

# Group Study Guide

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# #GOSPEL

Life, Hope, and Truth for Generation Now

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## **Chapter 1: #Coffeetalk**

A wise man once said that the Bible is shallow enough for a child not to drown, yet deep enough for an elephant to swim. Over 1500 years later, Augustine's words still hold true. The Gospel is simple enough for a young child to grasp, yet it's deeper complexities and spiritual truths far outmatch even the most learned theologians and Biblical scholars. What more could we expect when the Infinite reveals Himself to the finite mind?

This study guide is designed to give you the tools needed to mine deeper and further into the truth of the Gospel, based on Paul's letter to the Romans. We will use four sections to help understand and evaluate concepts presented in the book, #Gospel, explore connections to other passages of scripture with similar themes, and give concrete steps for practical application.

Don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says.  
Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.

James 1:22

**Watch Video: #CoffeeTalk (available on [hashtagospel.com/video](https://hashtagospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Describe the analogy of coffee, cyanide and sin in your own words.
2. In what ways is sin a "deadly contaminant"?
3. List the main assertions Paul makes in Romans 1:16-17.
4. How was Paul equipped to write about the Gospel?

## Digging Deeper

Can I look deeper into these concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications, and consequences?

1. #Gospel calls sin “the foundation for the gospel.” Why?
2. In three minutes, list synonyms of “sin” that come to mind. Think outside the box. When time’s up, look over your list. What nuances of meaning do you see?
3. What does the Gospel say about how God views the artificial constructs of class, race, and other forms of hierarchy that abound in society today?
4. As the illustration of #FrozenCure suggests, if human beings have two contradictory sides, “selfishness and love”, what psychological challenges might that create for us?

## Making the Connection

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. What do the following verses say about the character of sin and what sin does?

Genesis 4:7

John 8:7

James 1:15

Psalms 51:2-4

John 8:34

James 4:17

Psalms 90:8

Hebrews 3:13

James 5:20

Isaiah 59:1-2

Hebrews 11:25

1 John 3:4

2. What the general response of humanity to the knowledge of God according to Romans 1:18-32? Why do you think this is?

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. Am I a sinner? Why?
2. What are the effects of sin in my life? In the world around me?
3. What will sin do to me, if not addressed and removed?
4. How should the acknowledgement of my own sinful situation translate into the way I treat others?

## **Chapter 2: #That'sNotFair**

**Watch Video: #That'sNotFair (available on [hashtagospel.com/video](https://hashtagospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. What do you think Albert Einstein meant by “the laughter of the gods” in the quotation at the beginning of the chapter?
2. Is justice measured by our actions or intentions, both or neither?
3. Do we use the words *justice* and *fairness* interchangeably, or is there a difference between them? If so, what is the difference?
4. What does it mean that God is omnipresent? What implication does that attribute of God have on our idea of justice? Do the same in reference to God’s omniscience, omnipotence, and incorruptibility.
5. Think carefully about this sentence in the last paragraph of the chapter, “God cannot freely give mercy unless He treats us unfairly.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. List some sources that our idea of, and desire for, justice come from? Who decides what is just in our culture?
2. What would happen to individuals and societies if we abandoned the idea of justice?
3. How is our concept of justice influenced by our culture or personal experience?
4. Is human suffering ever just? If so, when and why?
5. Are justice and love related? If so, how?
6. Is justice achieved or received, or both?
7. What is the goal of justice?

### **Making the Connection**

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. How do we reconcile verses that say no one is righteous (Ps 14:3; Rom 3:10; Ecc 7:20) and verses that refer to righteous people (Ps 18:23; Ecc 3:17; 2 Pet 2:7)?
2. Does Matthew 5:38-39 discourage justice? If not, why not?
3. Micah 6:8 outlines God’s requirements of His people. How would you define and distinguish between “to act justly,” “to love mercy,” and “to walk humbly with your God”?

4. What was Jesus suggesting in his parable about justice in Luke 18:1-8?
5. In the fight for civil rights in the United States, activists frequently quoted Amos 5:24. Read Amos 5:21-24 and discover what the prophet Amos was referencing in eighth century BC. How is Amos' perspective an incentive for just actions?
6. How was King Solomon shown to be a wise dispenser of justice when he was faced with the question of a child's birth mother? See 1 Kings 3:16-28.
7. John the Baptist railed against his generation calling them "crooked." How is that an apt adjective for injustice?
8. When Jesus said, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Mt 7:12), was He asking for justice, love, or something else?

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. As a judge, how would you seek to do your work? What obstacles would you have to overcome?
2. How does the fact that God is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent and incorruptible make you feel? What encourages you? What frightens you?
3. How just are your actions to others? Think of the person you know best in life and answer the following questions:
  - Are my actions toward them consistent?
  - Do I expect more of them than I do of myself?
  - When I wrong that person, do I ask for forgiveness?
4. Pick something you would have no problem saying, "That's not fair!" about. Explain why. Like a young child might do, keep asking the "why" question until you can't go any further, until you've identified where justice originates from.

The last word of this chapter is "hopeless." Is there any area in your life where you feel hopeless? Knowing that God is just, can you imagine a way out of that hopelessness?

## **Chapter 3: #RescuePlan**

**Video: #RescuePlan (available on [hashtagospel.com/video](https://hashtagospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Have you ever been in a situation where you were rescued from something?
2. What does Adam and Eve's situation in the garden, before disobedience, tell us about God's intentions and care for human beings?
3. How is Genesis 3:15 a "first gospel"?
4. What does the illustration about the little girl jumping to her father in the shallow end of the pool say about faith in God?
5. What was Abraham's biggest test of faith and why? How did this life experience change him?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. Is it fair that all of humanity has been damned because of Adam and Eve's one little sin?
2. Is Satan, the snake in the garden, a real being or merely a personification of evil's existence? What evidence leads you to this belief?
3. In Genesis 15:6, the writer notes, "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness." This phrase has been called the John 3:16 of the Old Testament. Is that a fitting comparison?
4. Is faith always a leap? Is faith ever blind? How is faith a factor in virtually every decision whether large or small?

### **Making the Connection**

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. Follow Paul's reasoning in Romans 4:13-25 about why Abraham's faith was so critical in his rescue and ours. What is the difference between weak faith (4:19) and strong faith (4:20)?

2. Romans 1:17 says that God’s righteousness is revealed “from faith to faith.” Is he talking about one kind of faith to another, one degree of faith than another, continuous faith, or something else?
  
3. Another word for rescue is “salvation”—saved from a bad set of circumstances to a better one. What do the following verses tell us about God’s salvation in Jesus Christ?  
Exodus 15:1-2  
Ps 62:1-2  
Isaiah 45:22-23  
Matthew 19:23-26  
Acts 4:12  
Romans 1:16  
Romans 10:9-10  
Ephesians 2:8-10  
1 Thessalonians 5:9-10  
2 Timothy 3:15-17  
Titus 3:4-8

### **Going All In**

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. Who (other than God) do you trust in a sticky situation? Do you tend to rely more heavily on your own instincts, experience, and know-how?
2. Read the story of Jesus and the hated tax-collector, Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10). How are you like Zacchaeus? The summary verse indicates that Jesus doesn’t just save; He also seeks. What are the indicators in your life that the Lord has (or is) seeking you?

## **Chapter 4: #OfftheMark**

**Video: #OfftheMark (available on [hashtaggospel.com/video](https://hashtaggospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. How do Joseph's words in Genesis 50:20 apply to the development of God's rescue plan?
2. How did God work behind the scenes in the life of Moses to prepare him for the way God wanted to use him in His divine rescue plan?
3. What was God telling Moses (and us) about Himself by introducing Himself as "I AM"?
4. What did God want the Israelites to learn from their rest stop at Mt. Sinai?
5. How is the heart of the gospel the glory of God?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. Did God choose Moses because Moses had the right attributes to lead Israel or did God take Moses as he was, equipping him to become the leader his nation needed??
2. The name Jehovah comes from the name "I AM." Many Jews won't say or write it out of reverence. What are some other names of God found in the Bible? Why are they significant?
3. Are the 10 Commandments achievable? Check out Paul's commentary on his efforts to score 10 out of 10 (Romans 7:7-24). Are the 10 Commandments all the Israelites needed to follow to please God? If not, what more does He expect of us?
4. Is the phrase "for the glory of God" the opposite of "for the glory of man" or are they compatible? Is self-interest always wrong?
5. Is God unreasonable in expecting perfection of us? See Matthew 5:48.

### **Making the Connection**

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. What did Jesus say about the law of God in the first section of His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, of 5-7)? Did He overrule it, change it, endorse it, or heighten it? How does Mt 5:48 explain how Jesus viewed the Law of God?



2. What was happening in the exchange that led to Jesus saying, “Before Abraham was, I am” in John 8:58? Read John 8:48-59. What do those verses tell us about the way Jesus relates to His Father?
3. Reflecting the nature of God, the Law is the perfect standard for human beings made in the image of God. How do these Scripture passages explain that just knowing the law isn’t enough to get us there?
  - Romans 3:20
  - James 2:10
  - Matthew 5:27-28
  - Hebrews 7:18-19
4. Jesus condensed the Law of God from ten commandments down to two. How do love and law relate? Is the law loveless, love lawless, or are they complimentary? If so, how?
5. Romans 2:15 says that the Law of God is written on the human heart. If that is true, why do different people and societies have different laws? Isn’t it enough to say, “To thine own self be true”?

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. Read Exodus 14:12-14. Can you sympathize with the Israelites’ cries of desperation? When have you felt that way? How does the wider story of what happened to the Israelites challenge that attitude?
2. If your life is an expedition, what is your goal? Is it safe? Is it easily achievable? Do you have hope you will reach it? Will it be like Robert Falcon Scott’s expedition to the South Pole, or have you prepared well? How have you made preparations?
3. Have you had a moment in your life (maybe not exactly like Moses) when you heard clearly from God? What were those circumstances? What did you do in response? Where are you now?

## **Chapter 5: #NotAbandoned**

**Video: #NotAbandoned (available on [hashtaggospel.com/video](https://hashtaggospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. When have you felt abandoned? Can you describe the feeling?
2. If the Gospel is God's rescue plan for humanity, what is He rescuing us from and what is He rescuing us to?
3. God's prophets had two purposes, one negative and one positive. What are these purposes? Why do we need them?
4. Why is the chart about manuscript evidence so significant?
5. Elisha prayed a very specific prayer for his servant. What was it, and how can we use it to understand the way God works today?
6. What confused John the Baptist about Jesus? What did Jesus say to clear things up? What does that teach us about Jesus?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. How do each of the following concepts relate to feelings of abandonment: sin, separation, death, hardship, discipline, loss, faith, hope, love.
2. Are people separated from God lost, or do they just feel lost, since God is "everywhere"? Is being lost a feeling, a real condition, or both. Why?
3. Does the Bible need to be "proved" to be God's Word? Is it wrong to look for evidence that is reasonable, clear and compelling? Are there other sources of proof that collaborate the authenticity of scripture? Explain your answers.

### **Making the Connection**

Where do I go in the Bible to advance my grasp of the truth of God about these concepts?

1. What do we learn in the following biblical passages about why Israel was "abandoned" (or so they felt) and what that "abandonment" should teach us?
  - a. Psalm 106
  - b. Acts 7
  - c. 1 Cor 10:1-13

2. The book of Isaiah has been called the Gospel of the Old Testament. For starters, read the passages from Isaiah footnoted in this chapter on page 96. How did they offer glimmers of hope for Israel in their time of seeming abandonment?
3. At the heart of Isaiah is an extended passage that seems to be all about Jesus (52-13-53:12). Check out these New Testament verses that refer to this passage. What are the parallels?
  - a. Matthew 8:17
  - b. Mark 15:28
  - c. John 12:38
  - d. Acts 8:32
  - e. Romans 10:16
  - f. Romans 15:21
  - g. 1 Peter 2:22-24

## **Going All In**

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. What should we do when we feel abandoned by God?
2. What can feelings of abandonment teach us about ourselves, about others, about God?
3. What should we do when God intervenes in a crisis and rescues us? What should we do when God doesn't intervene?
4. The chapter ends with a father lovingly assuring his lost little boy, "I've been here the whole time. Didn't you hear me calling?" How does God call to people who are feeling abandoned? If you feel abandoned still, how does the gospel speak into those feelings?

## **Chapter 6: #UnconventionalHero**

**Video: #UnconventionalHero (available on [hashtaggospel.com/video](https://hashtaggospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Who are your heroes?
2. Many Jews were looking for a savior. What were they looking for? How did Jesus meet or destroy their expectations?
3. What led Nicodemus to visit Jesus in John 3? What did Jesus mean by the phrase “born again”? What “big lie” did Jesus shatter? What new perspective on “The Kingdom of God” did Jesus open?
4. What is so remarkable about Jesus’ statement, “before Abraham was even born, I AM!” in John 8:58? How did the religious leaders respond? How should they have responded?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. What type of people did Jesus gravitate to? Who gravitated to him?
2. Malachi, the last Old Testament prophet, lived four centuries before Christ. Why do you suppose God kept silent for so long before Christ came?
3. Why did Jesus, who was God, say to His Father, “Not my will, but yours be done” in Luke 22:42? Not just why did He say it, but how could He say it? Aren’t the wills of Father and Son perfectly aligned?

### **Making the Connection**

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. Regeneration is the theological term that means “born again.” How do the following verses give a transformational picture of God’s rescue plan?
  - a. Col 2:1-3
  - b. John 1:12-13
  - c. John 3:1-18
  - d. John 6:63
  - e. Titus 3:5
  - f. 1 Peter 1:3, 23-25

- g. 1 Jn 3:9; 4:7; 5:2-4
  - h. Ezk 36:26-27
2. How did Jesus' words in John 13-17 prepare His disciples, even though they understood very little at the time He spoke to them? Put yourself into the disciples' shoes and scan through Jesus' words one chapter at a time. Which words were meant for them, and which words are meant for His disciples ever since that time?
  3. In Genesis 22:1-18, God tests Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his only son. How is this story similar to and different from God sacrificing His only Son, Jesus, to rescue us?
  4. John 17 offers us an intimate glimpse into the heart of our Savior. What stands out about his prayer? How does it teach us both what to pray for and how to pray?

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to life specifically?

1. Why does our culture glorify superheroes (even faulty superheroes or anti-superheroes)? How do they reflect our sense of justice, our hope for answers, and our feelings of weakness or inadequacy?
2. What lesson did Jesus teach His disciples in Matthew 14:22-36? How did *fear cloud faith* for the disciples and how does it happen for you?

## **Chapter 7: #TheDifference**

**Video: #TheDifference (available on [hashtagospel.com/video](https://hashtagospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Why does the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus matter?
2. How does the resurrection of Jesus make the #Gospel stand apart when it comes to explaining the meaning of death and life?
3. How do we know that Jesus died on the cross?
4. What are some of the theories against the resurrection and how do each of them fail to explain the historical facts?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. According to the chapter, the transformation of the disciples gives truth to the claim of Jesus' resurrection. Could not other religions point to the transformation of its founder and adherents?
2. Does someone have to believe in the resurrection of Jesus to accept the Gospel? What conclusions do you draw from the following verses?
  - a. Rom 10:9-10
  - b. John 11:25-26
  - c. John 20:27-29
  - d. Acts 3:15
  - e. Acts 4:33
  - f. Acts 23:6
  - g. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
  - h. 1 John 3:1-3

### **Making the Connection**

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. In Genesis 2:17, God gives Adam the freedom to eat of all the trees in the Garden, except one. Regarding the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, God says, "In the day that you eat you will surely die." What does it mean to die? Is death more like an end to

existence or separation? Is death physical or spiritual? How do the following verses give us a biblical perspective?

- a. Hebrews 9:27
  - b. Psalms 146:4
  - c. Romans 6:23
  - d. John 11:25-26
  - e. 1 Corinthians 15:22
  - f. Revelations 21:4
2. What does Ephesians 2:1-3 say about being dead?
3. 1 Corinthians 15 best explains the importance of Jesus' resurrection to God's rescue plan. Take the chapter section by section. Summarize each section in one sentence that explains the critical importance of the resurrection.
- a. 1-11
  - b. 12-19
  - c. 20-28
  - d. 29-34
  - e. 35-49
  - f. 50-57
  - g. 58
4. The Old Testament is alive with the anticipation of life after death. How are each of the following verses "whispers of hope"?
- a. Job 19:25-26
  - b. Ps 49:15
  - c. Isa 25:8; 26:19

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

- If miracles are the method God used to identify and validate His messengers, then the resurrection is the biggest authentication of all. How does that affect the way we should view His message?

How should the resurrection of Christ affect the way we view our own death? How should it change the way we view life?

## **Chapter 8: #MissionImpossible**

**Video: #MissionImpossible (available on [hashtaggospel.com/video](https://hashtaggospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Is it wrong to want to be loved? What are the psychological ramifications of the need to be loved?
2. How is the #Gospel different from every other world religion or philosophy?
3. Who were the “legalists” of Jesus’ day? Why is “legalism” so dangerous?
4. What are #TheHardestWordsToSay and why?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. The chapter claims, “Atheism and Christian legalism are both born from the same impossible desire: to be the masters of our own future.” Do you agree? What are the telltale signs that gospel-believing Christians are drifting into legalism?
2. Do you think going back in time to the Garden of Eden to cut down the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil have prevented humanity’s sin and disobedience? Why or why not?
3. When asked to explain the #Gospel, many of us respond, “Jesus died to forgive us of our sin.” What is incomplete about this answer? Read John 3:16 and identify the four major features of the #Gospel that this answer lacks.

### **Making the Connection**

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. Soon after saying “But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8), the Apostle Paul said this, “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life” (Rom 5:10). How does verse 10 expand on verse 8 and help to explain it?
2. The Apostle Paul explains the Gospel in Romans 5 by contrasting Adam and Christ, the first Adam and the Second Adam (5:12-21). What are the differences between these two Adams?



3. What is repentance, who needs to repent, and how do we repent? Read the following verses for guidance:
  - a. Proverbs 28:13
  - b. Matthew 3:8
  - c. Luke 5:32
  - d. Luke 15:10
  - e. Acts 2:38
  - f. Romans 2:4
  - g. 2 Timothy 2:24-25
  - h. James 5:19-20
  - i. 2 Peter 3:9
  - j. 1 John 1:9
  - k. Revelation 3:19
4. How does the story of The Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 illustrate the difference between the Gospel and legalism? Don't miss the one who the story is chiefly about . . . the elder brother!

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. The chapter begins with a quote from A.W. Tozer, a notable preacher of the twentieth century. He reveals the irony of Jesus' rescue. How does that irony attract us? How might it repel us? What does it tell us about God's character, about the way God acts?
2. Jesus said, "For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mt 16:25). Can you think of other similarly ironic statements that describe the Christian life?
3. Read the words that end the chapter, those immediately after Romans 10:9-10. How do you suppose that after Jesus paid the debt for our sin, satisfying God completely, the story of the #Gospel does not continue "happily ever after"?

## **Chapter 9: #IntotheFire**

**Video: #IntotheFire (available on [hashtaggospel.com/video](https://hashtaggospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Why does selfishness remain after we commit our lives to Jesus Christ? Can it be tamed? Can the Gospel do anything about it?
2. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the #Gospel?
3. How do we know when we are convicted by the Spirit? What should we do when we are? Is all conviction genuine? How can we tell the difference between the false and true conviction?
4. The Apostle Paul describes himself as a theological, if not psychological, basket case in Romans 7. Was this a onetime crisis of faith, an occasional self-conflict, or a perpetual struggle? How did he (and can we) move out of the darkness of Romans 7 into the light of Romans 8?
5. Who are the three Hebrew boys referenced at the end of the chapter? (Check out Daniel 3.) How long did it take until they were rescued? What can that tell us about how God rescues us?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. The chapter asks the question, “If Paul fared so poorly against this overpowering wave of selfishness, what chance do we stand?” What’s your answer biblically? What’s your challenge personally? Who’s there to help you relationally?
2. In Matthew 5, Jesus says that He came not to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it. How should we treat the Law today? Should we ignore, adapt, or obey it? How can following the Law hurt us? How can it help us? How does living by faith relate?
3. In Philippians 1:6, the Apostle Paul writes that God will complete the good work he began in us. It’s easy to get discouraged when we sin, denying the truth that God is working in our lives. How do each of these verses reverse this mindset and give us assurance of His truth?

Psalm 23:4

John 6:37-39

John 10:28-29

Romans 4:16

Romans 8:38-39

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Ephesians 2:8-9

1 John 5:11-13

4. Romans 8:31-39 is an amazing look at the power of the #Gospel.
  - a. How is it possible that Christ will freely give us all things (32)? Won't that feed our selfishness?
  - b. How is it possible that no one will bring a charge against us when there are so many charges that can be brought (33)? Surely, we can't be completely exonerated, can we?
  - c. What is Christ praying for on our behalf (34)?
  - d. Those who follow Christ can never be separated from his love (35-36). If so, why do we endure so much suffering? Isn't that unloving?

## Making the Connection

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. Name a few people in the Bible who got a fresh start. What was life like for them before and after their restart?
2. Romans 8:1-3 talks about two laws: "the law of sin and death" and "the law of the Spirit of life." How do those two laws work? How do they relate?
3. Read Romans 8 to uncover the role of the Holy Spirit in the #Gospel message. What are some different ways the Spirit can work in our life?
4. What does it mean to be "in Christ"? See Rom 8:1.

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. Like Jonah, what are you running from right now?
2. What is the first word that comes to mind when reading the following terms? How do these words and phrases help you to better understand your life in Christ?

condemnation	love	holy
forgiven	the law	death
Gospel	sin	my flesh
the Holy Spirit	obedience	
3. Why is slipping into "checklist Christianity" so easy? How can we fight against it?
4. Like prayer and Bible reading, what are some other spiritual disciplines that, when done with the right motivation, can help us in our struggle to "stay on the altar" and be the living sacrifice that Paul talks about in Romans 12:1-2?

## **Chapter 10: #MidnightRescue**

**Video: #Midnight Rescue (available on [hashtagospel.com/video](https://hashtagospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Have you ever been anxious or afraid of sharing the Gospel with others? What were the biggest barriers for you?
2. Read Romans 9:1-5. What is Paul's concern? How does that relate to the Gospel? How were the Old Testament Israelites rescued? By the Law or by the Gospel? Ask the same questions for the non-Israelites.
3. What were Moses' specific objections to God when God called him to speak to Pharaoh in Exodus 3:1-4:17? How did God address them?
4. Why were the stories of the woman at the well in John 4 and the blind man in John 9 so compelling? How did they use their stories to share the Gospel with those around them?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. Follow Paul's logic through his set of four questions in Romans 10:14-15. What is he trying to communicate?
2. Why does Paul quote Isaiah 52:7 at the end of Romans 10:15? Read Isaiah 52 to understand what would have immediately come to mind for Paul's readers. Connect Isaiah 52 with Isaiah 53.
3. How important is it to decide definitively whether Calvin and his followers, Arminius and his followers, or some other way is right about the degree to which God programmed His rescue plan in advance? Without feeling the need to argue for one side or the other, consider these questions. (Be careful. This subject has been the source of much conflict over the years.)
  - a. Can all of the views be right? Can all of them be wrong? Does it matter?
  - b. What is the difference between a mystery, a paradox and a contradiction? Which of these are we dealing with here?
  - c. Do answers to these questions change whether someone is rescued by grace through faith?
  - d. Do answers to these questions affect who God calls us to take the Gospel to?

## Making the Connection

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. Paul describes those who share the gospel with others as having beautiful feet. Pick a few of the references below. How do each of these “beautiful feet” references align us with God’s rescue plan?

Genesis 12:1-3

Luke 24:46-48

Exodus 19:5-6

John 20:21-23

Isaiah 6:8

Acts 1:8

Matthew 24:14

1 Peter 2:9-10

Matthew 28:18-20

1 Peter 3:14-17

2. Read a few of the following sermons and testimonies from the book of Acts. How were they crafted specifically for the audience?

Acts 2:14-41

Acts 13:16-43

Acts 3:12-26

Acts 17:22-34

Acts 4:8-22

Acts 22:1-21

Acts 5:27-42

Acts 23:1-6

Acts 7:1-60

Acts 24:10-25

Acts 10:34-48

Acts 26:1-29

3. What future does the nation of Israel have, according to Romans 11? What is Paul talking about when he speaks of “the fullness of the Gentiles” in Romans 11:25?
4. Paul wanted his feet to be beautiful for his countrymen saying, “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved” (10:1). What role does prayer play in the process of sharing the Gospel?

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to life specifically?

1. Have you ever been part of a rescue team? If so, what was it like? If not, imagine how you would feel as part of one. What would being on that team do for relationships among team members? What would it do for motivation and focus?
2. Ask God for an opportunity to share your story with someone this week. Next time your group meets, share your experiences.

# Chapter 11: #BandUnbroken

**Video: #BandUnbroken (available on [hashtagospel.com/video](https://hashtagospel.com/video))**

## **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Before starting the discussion, take time to share about the opportunities that each of you had to share your testimony with people in your life this week.
2. How is Romans 12:1 about worshipping God?
3. What does it take to live in community? How do wolves illustrate the value of community? Why is living in community as Christians so challenging, yet so necessary?
4. In *The Four Loves*, author C.S. Lewis writes, “to love is to be vulnerable.” What are the risks of deep relationships? What are the risks of isolation?
5. Is love a command, a belief, a value, an action, something else, or a combination of them all? Should I love even if I do not feel like loving? Does God call me to love all people equally? If I want to be loved in return, does that make my love less genuine?
6. James 2:22-24 says that genuine faith is always accompanied by action. Are there things that you are believing in faith for right now? What actions can you take today to support that faith?

## **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing evaluating their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. Look over Romans 11-12. How does the end of Romans 11 link to the beginning of Romans 12? How does Romans 12:1 connect to Romans 12:2? In the rest of chapter 12, how do the ideas of humble service connect to ideas of love in action?
2. What does submission look like in the Christian life?
3. Church life is often called “body life” because all the parts of the body work together under the direction of the head (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:12, 27). How do the following metaphors of the church illustrate community, teamwork, and unity?

Shepherd & Sheep	1 Peter 5:1-5
Building & Foundation	1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:18-20
Father & Family	Matthew 12:48-50; Galatians 6:10
Groom & Bride	Ephesians 5:22-33
Citizens of God’s Kingdom	Romans 14:17; Philippians 3:20-21

## Making the Connection

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. Love is arguably the central theme of four books of the Bible: Ruth, Song of Solomon, Hosea, and 1 John. Though relatively short, they are long on lessons of love. What does each one teach about love?

Ruth

The Song of Solomon

Hosea

1 John

2. Known as the “love chapter,” 1 Corinthians 13 offers readers noteworthy qualities of true love. How do these concepts apply to life in biblical community? Which ones are the most challenging for you?
3. Read Mark 12:28-34. Are love and law two different things or two forms of the same thing?
4. What are some specific ways to tell that Christians are growing together as the body of Christ?

## Going All In

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. “Living sacrifice” seems to be an oxymoron. In each of the following situations, what does it look like for you to be a “living sacrifice”?
  - Dealing with a difficult co-worker
  - Discussing politics
  - Being neighborly
  - Managing time & finances
  - Parenting & grandparenting
  - Being a son or daughter
  - Driving your vehicle
  - Shopping
2. If you could build a local church body from the ground up, from the Bible up, what would it look like? Why? Would many find the church off-putting? Why?
3. Examine the Venn diagram found near the end of the chapter. How do you determine what people really need? How do you prioritize those needs? In your experience, how big is the overlapping area? What are you doing in that area? What do you need to do? What is keeping you from doing it?

## **Chapter 12: #RulesofEngagement**

**Video: #RulesofEngagement (available on [hashtaggospel.com/video](https://hashtaggospel.com/video))**

### **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

1. Why are Christians seen as “judgmental” to so many people who do not follow Christ?
2. Should those who promote the Gospel be gentle or controversial when it comes to hot button issues in our society? How does John 1:17 help us answer this question?
3. How do the actions of the early church, living under the oppressive Roman government, help the Church today to understand the role God wants us to play in society?
4. If we follow Paul in Romans 13:13-14, will we alienate ourselves from unbelievers or attract them? What does a Christian look like who’s clothed in the presence of Christ?
5. The chapter outlines Paul’s strategy in Romans 13 as, “obey authority, love others, and stay pure.” How do we do this under corrupt leadership?

### **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing evaluating their accuracy, implications and consequences?

1. When is it appropriate to engage in civil disobedience? Does the Bible offer any guidance? Does the political system make a difference?
2. Romans 13:1-7 is clear: Christians should submit to civil authorities because, in so doing, they are submitting to God. But does the Bible indicate whether it is permissible or desirable for Christians to serve as civil authorities? Should Christians try to influence public policy, aligning it more closely with #Gospel principles?
3. What, if anything, does the Bible say about such matters as:
  - Labor unions
  - Taxation
  - Universal health insurance
  - Inheritance laws
  - Clean air and water
  - The right to bear arms
  - “Equal pay for equal work”
  - Banks and Lending
  - Nuclear weapons



4. Can morality be legislated? If not, doesn't every law spring from some moral assumption? If yes, does it make people more moral to force them to do what they don't want to do?

## **Making the Connection**

Where does the Bible talk more about these concepts?

1. The Apostle Paul appealed to his Roman citizenship when threatened with arrest, beatings, and incarceration in Acts 22:25-28. Does Paul's appeal offer any guidance for how Christians should use the levers of political power?
2. Paul called on Christians to pray for "kings and all who are in high positions" in 1 Tim 2:1-2. How should we pray for them? The text also says we should pray for them, "that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way." What does this mean in today's society?
3. What do the concluding verses of Acts tell us about how to relate to civil government in Acts 28:17-31?
4. When Jesus was asked about whether God's people should pay taxes to godless governments, He confounded his questioners in Matthew 22:17-21. How did Jesus use that opportunity to definitively answer that question as well as call them to something higher?

## **Going All In**

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

1. From conservative to liberal to independent, Christian voters maintain vastly diverse political views. Is it beneficial or detrimental for the body of Christ to have differing political perspectives? Does it matter?
2. How are we to relate to a society that does not share our belief system? What does that mean for us practically? What if the society is openly hostile to what we believe? What biblical examples can we draw from to help us work through these questions? How do we fight back against negative stereotypes (whether deserved or undeserved) of Christianity?
3. What are some concrete examples of ways we can submit to authority, love others, and stay pure?

# Chapter 13/Conclusion: #AllIn

**Video: #AllIn (available on [hashtagospel.com/video](https://hashtagospel.com/video))**

## **Grasping the Concepts**

Do I understand the concepts discussed in the chapter?

- This chapter is a call to push all our chips to the center of the table. Is that a fair analogy? Why is this so hard to do?

## **Digging Deeper**

Can I look deeper into those concepts by analyzing their accuracy, implications and consequences?

- Looking back at the concepts both in this chapter and the entire book, what were some of the ideas that struck you as most significant in your life?

## **Making the Connection**

Where do I go in the Bible to advance my grasp of the truth of God about these concepts?

- Read Mark 10:17-27. How does this narrative speak into going “All In”? How does this relate to us?

## **Going All In**

How should I apply the truth of God to my life?

- When was your “moment of truth” with the #Gospel? How did you know you had to make a decisive, all-or-nothing decision? What were you ready to say goodbye to? What were you hoping to say hello to? What has happened since?
- This chapter asserts that living the Gospel requires constant **repentance, submission, and dependence** on God because we face “an endless battle with sin.” Using the space provided, list some strategies you can use to face the challenges of living out the Gospel. Do you have a close relationship with another follower of Christ? If so, share your responses with them, helping each other work to work toward your goals on a regular basis. If not, jot down strategies to form that kind of relationship.

Repentance	Submission	Dependence	Relationship

## Wrap up

Next steps:

- Take some substantial time as a group to pray together about the following:
  - Opportunities to put ideas from this study guide into practice
  - Courage to share testimonies with others
  - Wisdom and direction in moving forward spiritually
  - Occasions to work together as a group to meet the needs of our surrounding community

Romans 16:25-27

Now all glory to God, who is able to make you strong, just as my Good News says. This message about Jesus Christ has revealed his plan for you Gentiles, a plan kept secret from the beginning of time. But now as the prophets foretold and as the eternal God has commanded, this message is made known to all Gentiles everywhere, so that they too might believe and obey him. All glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, forever. Amen.

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