

Let's Roll

Book Discussion Guide

Chapter 1: A Day We'll Never Forget

For most Americans, the events of September 11, 2001 are seared in our minds. What are your own memories of that day? What were you doing when you first heard the news of the terrorist attacks?

Most of us don't think about whether our spouses will come home from work each day—it's just a given. Put yourself in Lisa Beamer's place the moment her friend, Elaine, called to tell her about the tragedy at the World Trade Center. How do you think you would have reacted?

Chapter 2: Salt-of-the-Earth Folks

Every day, Todd's mother read a chapter from the book of Proverbs to her children. What were some other ways in which David and Peggy Beamer reinforced biblical values in their children?

What were other early childhood influences on Todd that helped him grow into the man he would become?

Compare the Beamers' style of parenting to your own style, or your parents' style. What role do you think parenting plays in the formation of good character?

Chapter 3: The "Go-To" Guy

What were some attributes Todd acquired during junior and senior high school and college that helped him as an adult?

What do you think Todd meant when he said he wanted to live the Christian life, not just talk about it? Do you agree that someone can serve the Lord just as well in business as in the ministry? Why or why not?

Speculate on how Todd's qualities of being a "gamer" and a "thinking athlete" may have contributed to his actions on Flight 93?

Chapter 4: Our Paths Cross

What are some leadership qualities that Todd displayed at college? How did these qualities contribute to his later success . . . and ultimate sacrifice?

How did Lisa's first impressions of Todd differ from how he really was? Have you ever had an impression of someone that turned out to be false? What did it teach you about making snap judgments?

Chapter 5: A Norman Rockwell World

The Brosious children grew up in a loving, structured home environment. What characteristics of the family do you feel were most important in shaping the lives of Lisa and her siblings?

Today's society often encourages a hands-off approach to discipline and promotes a free-thinking, live-for-today philosophy towards relationships and life. What are some practical ways that parents can counteract these influences on their children?

Chapter 6: Wrestling with the "Whys"

Discuss the qualities that Lisa's father brought to his parenting. In what ways was he a good role model for Lisa?

After her father's sudden death, Lisa questioned her faith to the point that she was angry at God. Have you ever felt that way? What would you say to someone who is feeling the way Lisa did?

Do you think God used this tragedy to prepare Lisa for the events of September 11, 2001? If so, how?

Chapter 7: Stepping Out on Faith

Discuss the lessons that Lisa learned about God during her missions trip to Indonesia. Do you think the trip was yet another way that God continued to prepare Lisa for the future?

What kind of impact did Lisa's conversation with Dennis Massaro have on her life? Have you ever had a life-changing conversation with someone? Explain.

Chapter 8: Surprised by Love

What is your reaction to Todd and Lisa's courtship? Why do you think they "clicked"?

Lisa had high standards when it came to choosing a mate. If you are married, describe some of the qualities of your spouse that cause you to acknowledge to yourself that he or she was "a keeper". If you're not married, what kinds of things would you consider when choosing a mate?

Chapter 9: Forward Thinking

What do you think of the goals Todd wrote for himself? What do they (and the fact that he wrote them at all) say about him as a person?

Have you ever written some concrete goals for yourself? If so, what has been the outcome so far? If not, is this something you would consider doing? Why or why not?

Chapter 10: Adding to Our Team

What are some of the parenting qualities Todd displayed that you feel will remain with his children throughout the rest of their lives?

Chapter 11: Trouble at the Top

What factors make it difficult to balance work responsibilities with spousal and parental obligations? How have you sought this balance in your own life?

Why do you think the “survey” that Lisa gave Todd succeeded where arguing didn’t?

How did Todd’s loss of the big account turn out to be a blessing in disguise? Have you ever experienced a loss that ultimately turned out to be for the best? Explain.

Chapter 12: Living the Dream

By 2001, Todd and Lisa both felt they were living their dreams. What would it take for you to say about your own circumstances, “Life couldn’t have been better!”

What has the story of Todd and Lisa taught you so far about the value of setting goals and planning for the future? What are the good aspects of trying to plan and be prepared for every eventuality? Where do such plans fall short?

Chapter 13: Roman Holiday

During their vacation in Rome, Lisa read the book of Esther to prepare for leading a study at church when she returned. Why was this so prophetic for Lisa?

Why was it so out-of-character for Todd and Lisa to purchase her tennis bracelet? Have you ever done something similarly out-of-character for you?

Chapter 14: A Whirlwind Arrival—and Departure

Every time we leave our families for work or for a trip, there is a chance we will never see them again. And yet, if we thought about this every time we say “goodbye,” we would probably never step out the door! What are some ways to calm our fears about saying goodbye?

Chapter 15: Inside the Nightmare

Why do you think bad things happen to good people?

How would you have expressed your feelings to Lisa regarding Todd’s death? What would you have said? Why?

With the exception of Lisa’s brother Jonathan, this chapter never describes any family member or friend succumbing to a fit of anger or rage over Todd’s death. Why do you think that is?

Chapter 16: How to Tell the Children?

Was there any moment in this chapter that touched your heart? Explain.

Why is it so much easier to explain death to adults than to children? Do you think that Lisa made any particularly good points in explaining Todd’s death to David?

Chapter 17: A Phone Call from Heaven

Why was the phone call from Nick Leonard, the United Airlines family liaison, “a phone call from heaven”?

What do you think you would have done if you were in Todd’s situation on the plane? How were his actions in keeping with his personality and character? How did knowing about his actions fill his family with joy, even in the midst of sorrow?

Chapter 18: Reliving the Takeover

How might the delay in takeoff of Flight 93 have affected the events of the day?

On page 194, the closing statement of the hijackers’ prayers concludes with “...We are of God and to God we return.” What does that statement infer about their belief in God, and how does it differ from a Christian’s understanding of who God is and our relationship with Him?

Chapter 19: Plots aboard Flight 93

Discuss the various phone calls made by passengers to loved ones. Which ones seem especially poignant to you? Which ones contributed to the efforts of the heroes aboard Flight 93?

What might you have said to your loved ones if you were on Flight 93 and knew you were probably going to die? What might you have said to fellow passengers? To God?

Chapter 20: A Town United . . . in Life and Death

If you were among the group on Flight 93, how would you have prepared yourself prior to storming the cabin to thwart the hijackers? What would you be thinking?

Do you think Todd Beamer would have attempted to stop the hijackers if his relationship with God wasn’t strong? Explain your answer.

Do you think that God put Todd on Flight 93, or was it just a “normal course of events”?

Chapter 21: Saying Good-Bye to Todd . . . for Now

Many people consider Todd Beamer a hero. Do you? Why or why not?

Why do Americans consider some celebrities and athletes heroes? What qualities do you think a hero have to be worthy of the name?

If Todd had not been aboard Flight 93, do you think the outcome of the flight might have been different? Explain.

Chapter 22: The Shanksville Crash Site

Have you ever met a total stranger and somehow felt “connected” because of an unspoken bond of faith? How did it feel?

Why did Lisa feel it vitally important to have hope in God, in spite of the terrible tragedy all around her?

Chapter 23: It's Just Me!

During her interview on The Larry King Show, Lisa told Larry that "God's justice will ultimately prevail." What do you think she meant?

Based on her interviews, what qualities of Lisa Beamer's character shine through?

Chapter 24: Poignant Moments . . . and Key Decisions

What do you think prompted David Beamer to state to Lisa's brother Paul, "Uncle Paul, you could be my daddy, right?"

If by some tragedy you had lost your spouse while your children were young, what would you consider the most important things you would want your child to understand and remember about their mother or father?

Chapter 25: The "Completed" Flight to San Francisco

Describe how you think Lisa's faith sustained her through the many interviews in the weeks following Todd's death.

If you had an opportunity to use air travel in the weeks following the events of September 11, 2001, did you (or would you have)? Why or why not?

Chapter 26: The Reason for My Hope

As she addressed the women's conference, Lisa stated that even though people saw her as a tower of strength in the face of an overwhelming situation, she gave God the credit for keeping her focused and steady. Has there ever been a time when you have felt emotionally out of control? How did you handle it?

Why do you think so many people wait to call on God until they are at their wits' end?

What is the difference between having hope in the face of a personal tragedy, and just "dealing with it"?

Chapter 27: Life Goes On . . . or Does It?

In what ways did David appear emotionally stronger than Lisa? Explain your answer.

Do you feel that including memories of Todd during their holiday celebrations was a good idea for Lisa and the children? Why or why not?

Chapter 28: Welcoming Morgan

Review Lisa's questions to God about her pregnancy on page 287. What do you think the answers might be?

Lisa mentions the other widows who gave birth in the months following September 11. How is a new baby a sign of hope in the midst of sorrow?

Chapter 29: The Bigger Picture

What was the value Lisa found in seeking counseling? What do you think is the value of seeking godly Christian counsel through tough times?

What were some ways that Todd's sacrifice had an impact on other people's lives? Were any of these surprising to you? How did Todd's sacrifice contribute to the "bigger picture," in Lisa's view?

Chapter 30: It is Well With My Soul

What truths about God did the crash of United Airlines Flight 93 and the death of Todd reinforce in Lisa Beamer?

How has this biography of an ordinary family's reaction to a horrendous tragedy helped you? Has it caused you to reevaluate your relationship with God and your family in any way?