1. Where do you stand on the issue of gun ownership? Are guns useful tools for private citizens? Who should be allowed to own or carry weapons? How does this standard apply when it comes to other items, like knives, bats, tasers, etc.

2. Kelly and Jason were each chosen for this case because of their charisma and persuasive capabilities. What do you see as the benefits of the adversarial system of justice, where two sides present their best cases and a neutral party decides between them? What are the downsides?

3. Lassiter trusts only what his algorithms tell him, while Jason follows instinct and intuition. Which do you trust more: statistics or gut feelings? Which do you find more helpful? Which is more compelling? Are scientific methods and subjective interpretation mutually exclusive?

4. What truly motivates Robert Sherwood? Can his unscrupulous methods be overlooked given that he donates so much of the proceeds to good causes? (Do you think the name Sherwood might be significant?)

5. How would you describe the ethics of the financial investors who make money based on the justice system?

6. What are your impressions of Bella, Jason’s secretary? Would you enjoy spending time with her? Would she be welcome attending a church you’re familiar with? What do you think of the way she describes her past?

7. In Chapter 40, Jason, his sister, and Matt Corey courageously confront Jim Noble’s alcoholism. Identify a time you’ve needed to confront a friend or loved one. Were you able to? What was the result? When is confrontation useful, and when should it be avoided?

8. Why do you think the author might have given Jason the name Noble? Compare that name to what you know of his character.

9. Did Kelly and Judge Shaver truly care for each other? How do their feelings for each other affect your impression of their relationship? At what point did they cross the line from friendship to affair?

10. In Chapter 80, what motivated Kelly to take such a big risk while swimming? How did that experience change her in the rest of the book? Think of a watershed moment in your life. What did you learn from it? Do you still live out that lesson?

11. What were Kelly’s and Jason’s reasons for hiding their respective secrets? Did they face similar fears, or do you think they had differing motivations?

12. How does Kelly’s attitude toward God change over the course of the novel?

13. Read Exodus 23:1-8 in the Bible. What principles do these verses apply to the topic of justice? What kind of justice does God require his people to show each other?

14. What would your verdict have been had you been on the jury in this novel?