



DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR **LITTLE CROOKED HOUSE**

KEY SCRIPTURES:

Proverbs 4:23

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.

1 Samuel 16:7

Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

In addition to referencing the nursery rhyme, the title is obviously a metaphor for the heart- with nooks and crannies and hidden secrets. How is your heart like a house, a “temple” as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 6:19?

What are ways you can “keep your imperfections hidden in the cupboards” in real life? Have you ever had an experience like the Prims, when things that were buried inside your heart suddenly came out?



The film is about the pursuit of earthly happiness, and reveals such a pursuit to be a futile loop- “always looking for a little more happiness at the bottom of the bottle”. How can one person’s happiness be the cause of another person’s misery? How can the pursuit of your own private happiness have negative consequences for those around you?

How are the Prims doomed to be locked in the same vain pursuit for the rest of their lives if they continue drinking the happiness bottles? How does the “futile loop” continue in the epilogue with Kathy Merriweather and Dirk?

The story of the McCarthys seems to parallel the story of the Prims. What are some similarities between the two stories, despite being on different channels, with one being a color movie and the other a black-and-white sitcom? How is Susan McCarthy similar to Mrs. Prim and Nancy Prim? What are their goals?

Little Susan McCarthy is actually one of the film’s main antagonists, because she is purposely deceiving everyone just so she can raise money to buy toys for herself from a J.C. Penney’s catalogue.

Why is Susan McCarthy a perfect symbol of humankind’s fallen nature (Romans 3)?

Explain Susan’s defense of “As long as I’m getting exactly what I want, I don’t see what the problem is”. How is this perception all-too-common in our ordinary society?

Like Susan’s eventual (and albeit comical) comeuppance, how does the pursuit of selfish happiness leave you “stuck”?



Describe happiness.

Describe joy, as mentioned in Nehemiah 8:10, “The joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Is there a difference between happiness and joy? How can you be content even in an unhappy situation? And how can you be discontent even in a *happy* situation?

Romans 3, as well as Pamela the Lucky Smiles girl, talks about “no one is righteous” and “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”. What does this mean, and how does it contrast with the secular viewpoint that “man is basically good”?

Review the story of the fall of man in the first chapters of Genesis. What was “the original sin”, and how is it depicted all throughout *Little Crooked House*?

**** And by the way, Eve Prim’s name is an obvious reference to Eve herself, but did you catch the reference to both Cain and Abel anywhere in the film?***

How can media and “mass hysteria” (still as common today as in the Red Scare-era of the late 1950s) affect your heart? How does Susan’s alien invasion idea affect her friends and neighbors? Have you seen any recent events that are similar to such hysteria? Why is it important to guard your heart against the things you see and hear?

Discuss nostalgia. Do you think things have changed very much since the 1950s? What things do you think are different? What things are the same? Do you think nostalgia is an accurate way of learning from the past?