

The Dancing Willow Tree

Loretha and Thea both faced dilemmas; Loretha, for the sake of her daughter, Elizabeth and Thea, for the sake of her marriage. Of the two women, which do you believe was the stronger? Why?

On page 86, Loretha visited Thea. Do you think Loretha should have shared how she felt about her husband and his behavior with Elizabeth? Explain your position.

Malcolm had been trying to be Johnny's friend for twenty years. His connection to Johnny had plagued him so deeply he allowed himself to drift into a gay relationship. Once he received insight about himself he abruptly broke it off with Randy. Do you think during this break up he should have been a little more caring of Randy's feelings? Explain your position.

The Dancing Willow Tree brought Johnny and Malcolm together again as men and for the first time in twenty years they were forced to relate to each other. This time Johnny appeared stronger and more aggressive, while Malcolm appeared more submissive. Do you believe this to be Malcolm's true personality or was he simply appearing to be submissive only to win Johnny's acceptance? Discuss.

In *Rehoboth Road*, Nat believed it was a husband's duty to avenge his wife. He allowed his raw emotions to take over when he physically attacked Reverend Oliver, and he never stopped to think his words would have been even more effective. Now, in *The Dancing Willow Tree*, Nat suffers the repercussions of his actions. Do you believe his emotional and physical pain was worth his physical attack on Reverend Oliver? Discuss.

Reverend Turner stepped down a pastor of the Concord Baptist Church at the end of this saga. Throughout both novels he demonstrated very little instances of remorse over his behavior. Discuss your opinion of Reverend Turner, as a man, a father, a husband and a minister. In doing so, you must consider the era in which he lived, and his position in the community, or should it have mattered?

Do you believe the title of *The Dancing Willow Tree* correlates to the story?

Do you believe the cover of *The Dancing Willow Tree* represents the story?

Were all of the loose ends of the saga that began in *Rehoboth Road* tied up in *The Dancing Willow Tree*?



Enjoy your book club meeting. If you have any other questions, please feel free to write me. Thank you for selecting *Rehoboth Road* and *The Dancing Willow Tree* as your book club reads.

Anita Ballard-Jones