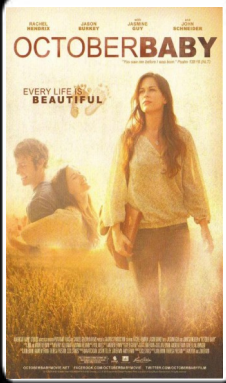


OCTOBER BABY

Movie Summary:

19-year-old Hannah is a home-schooled Baptist girl who has struggled with life-long ailments. Searching for the answers, Hannah discovers the mystery behind her strange medical history: her parents adopted her, as a tiny and vulnerable premature infant, after surviving an abortion attempt.



Act 1:

[Q1] Our culture is fascinated with identity. Advertisers attempt to convince us our identities can be found in wearing the right clothes or driving the right car. But most people find identity in their jobs, beliefs, political association, or their heritage. How has your view about "who you are" changed over the years?

[A1] Give everyone a chance to answer this question. Remember we are trying to get to know the people in our groups and their story.

[Q2] After suffering a seizure Hannah visits a Dr. and finds out her life had a completely different beginning than she had been led to believe. She was adopted and aborted (although the attempt failed). Describe some of the emotions Hannah might have felt toward her parents when she discovered they had been hiding the truth from her for all those years. What about toward her birth mother?

[A2] It is likely that Hannah felt a myriad of emotions: anger, denial, grief, hurt, abandonment, rejection, and ultimately fear. We are designed by God to experience all of these feelings and more (sometimes more than one at once), however it's how we respond that matters most.

[Q3] Read Ephesians 1:3-7. Because of His great love for us, God has always desired that we be adopted into His family. How does it feel knowing that God wants to be your Father? What are some of the benefits that come along with being the children of God?

[A3] Paul said, "Praise be to God," meaning - it feels amazing that the Creator wants to have a relationship with us. Of course some of the benefits include: we are never alone, God knows our situation, and someday we will spend eternity with Him in paradise.

Act 2:

[Q4] Jacob and Grace kept huge secrets from Hannah throughout her life. What were the motivations behind this decision? Is there ever an appropriate time to conceal the full truth from someone? Explain.

[A4] Hannah's parents probably were trying to protect her from more pain. It is never a good idea to hide the truth from others - deception leads to mistrust and hurt feelings that could have been avoided.

[Q5] Hannah's anger drove a wedge between her and her father, sending her on a search to find her birth mother. Unfortunately, this quest to find answers only led to further rejection and pain. The reality is you are not responsible for what people do to you, but you are responsible for how you respond.

What would have been your knee-jerk reaction if you were in Hannah's shoes?

[A5] Answers will vary but may range from: get angry, write a letter to the woman, camp out at her door step, look to get even, or turn away and never look back.

[Q6] Read Ephesians 4:20-27. Anger is a natural response when someone hurts us or treats us unfairly. What do you think Paul meant when he wrote, "In your anger do not sin"?

[A6] We don't lose our emotions once we become followers of Christ. It's okay to feel angry (God designed us that way). However, sometimes our anger makes us want to lash out or hurt people who have hurt us. The good news is the longer we follow Christ the more His Spirit helps us to control our emotions and respond with love, kindness, and forgiveness.

Act 3:

[Q7] After wandering into a church building late one afternoon, Hannah finally begins to find healing in her life. She runs into a Priest who tells her, "Hatred is a heavy burden. Because you have been forgiven, you also have the power to forgive." Is there someone in your life that you are struggling to forgive? What might the Priest say to you?

[A7] This is a very personal question, but it is also where the rubber meets the road. If anyone shares, please LISTEN and be prepared to pray with them.

[Q8] One of the most powerful scenes in the movie takes place when Hannah drops off a hand-written note to her birth mother, Cindy. The note simply read, "I forgive you." Who do you think was impacted the most by this act of forgiveness, Cindy or Hannah? Explain.

[A8] This is a good question. The reality is, both were impacted by this act of forgiveness. Cindy was free from the guilt and regret she had, and Hannah was free from the anger and resentment she had.

[Q9] Read Ephesians 4:31-32. In light of this passage what is the danger of treating forgiveness like an obligation instead of an act of love and obedience? What must we do first in order to truly be able to forgive others?

[A9] If I forgive out of obligation, I probably am not truly dealing with the hurt and the resentment will come back. In order to be able to forgive, we must first recognize that we have been forgiven time and time again by God the Father. Receiving forgiveness is the motivation to be able to give forgiveness to others.

Roll Credits:

What is one thing you believe God is calling you to do as a result of discussing *October Baby*?

