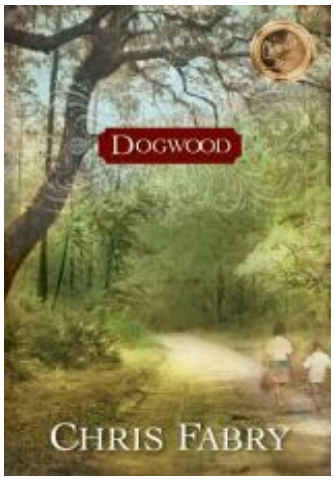
Dogwood

by Chris Fabry



About the Book

In the small town of Dogwood, West Virginia, Karin has buried her shattered dreams by settling for a faithful husband whose emotional distance from her deep passions and conflicts leaves her isolated. Loaded with guilt, she tries to raise three small children and "do life" the best she can. Will returns to Dogwood intent on pursuing the only woman he has ever loved --- only to find there is far more standing in his way than lost years in prison. The secrets of Will and Karin's past begin to emerge through Danny Boyd, a young boy who wishes he hadn't survived the tragedy that knit those two together as well as tore them apart. The trigger that will lay their pain bare and force them to face it rather than flee is the unlikely figure of Ruthie Bowles, a withered, wiry old woman who leads Karin so deep into her anger against God that it forces unexpected consequences.

Discussion Guide

1. The setting for **Dogwood** is West Virginia. In what ways is the setting a character?

2. One legend says Christ was crucifi ed on a dogwood tree, which at one time grew straight and tall; then he promised it would never be used for executions again. ?Slender and twisted it shall always be, with cross-shaped blossoms for all to see.? What significance does this legend have in the themes and characters of the novel?

3. Will Hatfield is a Christ figure. In what ways does his life parallel the life of Jesus? To what lengths does he go to pursue his love? Conversely, what are Will?s flaws?

4. Karin is a character who, in a sense, cannot respond to Will?s love. How does her life parallel the spiritual condition of every person?

5. Ruthie Bowles is a figure floating between Will and Karin, piecing together their history as she probes their past. In

what ways is Ruthie the catalyst to the changes these two experience? Have you known a ?Ruthie? in your own life?

6. Describe Will?s relationship with his brother, Carson. How does Carson reflect the feelings of the community?

7. Will has a special relationship with his father. In what ways does Will?s life mirror his father?s? How does his father?s love help mold and shape Will?

8. At the end of the novel, we see a change in Karin?s life. What circumstances aid in her turnaround? What kind of future do you think she has? Has seeing the truth ever helped you change in some way?

9. Danny Boyd is a plaintive voice throughout the book, giving a behind the scenes look at the pain his family has experienced. How did you respond to his counseling experience?

10. How does Karin?s brother, Bobby Ray, escape his fate at the end of the novel?

11. One theme of the novel is sacrifice. What would you say to a person who sacrificed for you and pursued you as Will did Karin?

Author Bio

Chris Fabry is an award-winning author and radio personality who hosts the daily program "Chris Fabry Live" on Moody Radio. He is also heard on "Love Worth Finding," "Building Relationships with Dr. Gary Chapman" and other radio programs. A 1982 graduate of the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism at Marshall University and a native of West Virginia, Chris and his wife, Andrea, now live in Arizona and are the parents of nine children.

Chris? novels, which include DOGWOOD, JUNE BUG, ALMOST HEAVEN and THE PROMISE OF JESSE WOODS, have won five Christy Awards, an ECPA Christian Book Award, and a 2017 Award of Merit from *Christianity Today*. His 80th published book, UNDER A CLOUDLESS SKY, is a novel set in the coalfields of his home state of West Virginia. His books include movie novelizations, like the recent bestseller WAR ROOM; nonfiction; and novels for children and young adults. He co-authored the *Left Behind: The Kids* series with Jerry B. Jenkins and Tim LaHaye, as well as the *Red Rock Mysteries* and the *Wormling* series with Jerry B. Jenkins.

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