



LEVI'S WILL – DISCUSSION GUIDE

by Dale Cramer

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1. At the story's beginning we see that the author has juxtaposed the two lives of Will Mullet/Will McGruder, past and present. What does this tell us about Will's character and life?
2. Will seems eager to put off many of the qualities that make him Amish. Why? Does he ever regret leaving behind his old life? Which of these qualities can he see, in hindsight, may have helped him to succeed in the World?
3. It's apparent that Will struggles with the World's ways and feels forced to comply with its rules in order to survive. How is his struggle with the World similar to that of the Amish community from which he fled? How is it different?
4. The priest on the army ship suggests to Will that Will is angry. What is he angry about? What, if anything, changes in Will's relationship with God after the priest absolves him? Does Will believe the priest has helped him?
5. How has Will's relationship with Helen changed throughout their marriage? How has Will's Amish background shaped his idea of marriage? How does Will's perception of marriage differ from his reality?
6. How does Will's past catch up with him and what damage does it do to his relationships with his family?

7. Why does Will throw himself into his work? What sacrifices are made in doing so?
8. What does Mose see in Levi that Will does not? Does Mose's relationship with his father help to change Levi's opinion of Will?
9. How does Levi react to Helen's coconut cake? Why does this start a competition between Levi and Helen? What does Helen hope to gain through this game?
10. Will pinpoints an event early in Riley's childhood when his son started turning away from him. What is this event, and what is its significance? How has this influenced Riley's relationship with his father?
11. What has Will's defiance as a youth cost him as an adult? How do "the sins of the father" play out in Will and Helen's marriage? His relationships with Welch and Riley?
12. What makes Riley different from his brother? How does this affect his relationship with his parents?
13. What did Will notice about Barefoot that made him think Barefoot knew the secret to a happy life? What does this have to do with Will's relationship with God?
14. Will also realizes that this secret, or truth, is one that God has been trying to make real to him all his life. Why did it take Will so long to see it?
15. How does Katie react to Will's announcement at the family reunion? Why is this so important to Will?
16. How did the sermon preached in English at Levi's funeral affect Riley? What changes in him as a result? How does the author show this change?

17. How has Levi's funeral helped Will to reconcile with Riley? What lessons are learned from the author's comparison of the Amish ways to the modern lifestyle of the World?
18. What in general does the novel have to say about faith, legalism, religion, and morality regarding the various "brands" of Christianity practiced by believers, whether Amish, Mennonite, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, Episcopalian, Nondenominational, etc.?



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