

Questions on *Fellowship of the Ring*, Book One of *The Lord of the Rings*

1. Consider the hobbits' lifestyle. Do you find them complacent or do you think they are as engaged in the world as they need to be? Explain.

2. Is it necessary to leave home in order to gain a true love for and appreciation of your home? Support your answer with examples from the book and from personal experience.

3. In what ways are the evils spoken of *The Lord of the Rings* the same or different from the ones we face today?

4. Why was Frodo chosen to bear the Ring?

Does everyone have a similar calling? Explain.

5. What are the roles of Frodo's friends?

Are they less important than Frodo? Why or why not?

6. What are the essential differences between the bonds of friendship and the bonds of community?

Why is community necessary if one has loyal friends?

7. Is the loyalty of Frodo's friends born of bravery or ignorance?

8. Why is Gandalf fooled by Saruman? (Was it due to a lapse in Gandalf's wisdom or was it a testament to Saruman's wilyness?)

Should leaders such as Gandalf be more cynical?

9. Why does Frodo choose to trust Strider/Aragorn?

What lessons might there be for us in identifying those who are trustworthy? (Or could Frodo just as easily have been mistaken?)

10. Do you see any indication why Aragorn feels compelled to leave his one true love behind in Rivendell to pursue this quest?

11. Gandalf believes all along that Moria is the best path to get past the mountains, yet he accedes to Aragorn's wishes. Why does he do this? (Is this pure humility on Gandalf's part, or is he trying to let Aragorn see the folly of his ways? Or is there some other explanation?)

12. In what way is Gandalf's sacrifice similar to Jesus'? In what way is it different?

These questions are written by Mark Eddy Smith, author of *Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues* (InterVarsity Press). Permission is granted to reprint for group discussion.