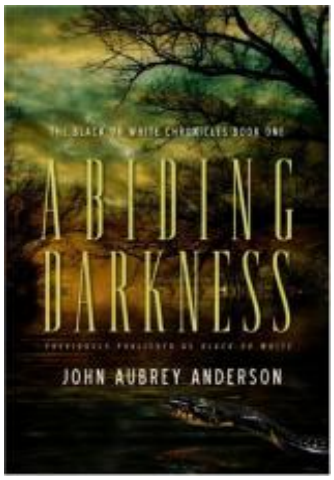
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

Abiding Darkness

by John Aubrey Anderson



About the Book

Turmoil comes to what was peaceful Mississippi cotton country in 1945 when good and evil go to war at Cat Lake. Missy and Bobby Parker, white children from a privileged family, and Junior Washington, their black friend, are caught in the epicenter of the first battle.

In the aftermath, Missy takes up a life mission that fuels the fire of aggression in the evil lurking in the lake. The war destroys lives in and around Missy's family and community. The lives of the Parker and Washington families, linked for generations by land and work, are now bound by spiritual warfare.

Missy struggles to find the strength to endure the onslaught. With the help of supernatural guardians and the spiritual guidance and love of both families, Missy must come to terms with the truth about the malevolent plot against her-or die trying.

Discussion Guide

1. How did you respond to the comment in Chapter Six, of Bobby Lee Parker, a non-church goer, "As far as he could tell, the men who went to church weren't any better off for going?"

2. What thoughts do you have about the demonic realm after reading **Abiding Darkness**?

3. How have you implemented the reoccurring theme of the book: life's only worthwhile purpose is to know God and make Him known?

4. In Chapter Eight: Were you able to identify with Pips' journey in her rocking chair because you've been on a similar journey?

5. At the end of Chapter Eight: Missy thought "Third grade was an affliction." Were any of your years in school an affliction? Which one(s) and why?

6. Reflect on the phrase from Chapter Fifteen, "......and didn't feel compelled to cram words into interludes of silence."

7. From Chapter Eighteen: Is the phrase, "Forgiveness doesn't have a facial expression," true? Why? Why not?

8. In Chapter Seventeen, Missy is sitting on the porch of Mose's cabin with Pat, wondering "if this is the most peaceful place on earth." Where do you feel peace and what is it about that place?

9. In Chapter Nineteen, Pat and Missy listened to the leaves whisper secrets. Describe what that means to you.

10. In Chapter Twenty-two Missy told Pat, "Well, if you think Hitler was wrong, then you need come up with a good reason for your conclusions, 'cause right now they're based on a belief that good and evil exist --- that means there has to be a moral law. If there's no moral-law-Giver --- there's no moral law. If there's no moral law --- then one of the greatest atrocities in history was no different from me killin' a turtle out there in that lake." Is her premise correct? Why, or why not?

11. In Chapter Twenty-four Missy told Pat, "You're askin' me to turn my back on the only security I'll ever know, to let a man who doesn't believe in compasses guide me through a jungle." What do you think Missy had in mind when she used the word *jungle*? *Security? Compasses?*

12. Discuss the phrase, from Chapter Twenty-seven, "Reason told Pool's brain that running and screaming wouldn't help, but it didn't tell his feet or his mouth."

13. Do you see the bridge as one of **Abiding Darkness**'s characters --- a symbol of someone or something?

14. Do you see the lake as one of **Abiding Darkness**'s characters --- a symbol of someone or something?

15. What, if anything, do you feel was the dog's role in the story?

16. Can you tie your feelings about current events in world history to the prospect of the presence of spiritual beings?

17. Which character appealed to you the most? Why?

18. Which man appealed to you the most? Why?

19. Which woman appealed to you the most? Why?

20. In the book we saw forces of good and evil in the events centered on Cat Lake. Have you ever witnessed a struggle between the forces of good and evil? Tell your story.

21. How does the imprisonment of Mose compare with the imprisonment of Joseph in Egypt as recorded in the Book of Genesis in the Old Testament? Can you see how the upright behavior of faithful men, in circumstances where they are being treated unjustly, allowed good to triumph over evil?

22. Do you believe there is a constant battle being fought between God and his Enemy, Satan? What about a battle between the forces of good and evil? Is there a difference?

23. Why do you think this story is set in Mississippi? What significance does the time frame of the story have?

24. In Chapter Two, the reader begins to see the nature and thoughts of the demon who seeks to destroy Missy Parker. Do you think that the depth and cunning that the author gives to the demon is accurate? Do you believe that the plans of the Evil One are this carefully laid out?

25. In Chapter Three, A. J. Mason is described as a Christian man, quiet and serious, not without a willingness to smile or laugh. He hears a voice that tells him to "be ready." Do you believe that God speaks to today's Christian in this manner? If people are willing, allow them to share instances in which this has happened to them or to someone close to them.

26. In Chapter Three, the reader also learns about Junior's prophetic dream. Identify other instances in the Bible in which God communicates through dreams. Do you believe that God currently uses dreams to communicate with his people? If people are willing, allow them to share instances in which this happened to them.

27. Share impressions of Missy Parker at the start of the book, after Mose Junior's death, and after her bible study with Pip has started.

28. In Chapter Six, A. J. Mason is described as a man who had "been shooting rifles and shotguns since he was old enough to understand what the trigger was for...training for this day...becoming a man who was ready." Do you believe that sometimes God uses our whole lives to prepare us for one moment? What impact would this belief have on your daily choices?

29. In Chapter Six, Horton prays this prayer: "If you're really there, and if you really got me out of that mess (in the war),...I appreciate it...I reckon you're all we've got." Do you think God hears these kinds of confused and conditional prayers? How do you think he responds to them?

30. After her son's death, Pip has been asking why God would take a boy like Mose, Jr. Do you think God did this? Do you think he allowed it? Why?

31. In Chapter Eight, the reader sees a 13-year-old Mose talking with Pap about heaven. Mose asks Pap about angels, and the old man tells him that the Bible says that each of us has a guardian angel. Where in the Bible is this found? Do you think this is literal?

32. In Chapter Eight, the reader hears the advice that Pap has given to young Mose for as long as he can remember: "Boy, you need to do two things for your whole life. You got to know God better every day, and you got to make him known." What do you think of this advice? Is it necessary to "make God known" in order to be a good Christian? Why?

What do you believe happens to the Christian who does neither of these things, yet has made a sincere profession of faith?

33. In Chapter Eleven, the leader of demons instructs his henchmen to possess Blue Biggers, to take over his will. Do you believe that this is possible, or do you think that certain people are predisposed by their natures to simply be readily available for evil purpose?

Author Bio

In my younger years, if I was awake, I was outside the house and --- more often than not --- in trouble. Other than devouring a small handful of the *Horatio Hornblower* series by C.S. Forrester and almost everything I could find on flying, I wasn't much of a reader until after I graduated from college.

After graduating from college, I went into the Air Force and spent five years in the Strategic Air Command. In SAC, when I was not in Southeast Asia, I spent seven out of every twenty-one days in a concrete alert facility?and I became a reader.

Today, I enjoy being "inside" a compelling story?I want to see the people and taste their food?and my preference is to be immersed in tension. As best I can recollect, the authors I've listed here wrote most of my favorite books.

Agatha Christie, Tom Clancy, Stephen Coonts, Michael Crichton, Clive Cussler, Patrick Davis, Len Deighton, Nelson DeMille, Ian Fleming, Ken Follett, C.S. Forester, Frederick Forsyth, Dick Francis, Ernest Gann, John Grisham, Jack Higgins, Stephen King, Dean Koontz, C.S. Lewis, Robert Ludlum, Harper Lee, Alistair MacLean, and Mark Twain.

John Aubrey Anderson grew up in Mississippi cotton country. After graduating from Mississippi State, he received an Air Force commission and has recently retired after flying twenty-eight years for a major airline.

Abiding Darkness
by John Aubrey Anderson

Publication Date: August 23, 2006
Genres: Christian, Suspense
Hardcover: 352 pages
Publisher: Warner Faith
ISBN-10: 0446579491
ISBN-13: 9780446579490