

By Bread Alone Discussion Questions

You may want to dig deeper into the ideas presented in this book and consider how they intersect with your own story. Feel free to use these questions with a group (preferably over a loaf of bread!) or in your personal reflection.

Part One

1. The preface provides background about the history of bread and its impact on culture. What are some of the pivotal stories in your own history with food? How did your family of origin or your spiritual community impact the way you see food?
2. The author describes food as something that can bind communities together as well as something that can cause isolation. How have you experienced both community and isolation as a result of food?
3. In this section, the author writes about her growing awareness of and frustrations with her body. What influences contributed to your awareness of your body as you grew up? In what ways have your feelings about your body changed over the years?
4. In chapter 3, the author talks about the tension between communion and control. What experiences have you had with diet culture and fasting? How have you seen this tension play out?

Part Two

1. Throughout this section, the author outlines the tension she felt in caring for her physical body as well as her emotional/mental health. What challenges have you experienced in your pursuit of health? In what areas have you experienced healing?
2. In part 2, the author paints a picture of her hunger for community and belonging. When have you felt a longing for connection in your own life? When have you experienced a glimpse of true community?
3. Looking back over her life, the author is able to trace the importance of bread and baking through her story. What threads can you see when you look back at your life? How have you experienced the presence and guidance of God throughout your story?
4. By the end of part 2, we see how the author has begun to find freedom in many areas of her life. In what areas of your own life do you feel free? In what areas are you still seeking freedom?

Part Three

1. At the opening of part three, the author draws a connection between yeast and the rhythms of death and life in the human experience. What seasons of death and life have you

- experienced in your own story? How have you seen death and life intertwined?
2. In chapter 10, we read about bodily knowledge and the way our bodies hold truths that our minds sometimes miss. When has your body held a calendar or another truth? What is it like to be reminded of truth in a physical way?
 3. Throughout this section, the author struggles to find a clear next step in her life and career. When have you had wrestled with what to do next? How did the experience shape you and your relationships?
 4. This section closes with a statement about how Communion brings together all types of people, highlighting our need for one another. When have you experienced a meaningful connection over a shared meal, whether inside or outside a church context?

Part Four

1. At the beginning of this section, the author tells of her move and her desire to fill her home and table with community. When have you experienced hospitality that led to rich community? How do you feel about inviting people into your home?
2. In chapter 14, the author tells a story of pain that was turned into an invitation. Are there any areas of your life where you've longed for bread but have been given cake instead? In what ways has that longing brought you closer to God?
3. During the lockdown of 2020, many people began baking bread for the first time or returned to the practice. Did you do any baking during that time? What practices or rhythms did you turn to during that season of change and the unknown?
4. At the end of the book, we are reminded of the daily provision and sustenance of bread. How have you seen God provide for you in daily ways? Where might God be inviting you to ask for daily bread?