



THE AMISH CLOCKMAKER

By Mindy Starns Clark and Susan Meissner

1. This book features two related storylines, one set in the present day and one set back in the 1950s. By seeing what really happened through Clayton's eyes rather than secondhand, through Matthew only, did the story come more alive for you?
2. Why do you think Matthew always felt such a bond of kinship with the infamous clockmaker? What elements of the story end up strengthening that bond?
3. Do you think Clayton would have become a different person had he not been in the buggy accident when he was young? How much are people shaped by what they experience as children?
4. As a clockmaker, Clayton tends to view many things in his life in terms of clocks and how they function. Did any of his various clock-related metaphors resonate with you personally? Which was your favorite?
5. How would you describe Clayton's love for his wife? Did she deserve that love? Was Clayton's love blind or did he see the reality of the situation but somehow love her anyway? Have you known love like that, or have you seen it in practice?
6. Clayton's community was ready to believe he had murdered his wife. Why do you think that was so? Why do old legends regarding someone's downfall or supposed crime tend to linger?
7. Do you think Clayton and his wife would have ended up having a happy, fulfilling marriage had circumstances played out differently? Why or why not?
8. Soon after leaving Lancaster County, Clayton encounters a kind pastor who is aware of the man's alleged crime but chooses to believe in his innocence anyway. Was this a reflection of the pastor's faith, or was it simply because he was a good judge of character? How much did his gift of discernment play into his decision to take Clayton in? Would you have acted similarly in such a situation?
9. Matthew struggles to trust his heavenly Father because he has learned the hard way that he cannot always trust his earthly father. How much of our relationship with our fathers plays into how we feel about and approach God? How would you compare your relationship with your dad to your relationship with the Lord?
10. Near the end of the story, Matthew imagines Clayton moving back to Lancaster County, getting reconnected with his community, cuddling Matthew's soon-to-be-born child, and later, being laid to rest next to the woman he loved. Do you think this would be a possible scenario for Clayton's life? Why or why not?