety?

Early in chapter 16, while discussing the government's unjust targeting of the populace, Krystin tells Seth, "Maybe they're permitted to legally, but it's not the same as a right."

- Do you agree with her statement?
- What's the difference between legal permission and rights?
- According to the Bible, do Christians have rights before God?
- According to the Bible, do people have rights before earthly authorities?