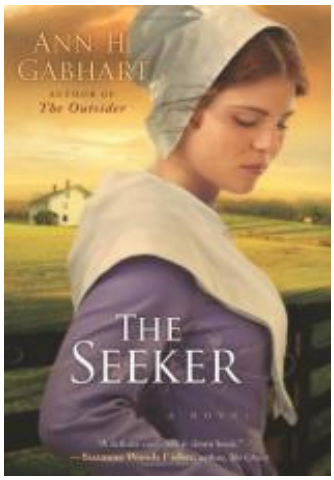
The Seeker

by Ann H. Gabhart



About the Book

Charlotte Vance is a young woman who knows what she wants. But when the man she planned to marry joins the Shakers --- a religious group that does not marry --- she is left dumbfounded. With the country --- and her own household --- on the brink of civil war, this pampered gentlewoman hatches a plan to avoid her family and win back her man by joining the Shaker community at Harmony Hill. Little does she know that this decision will lead her down a road toward unforeseen peace --- and a very unexpected love.

Discussion Guide

1. At the beginning of the story, Charlotte Vance has her life all planned out. Do you think her life was better or worse because her plans didn?t work out? Have you ever made life plans that fell apart and later realized that better things happened?

2. Adam Wade shuns attachments because he doesn?t want anything to get in the way of his art. Do you think falling in love would cause him to lose his creative fire? Do creative people have to live different lives from most other people in order to practice their art?

3. Adam hates doing formal portraits and yet he agrees to paint Selena Vance because his sister asks him to. Why didn?t he just tell his sister no? Do you have difficulty saying no to family and friends?

4. At the start of the conflict between the North and the South, Kentucky is determined to maintain a neutral policy. Why do you think this turned out to be such an impossible stance for the state to take? Do you think many of the families in the state mirrored the same confusion as their government when the armies began recruiting men?

5. When Adam meets Redmon, the slave tells him ?Ever? man is a prayin? man if times is bad enough.? Do you think

this is true? Did it turn out to be true for Adam?

6. Charlotte feels a strong attachment to her Grayson family land. At one time, nothing seemed as important as holding onto her heritage. What changed that for Charlotte?

7. When Charlotte and Mellie rode into the Shaker village, Mellie said she felt like Jonah getting swallowed by the whale. Was that an apt description of what was about to happen to them, how their life was going to change?

8. One of the Shaker sayings is ?Hands to work and hearts to God.? The Shakers believed all who lived among them should work if able and do their share of the labor. Why did they think this might be difficult for Charlotte? Why do you think Charlotte found she liked working with her hands?

9. The Shakers wanted no part of war, yet the war came to their doorstep anyway. They fed hundreds of Confederate and Union soldiers. Do you think this generosity of spirit was the reason the armies --- for the most part --- refrained from confiscating the Shakers? horses and wagons and destroying their crops and fences?

10. Sister Martha tells Charlotte that the foundations of happiness must reside in one?s soul. Do you believe this Shaker saying is true? Do you think Charlotte ever found that sort of happiness?

11. Adam is profoundly affected by what he sees on the battlefields. His brother once told Adam he was an observer, someone who stayed on the sidelines and didn?t get involved. And yet Adam went down into the field of battle to save the foolish young reporter. Why do you think he risked his life to save a man he barely knew?

12. Even though Charlotte never felt drawn toward the Shaker way, she was changed by her time among the Shakers. What things did she learn from the Shakers that made her life better and richer?

Author Bio

Ann H. Gabhart is the bestselling author of ANGEL SISTER, SMALL TOWN GIRL and WORDS SPOKEN TRUE, as well as several Shaker novels --- THE OUTSIDER, THE BELIEVER, THE SEEKER, THE BLESSED and THE GIFTED --- and *The Heart of Hollyhill* series. She lives with her husband a mile from where she was born in rural Kentucky.

Critical Praise

"A definite can?t-put-it-down book."

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