A FREE downloadable version of this guide is available at rose-publishing.com. Click on “News & Info,” then on “Downloads.”

The leader guide covers each chapter of this book and includes teaching tips and additional resources.

The study guide includes reproducible worksheets and discussion questions for each chapter.

What participants will gain from this study:

- Understand their identity in Christ.
- Learn how to know and accept God’s will for their lives.
- Gain practical guidance in spiritual disciplines.
- Know how to discern the truth and steer clear of false teachings.
- See what God’s Word says about being faithful stewards.
- Learn 24 ways to explain the good news of Jesus.
- Read inspiring stories of modern-day disciples who stayed strong through persecution.
LEADER GUIDE

Spend time in prayer before each session and pray for each participant.

CHAPTER 1: WHO I AM IN CHRIST

Main Idea
As a believer in Christ, you are a child of God—loved, saved, and renewed.

Teaching Tips
Introduce participants to the purposes of this study. Ask them what they hope to gain from the study or why they joined this study.
As you teach this session, be sure to highlight why it is important for believers to understand their identity in Christ. Explain how it can make a difference in our daily lives, at our jobs, with our families, and for our future hope.

Digging Deeper

CHAPTER 2: KNOWING GOD’S WILL

Main Idea
God has a purpose for each of us. We can trust God to love us and work all things in our lives for good.

Teaching Tips
Lead by example. You can encourage participants to open up and share their stories by giving your own testimony. Remember to include specifics and concrete examples of how you have seen God’s will in your life.
Make the Four Things You Can Do worksheet into something participants can do as a group. For example: create the cards or prayer journals together; organize a volunteer service; pick names out of a hat and ask each person pray for the individual whose name they chose every day until the next meeting. Pray that they would know and live in God’s will daily.

Digging Deeper
Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God’s Will by Kevin DeYoung (Moody, 2009)
Bible Promises for Hope and Courage pamphlet (Rose Publishing, 2006)
CHAPTER 3: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES
Main Idea
Spiritual disciplines help us change our sinful habits into good habits that make us more like Christ.

Teaching Tips
Set aside some time during the session to practice several of the spiritual disciplines: Read a Scripture passage; spend time in silent reflection; pray together; worship together in song or liturgy. Ask participants to share with the group if God laid anything particular on their hearts during this time.
Be aware that as you discuss spiritual disciplines some participants may feel guilty or judge themselves as lesser Christians. Remember to emphasize that feelings of guilt or failure are not reasons to give up on the spiritual disciplines, but may be cues to set realistic goals or to learn how to rely on God rather than on our own strength of will or determination.

Digging Deeper
Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth by Richard J. Foster (HarperOne, 1998)
How to Study the Bible pamphlet (Rose Publishing, 2007)
One-Year Bible Reading Plan pamphlet (Rose Publishing, 2009)
Metamorpha; an online community for Christian spiritual formation; www.metamorpha.com

CHAPTER 4: WHY TRUTH MATTERS
Main Idea
Discerning the truth from lies is essential to healthy, authentic Christian faith.

Teaching Tips
Before the session, familiarize yourself with the teachings of the religious and cult groups mentioned in this chapter. (See www.apologeticsindex.org and www.thecenters.org.)
If the discussion time becomes controversial or argumentative, use the disagreement as a teaching opportunity; allow for disagreement, not accusation. Remind participants that discernment is a process, and we shouldn’t assume we have all the right answers up front. It’s about relying on God to show us the truth as we research the claims of others, dig into God’s Word, and pray for spiritual eyes to see the truth.

Digging Deeper
See “Recommended Reading” and “Discernment Ministries” at the end of the chapter.
Also see Rose Bible Basics: Christianity, Cults & Religions (Rose Publishing, 2008)
CHAPTERS 5: WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT MONEY

Main Idea
God cares about our faithfulness with money—whether it is a lot or a little. We must always remember to keep God at the center of our finances.

Teaching Tips
Open the session by having participants brainstorm together: What kinds of messages do you hear about money from advertisements, family members, church leaders, coworkers, financial advisors, politicians, and others? Write all their answers on a whiteboard or easel pad. After the lesson time, go back to the list of messages and compare the list to what the Bible says about money.
At the end of the session have participants gather in a circle and place in the center their wallets, car keys, house keys, credit cards, and so forth. As a group, pray together affirming that everything we own has come from God and ultimately belongs to him. Pray for wisdom to know how to use all our resources for God’s glory and his kingdom.

Digging Deeper
Money, Possessions, and Eternity revised edition by Randy Alcorn (Tyndale House, 2003)

CHAPTER 6: 24 WAYS TO EXPLAIN THE GOSPEL

Main Idea
It is important to explore, learn, appropriate, and use the illustrations the Bible itself uses to explain what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

Teaching Tips
Begin the session by giving each participant a blank piece of paper and pen. Ask participants to take a few minutes to write down in their own words what the gospel is. Then ask participants to voluntarily share what they wrote. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1–8 where the apostle Paul explains the gospel to the Corinthian believers.

Digging Deeper
The God Conversation: Using Stories and Illustrations to Explain Your Faith by J.P. Moreland, Tim Muelhoff, and Lee Strobel (InterVarsity, 2007)
Life of Jesus pamphlet (Rose Publishing, 2009). Answers to the questions of why Jesus came, what he taught, and why he died and rose again.
CHAPTER 7: STRONG IN THE STORM

Main Idea
We can learn valuable lessons about following Jesus from the stories of other disciples who have stood strong through tough times.

Teaching Tips
Approach this chapter from the angle of discipleship. The best way to know what discipleship looks like is to see it in action, lived out by other disciples who have followed Jesus even when it was extremely difficult.

Does your church participate in the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church? If not, consider having your group take the lead or get involved in the next Day of Prayer. (See www.persecutedchurch.org for details.)

Be sure to set aside some time during the session to pray specifically for persecuted believers.

Digging Deeper
Day by Day with the Persecuted Church: 365 Daily Readings by Jan Pit (Sovereign World, 1995)

FEEDBACK
To improve future studies, be sure to get feedback from the group about teaching style, meeting location, discussion time, material covered, length of study, and group size. Choose a method that best suits your group: Anonymous evaluation sheet, e-mail response or questionnaire, open discussion. (See the feedback questions at the end of the study guide.)

The inclusion of a work or website does not necessarily mean endorsement of all its contents or of other works by the same author(s).

STUDY GUIDE
The study guide which begins on the following page includes a reproducible worksheet and discussion questions for group discussion or personal reflection.
Who I am in Christ

Worksheet

Choose 10 of the “I am’s” from this chapter that are most meaningful to you. Then complete the sentence (“This means that I...”) with something specific and personal to your own circumstances in life.

1. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

2. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

3. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

4. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

5. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

6. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

7. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

8. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

9. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________

10. I am _____________________. This means that I am ______________________________
Who I am in Christ

Discussion Questions

1. What would you tell a new Christian who believes that he or she is new creation in Christ, but doesn’t feel like he or she is?

2. What does it mean to be made in the image of God?

3. In your own words, how would you explain what it means to have a “new mind” (Rom. 12:1–2)?

4. Why can only Christ’s blood shed on the cross allow us to have a new, wonderful identity?

5. How does understanding your identity in Christ help you become a better disciple of Jesus?
Knowing God’s Will

Worksheet

Four Things You Can Do

- **Create daily reminders.** On 3x5 cards, write each of the headings in the section “What do I need to remember about God’s leading?” (For example: write “#2. I won’t miss God’s plan if my heart is set on pleasing him.”) Place the cards where you will see them easily and often (For example: On your desk, in your locker, on your mirror, your closet.)

- **Keep a prayer journal.** On the first day of each week write down your prayer requests and consistently pray about them. At the end of the month look back over your requests and see how God answered them. Was it a “yes” answer, a “no” answer, or “wait”? This will help you see how God is working in your life.

- **Start serving others.** Sometimes we need quiet time alone with God to listen to him, but remember that God also works in your life through your active service to others. Don’t let uncertainty about God’s will paralyze you from helping others. Find opportunities to volunteer in your church or community.

- **Ask someone to pray for you.** As a part of the body of believers, you are not alone! When you have a tough decision to make, find a friend, pastor, church leader, or a family member and ask him or her to pray for God to show you his will.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think that God sometimes has us wait for him, rather than just answering our prayers right away?

2. Read Romans 8:38–39. In your own words, how would you describe this kind of love?

3. What do you do when you pray about a decision you have to make, but don’t have a clear “yes” or “no” from God?

4. If a friend told you that she felt like she has missed God’s will for her life, what would you say to her?

5. Share with the group about a time when God changed a bad situation in your life into a good outcome. Looking back, what do you know now that you didn’t know then about how God works?
Spiritual Disciplines

Worksheet

For each of the spiritual disciplines below, write one practical thing you can do to grow in them. Remember to keep it realistic and achievable. For example, it might mean getting to church service on time so you can participate fully in the worship through music time. Or it might mean reading a book or talking with your pastor to learn more about a spiritual discipline that you don’t quite understand or don’t know how to do.

1. Bible Reading/Study __________________________

2. Prayer __________________________

3. Fasting __________________________

4. Worship __________________________

5. Service __________________________

6. Solitude __________________________

7. Discernment __________________________

8. Evangelism __________________________

Discussion Questions

1. Which spiritual discipline do you practice most often? Which one the least?

2. Do any of the spiritual disciplines cause you concern or make you uncomfortable? Why do you think this is so?

3. What are the spiritual disciplines for? And what are they not for?

4. What are some of the purposes of the spiritual discipline of solitude?

5. If a believer does not practice the spiritual disciplines often enough, does this put his or her salvation in jeopardy? Why or why not?
Why Truth Matters

Worksheet

Look up each of the passages below. In your own words, write down what each passage teaches about discerning the truth.

John 14:16–17 & John 16:12–13
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

1 Corinthians 15:1–8
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

1 Corinthians 2:12–16
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

1 Thessalonians 5:19–22
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2 Timothy 3:12–16
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Discussion Questions

1. If a Christian friend were following a false teacher on TV, the radio, or through a book, how would you approach your friend?

2. What would you do if you were concerned that a leader in your church was teaching a false doctrine? How would you approach the situation?

3. What role does the church and other believers have in discernment?

4. How can we discern whether a vision or miracle is true or false? Can we always know?

5. How is discernment a part of being a disciple of Jesus?
# What the Bible Says about Money

## Worksheet

Take a look at the diagram below. Mark on the spectrum where you are at for each of the points. Don’t over-think your responses or try to find the “right” answer; just respond honestly about your typical attitude toward each of these aspects of money.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Money is...</th>
<th>A corrupting influence</th>
<th>A tool for good or evil</th>
<th>A blessing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I should...</td>
<td>Avoid it</td>
<td>Manage it</td>
<td>Seek it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money should be...</td>
<td>Given away</td>
<td>Invested and spent wisely</td>
<td>Accumulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessions should be...</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Plentiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending on myself is...</td>
<td>Only for basic needs</td>
<td>In moderation</td>
<td>For pleasure and enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sign of holiness is...</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Neither poverty nor wealth are indicators</td>
<td>Wealth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading this chapter, how might you want your view of money to change on any of the aspects above?

## Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of messages do you hear about money from advertisements, family members, church leaders, coworkers, financial advisors, politicians, and others? How do these compare to what the Bible says?
2. Why do you think there are so many verses in the Bible about money and wealth?
3. How does giving generously benefit not only the recipient, but also the giver?
4. What is the connection between money in our lives and being Jesus’ disciple?
5. What are some practical things you can do—or avoid doing—to help you be content with what you have?
24 Ways to Explain the Gospel

Worksheet

The gospel is good news for all who believe. Using 20 of the illustrations in this chapter, create a list of what we were before coming to Christ and what we are now after accepting the gospel. (The first two are done for you.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We were once:</th>
<th>We are now:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dead</td>
<td>1. Alive</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Immature</td>
<td>2. Mature</td>
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Discussion Questions

1. Which of the illustrations of salvation have you heard most often? Which ones least often?
2. See the four evangelism plans at the end of the chapter. Can you think of other evangelism plans you’ve heard or used to explain the gospel?
3. How do illustrations help us better understand what “salvation” means?
4. After reading this chapter, how do these biblical illustrations help you better understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus?
Strong in the Storm

Worksheet

See “How Can I Help Persecuted Christians?” in this chapter. Write down four things you can do. Remember to make your goals specific and realistic.

1. ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

4. ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

Discussion Questions

1. Read John 15:19–21. Why is persecution an expected part of a believer’s life?
2. What types of persecution do Christians in your culture or society face? (See “Four Stages of Persecution.”)
3. What persecutions have you endured because of your faith?
4. Which of the six lessons was most meaningful to you? Why?
5. Look back over the chapters in this book. How can things like our identity in Christ, the spiritual disciplines, or discerning the truth prepare us to stand strong when faced with persecution?
Strong in the Storm

Write Your Own Story

You may not have faced persecution like the believers you read about, but everyone as a disciple of Jesus has been through hard times. Write down your experience and tell what you learned about God through it. Where did you see God’s love through that storm in your life? Then share your story with a friend or your study group.

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FEEDBACK

1. What did you learn through this study that deepened your relationship with God and/or helped you understand biblical teachings better?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
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2. What was your favorite thing about this study, and why?

__________________________________________________________________________
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3. How could the meeting location, setting, length, or time be improved?

__________________________________________________________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________

4. Did you think the material covered was too difficult, too easy, or just right?

__________________________________________________________________________
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5. What would you like to see different about the group discussions?

__________________________________________________________________________
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6. What would you like to see different about the activities?

__________________________________________________________________________
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7. What topic would you like to learn more about?

__________________________________________________________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________