

Discussion Questions

for

Doris Farrand's Vocation

These questions are designed to enhance your group's discussion of *Doris Farrand's Vocation* by Isabella Alden.

1. Doris admits that, despite being a “student of the Bible” for fifteen years, she has no idea how to apply it to her daily living. How common do you think that problem is? What actions can Christians take to understand the Bible in a way that it has a practical impact on their life?
2. The author describes Richard Shipley as an “autocrat,” someone used to ruling over others. What adjectives would you use to describe Richard’s personality? What kind of minister do you think Richard would be if he were to pursue his education in theology?
3. We typically define our vocation as our occupation. Garrett Randall said his vocation was to serve God with all his heart, soul and mind; and other things were an avocation or hobby. What do you think of Garrett’s viewpoint? In what ways did Garrett demonstrate his true vocation?
4. With money tight, Athalie gave up her dreams of going to college so her younger sister could go. She made her sacrifice without complaint, but she sometimes felt “a kind of left-out-ness” in her life. What do you think Athalie meant by that? Faced with the same situation, how willing would you be to make a similar sacrifice for a sister or brother?
5. Richard asked Doris to marry him after he learned about her inheritance. What do you think prompted Richard to pick that moment to propose? If you were Doris, would you have accepted? Why or why not?
6. Athalie’s philosophy is, “When what you *will*, is not, then *will* that which *is*.” What do you think of that homily? Is that a philosophy you can live by? Why or why not?
7. Richard insisted that Doris stop going to Bible class, and demanded that she turn down her minister’s request that she teach a Sunday-school class. He also objected to Doris’s plan to take over Garrett’s Friday class at the night-school on Water Street. Why do you think Richard was so opposed to Doris’s involvement with church work and helping others? If you were in Doris’s situation, what would you have done? Have

you ever been in a similar situation? Describe the situation and what you did to resolve it.

8. Doris and Richard argued constantly about her inheritance, prompting her to think of the verse, “How can two walk together except they be agreed?” How important do you think it is for a couple to be in agreement when it comes to money and how it should be spent or saved? Do you think a couple can succeed if they have differing views about money? Why do you think so?
9. Doris decided to renounce her fortune because her conscience wouldn’t allow her to inherit property and money she thought rightfully belonged to someone else. What do you think of Doris’s decision? If you were in Doris’s place, would you reach the same conclusion?
10. Which character did you find most interesting? What was it about that character that appealed to you? What character did you dislike the most? Why?

Add your own questions here:

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