

# Study Guide

01.01.21—v1

Thank you for downloading the *Both-And* Study Guide.

- This Guide will help you lead a group through the book's content, chapter by chapter.
- It can be used for personal reflection, but is primarily designed for leading group study.
- The group will require access to the book (one chapter to be read between meetings).
- If possible, ask the group to read the book's introduction before the first meeting.
- During the first meeting, follow the five steps on the next page.
- For all subsequent meetings, simply go to the relevant chapter in this Guide, and follow the steps on-page.



# 1

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## Group Introduction

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If the group members are not already familiar with each other at the first meeting, you may like to ask them to briefly introduce themselves.

Specifically highlighting any previous learning or background in theology may be helpful in gaining a basic picture of where everyone is at in their thinking.

# 2

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## Material Introduction

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Before the first meeting, you will have ideally read the whole book; or, at least, read enough chapters to understand how the 'both-and' concept works in principle.

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the introduction to the book. Frame the depth of your overview accordingly.

It will be helpful to explain that the group may share a range of theological views on some of the less central themes raised. Lovingly disagreeing is healthy and sharpens each other's views.

# 3

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## Chapter Choice

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There are 23 chapters in the book. Depending on the length and duration of your study group, you may not be able to cover all the chapters.

You may wish to select certain chapters based on your knowledge and discernment of the group's needs. Conversely, you may choose to use the first meeting to gather requests from the group on which chapters they would like to have covered.

This is where prior knowledge of the material will be helpful. You may need to explain what certain chapters entail (since it may not be clear from the titles alone).

# 4

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## Meeting Structure

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You can give an overview of how each meeting will be structured:

1. Recap—on the relevant chapter.
2. Read—the supporting Scriptures.
3. Ask—some key question prompts.
4. Point—to further material.
5. Pray—thanks for God's revelation.

Note: the key question prompts are designed to create open discussion among the group. They are not exhaustive, and you may wish to explore other avenues as the discussion develops. Worksheets to explore the benefits of a both-and mindset vs an either-or mindset are included and may be tackled ahead of each meeting (or during).

Opportunities can be offered for any group member to use the Guide to lead future meetings.

# 5

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## Prayer for Revelation

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LORD, we give you thanks for your revelation to us. For your Word to us; for your visible hand in creation; for your Spirit, living in us; and for your Son, sacrificed for us.

LORD, open the eyes of our hearts that we might know you more fully. And that this knowledge may overflow in love and service in our lives and communities.

Amen

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# 3

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# 1

**Apparent contradictions  
in the divine nature.**

three + one

God + man

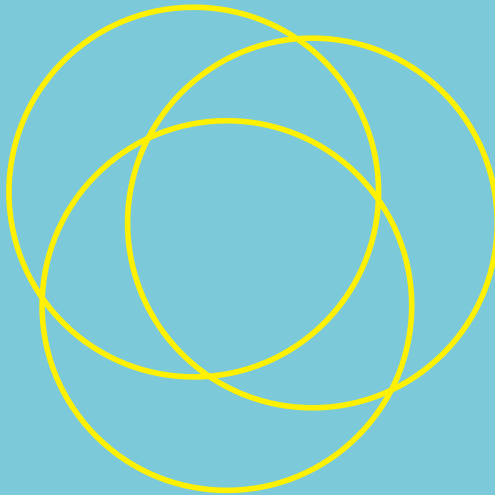
holy + intimate

angry + merciful

general + specific

# three

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# one

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*And when Jesus was baptised, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'*

*Matthew 3:16-17*

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*Deuteronomy 6:4-5*

*'Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.'*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

If we drop God's threeness, it results in the demotion of Jesus to a created human being, and the Holy Spirit to merely the tangible 'effect' of God. This, in turn, would nullify our salvation.

If we drop God's oneness, it means that Father, Son and Spirit effectively become three separate Gods, leading to a form of polytheism.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your hearts.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Three:**

Matthew 3:16-17

—

Genesis 1:1-2

Matthew 28:19

Luke 22:42

John 1:14

John 3:16

John 14:16-17, 26

John 16:10

Acts 2:33

1 Corinthians 12:11

Galatians 4:6

**One:**

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

—

Deuteronomy 32:39

Isaiah 43:10

John 1:1-2

John 20:28

Acts 5:3-4

Philippians 1:2

Colossians 2:9

1 Timothy 2:5

Titus 2:13

Hebrews 1:8

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Do you tend to pray to a particular person of the trinity?

Q. To what extent would Jesus' crucifixion be cruel if God was not both three + one?

—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there is an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Meditations on the Trinity: Beauty, Mystery, and Glory in the Life of God*  
A.W. Tozer

*De Trinitate*  
St. Augustine

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you are in perfect relationship. That, in you alone, we see love given, love received and love shared.

Heavenly Father, thank you for reconciling us, in Christ, to a restored relationship with you. Thank you for sharing your love with us, that we might reflect your goodness to those around us.

Amen



benefits of knowing God  
is 'three in person'

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benefits of knowing God  
is 'one in essence'

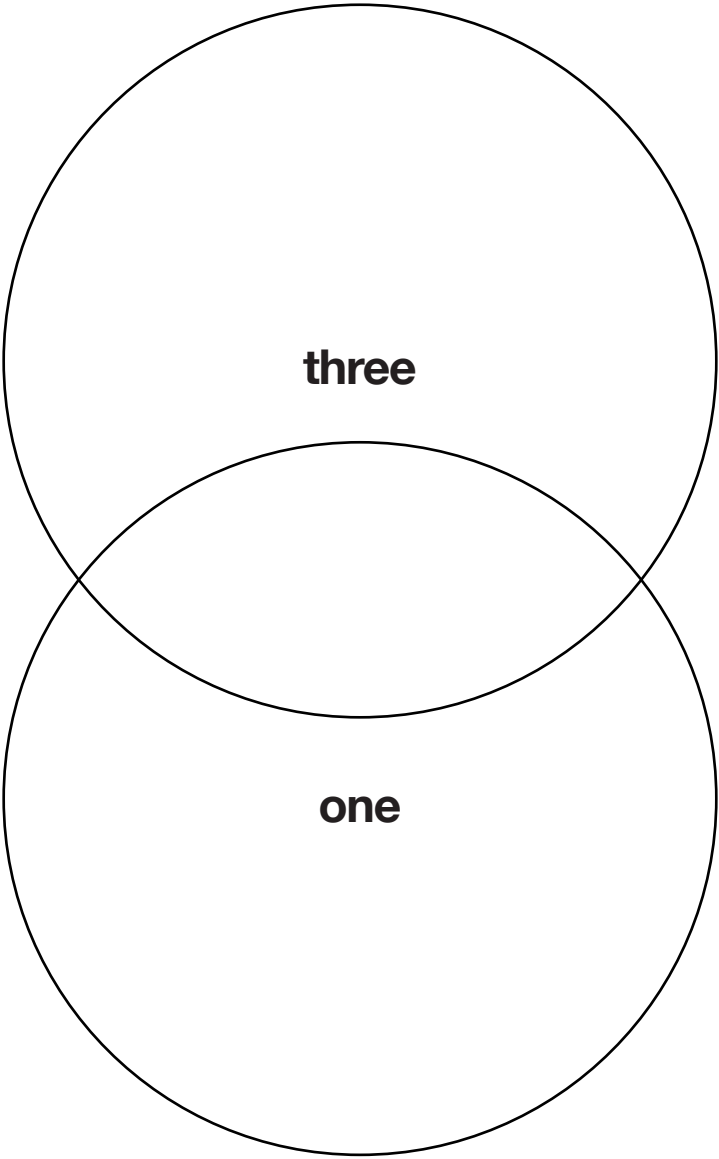
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problems of a  
'three'-only mindset

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problems of a  
'one'-only mindset

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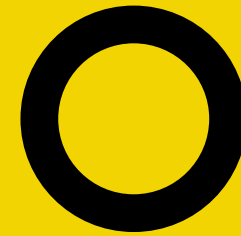
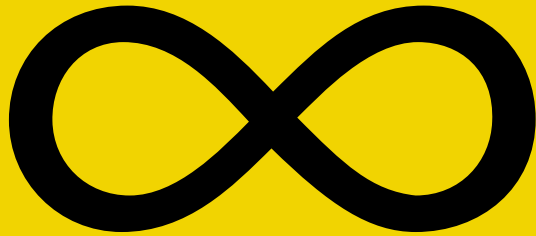


# God

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# man

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*Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.'*

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*John 8:58*

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*1 Timothy 2:5*

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*For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Jesus needed to be fully man to stand in our place as an appropriate sacrifice for humanity. (Heb. 2:17)

Jesus needed to be fully God to do the impossible and triumph over death. (Acts 2:24)

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

God:	Man:
John 8:58	1 Timothy 2:5-7
—	—
Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 14:13
Isaiah 9:6	Mark 11:12
Daniel 7:13-14	Luke 2:52
Matthew 1:23	Luke 22:44
Mark 4:39	John 1:14
Mark 5:41-42	John 8:39-40
Mark 14:62	John 11:35
John 10:30-33	Galatians 4:4-5
John 20:27-29	Philippians 2:5-8
Acts 2:24	Hebrews 2:17
Colossians 1:15-16	Hebrews 4:15
Colossians 2:9	1 Peter 2:21-24
	1 John 4:2-3

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. What are the benefits of understanding Jesus' humanity?

Q. What are the benefits of understanding His divinity?

Q. How many different religions have arisen from leaning into one or the other exclusively?

—  
Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there is an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Cur Deus Homo*  
St. Anselm

*A History of the Work of Redemption*  
Jonathan Edwards

*The Jesus Gospel*  
Liam Goligher

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you embraced self-limitation. That in becoming fully man you stood in our place as an appropriate sacrifice and took the wrath we deserve.

Jesus, thank you for your God-nature, for your awesome power to overcome death!

Amen



benefits of knowing  
Jesus is fully 'God'

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benefits of knowing  
Jesus is fully 'man'

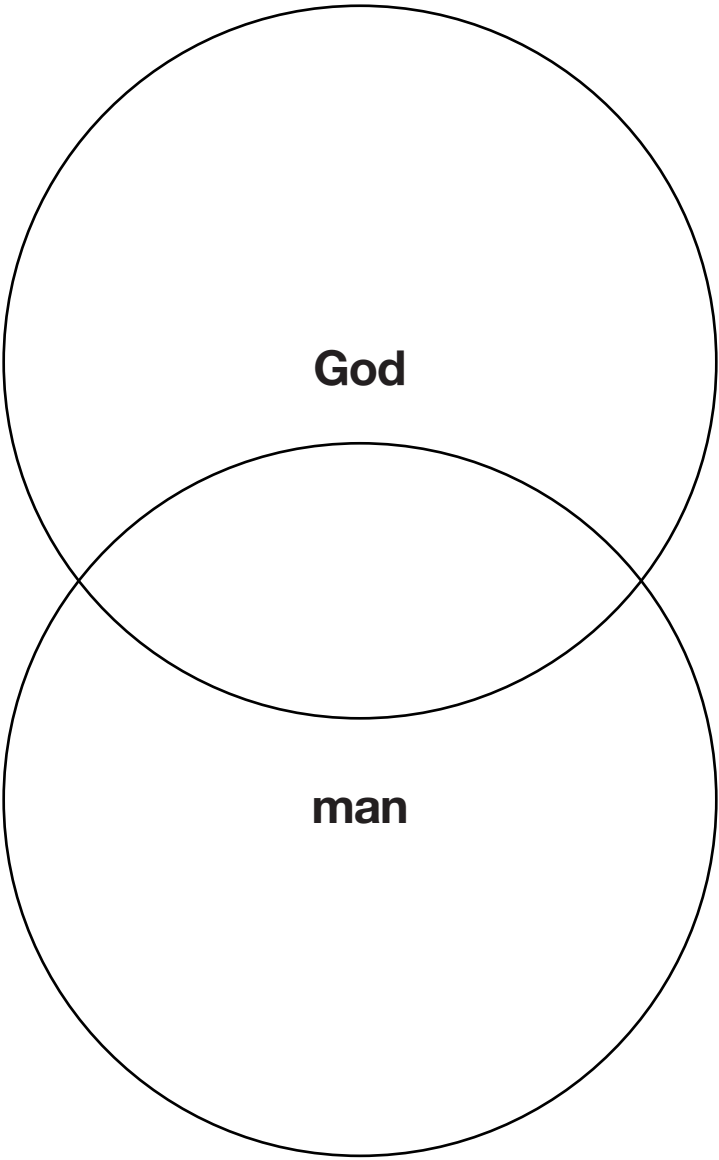
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problems of a  
'God'-*only* mindset

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problems of a  
'man'-*only* mindset

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# holy

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*'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways' declares the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.'*

*Isaiah 55:8-9*

# intimate

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*Luke 12:6-7*

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*'Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.'*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

If we sideline holiness, God loses his majesty and wonder—his complete otherness and unfathomable nature is lost on us. A big, big God fills us with awe and enables our response of repentance.

If we sideline intimacy, God may become austere and uncaring in our view—a being only to be obeyed out of fear.

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Holy:** **Intimate:**

Isaiah 55:8-9	Luke 12:6-7
—	—
Leviticus 19:2	Exodus 33:11
1 Samuel 2:2	Psalms 139:7-12
Psalms 97:12	Psalms 139:23
Isaiah 6:3	Psalms 145:18
Habakkuk 1:12-13	Isaiah 41:13
Luke 1:49	Jeremiah 17:10
Revelation 4:8	Jeremiah 23:23-24
	John 14:27
	Acts 17:27-28
	1 Peter 5:6-7

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Have you thought of holiness as separation before?  
Q. In what sense are we also separated unto the Lord?  
Q. How is it helpful to understand that a response of Awe = Fear + Love?

—  
Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)  
Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?  
Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?  
Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?  
Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*The Holiness of God*  
R.C. Sproul

*Knowing God*  
J. I. Packer

*Helps to Holiness*  
Samuel Brengle

*Knowledge of the Holy*  
A.W. Tozer

5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you are holy beyond our measure; and yet you know us intimately—you know every detail of our life and know exactly how we have been formed.

Thank you that, despite the great chasm between us, Christ's work on the cross redeems us, so that we may be called sons of the living God.

Amen



benefits of knowing  
God is 'holy'

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benefits of knowing  
God is 'intimate'

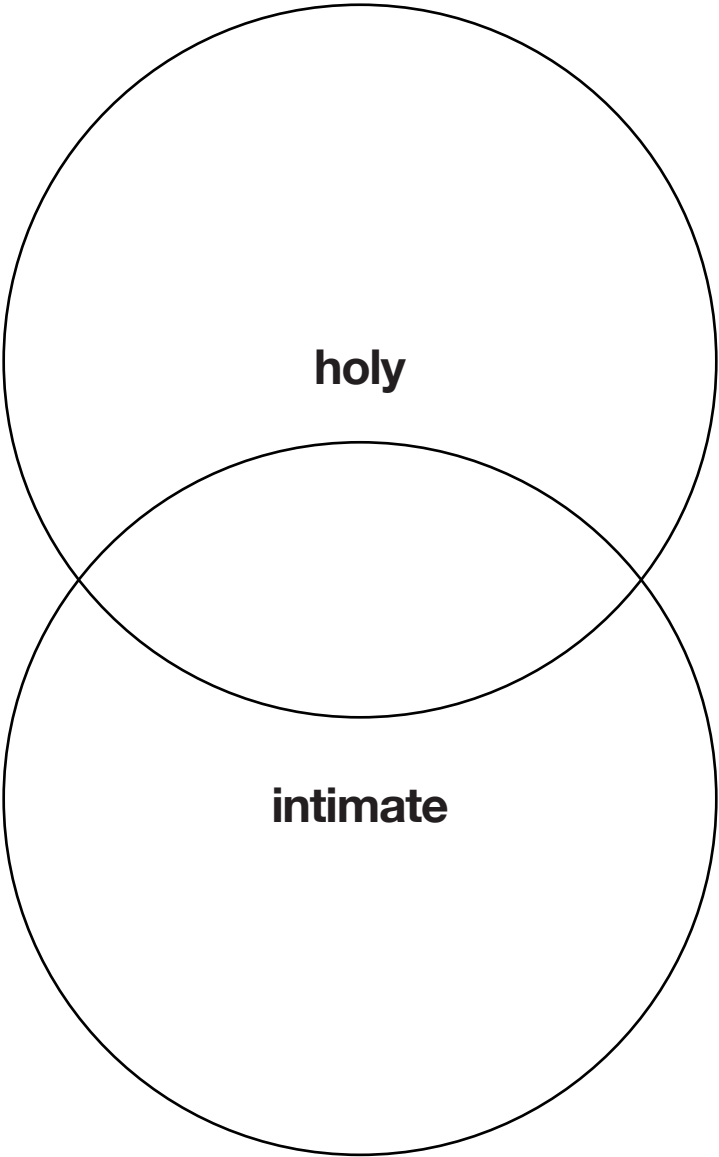
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problems of a  
'holy'-only mindset

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problems of an  
'intimate'-only mindset

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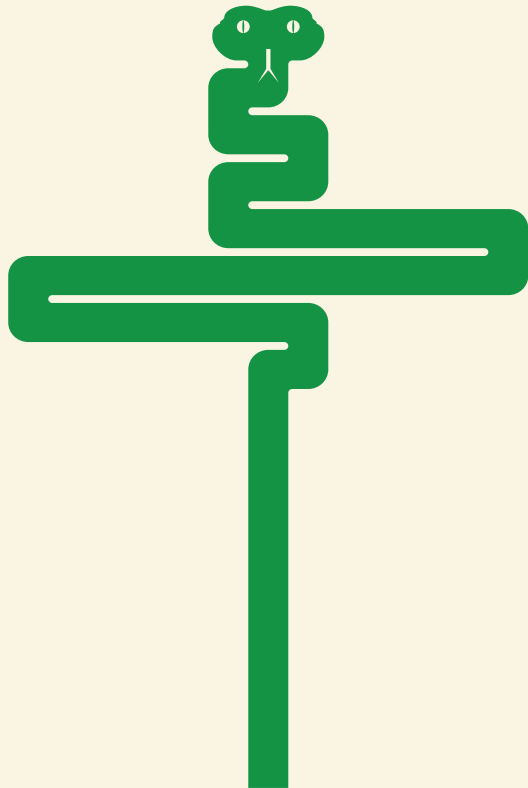
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# angry

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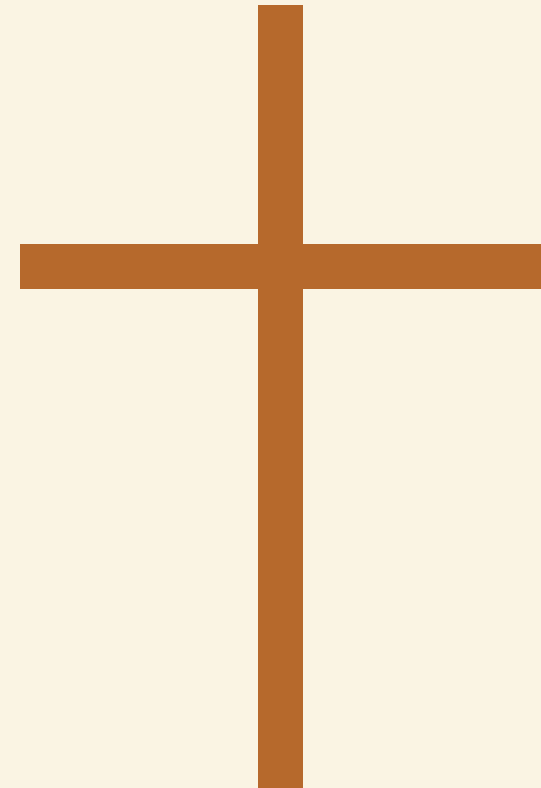
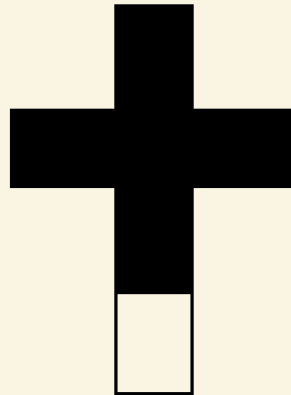
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*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

*2 Corinthians 5:21*

# merciful

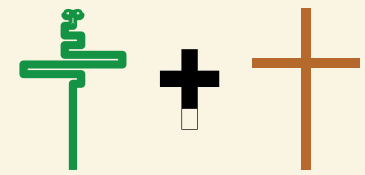
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*John 3:14-15*

*'Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believes in him may have eternal life.'*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

If we play down God's anger, we neglect the gravity with which God views sin. Consider what it cost God to offer us His mercy—His anger was pointed at Himself, even to death on a cross.

If we play down God's mercy, we end up with a predominantly angry God. It inevitably results in a tireless effort to appease Him and avoid His anger.

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Angry:** **Merciful:**

2 Corinthians 5:21	John 3: 14-15
—	—
Genesis 3:15	Exodus 34:6
Psalms 5: 4-6	John 5: 22-24
Psalms 76:8-9	Romans 8:1
Nahum 1:2	Romans 9:22-23
Matthew 20:22	James 2:13
John 3:36	1 Peter 1:3
Revelation 2:18	
Revelation 14:10	

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Do you find it harsh that God punishes the Israelites with snakes?

Q. What do you think it means that Christ 'was made sin'?

Q. What do you think of when you see a rainbow in the sky?

—  
Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*  
Jonathan Edwards

*The Prodigal Prophet: Jonah and the Mystery of God's Mercy*  
Timothy J Keller

5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

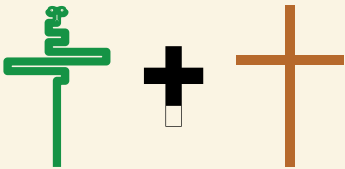
The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you are just. That by your righteous anger our sin is put to death.

Thank you that, in your mercy, we are shielded from your righteous anger by Christ, who became sin for us, in order to put our sin to death.

Amen





benefits of knowing  
God is 'angry'

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benefits of knowing  
God is 'merciful'

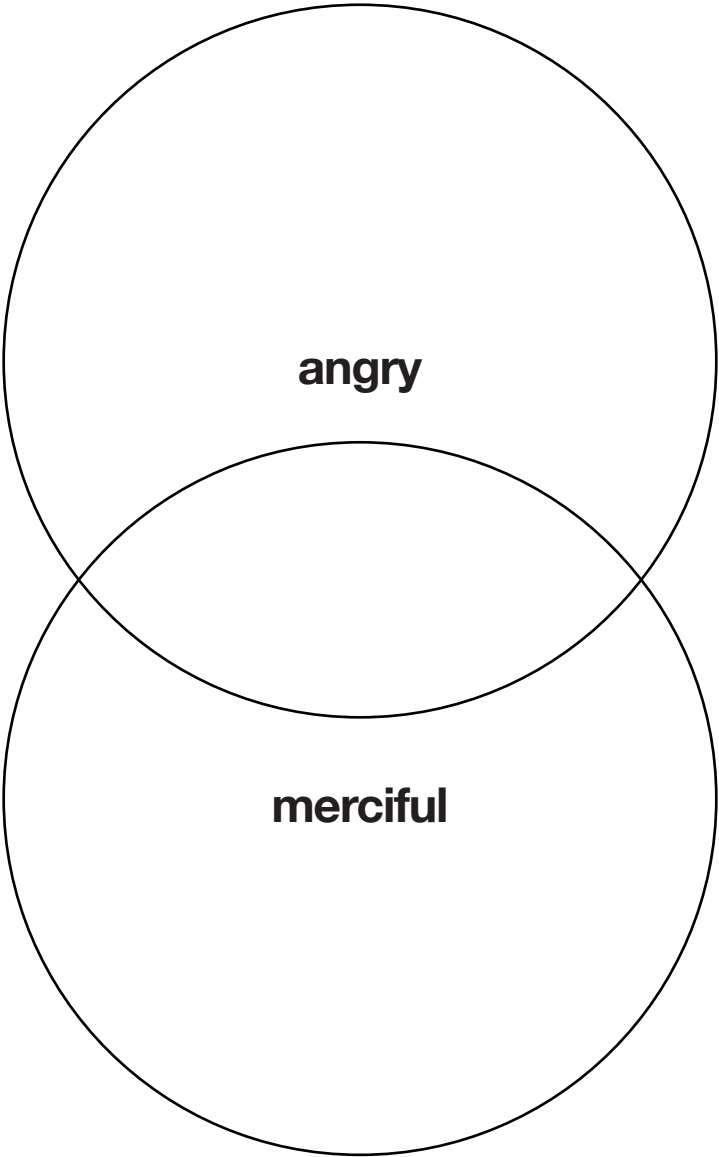
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problems of an  
'angry'-only mindset

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problems of a  
'merciful'-only mindset

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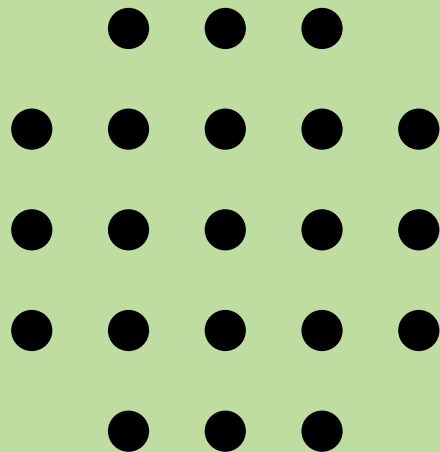
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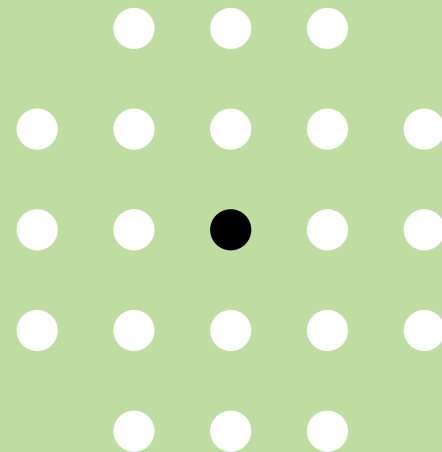
# general

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# specific

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*[God] makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good,  
and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*

*Matthew 5:45*

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*Ephesians 2:8*

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*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this  
is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without understanding that God's common grace prevents our inevitable spiral into depravity, we may not recognise our desperate need for God's saving grace.

Without recognising God's specific saving grace, we may be more inclined to imagine that our own record of goodness somehow influences God's grace to us; or, to believe in universalism (where *all* are saved).

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Common:	Specific:
Matthew 5:45 —	Ephesians 2:8 —
Genesis 4:15	Romans 2:4
Genesis 20:6	Romans 5:10
Psalms 145:9	Ephesians 2:3-9
Luke 6:35	Titus 2:11
Luke 16:25	Hebrews 6:4-6
Acts 14:17	
Romans 2:14-15	
2 Thess. 2:7	
1 Peter 3:9	

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

- Q. Do you believe that all humanity is 'totally' depraved?
- Q. How might your view of humanity shape your view of salvation?
- Q. How does God deal with our depravity (in common and in general)?
- 
- Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)
- Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?
- Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?
- Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?
- Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?
- Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Common Grace*  
Abraham Kuyper

*Calvin on Common Grace*  
Herman Bavinck

*All of Grace*  
Charles H. Spurgeon

5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that despite our leaning towards sin and self-destruction, you operate in the world to restrain humanity's evil.

Thank you for your patience to show your goodness to us—so that we might eventually come to recognise our need for your amazing saving grace.

Amen



benefits of knowing  
God's 'common' grace

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benefits of knowing  
God's 'specific'  
(saving) grace

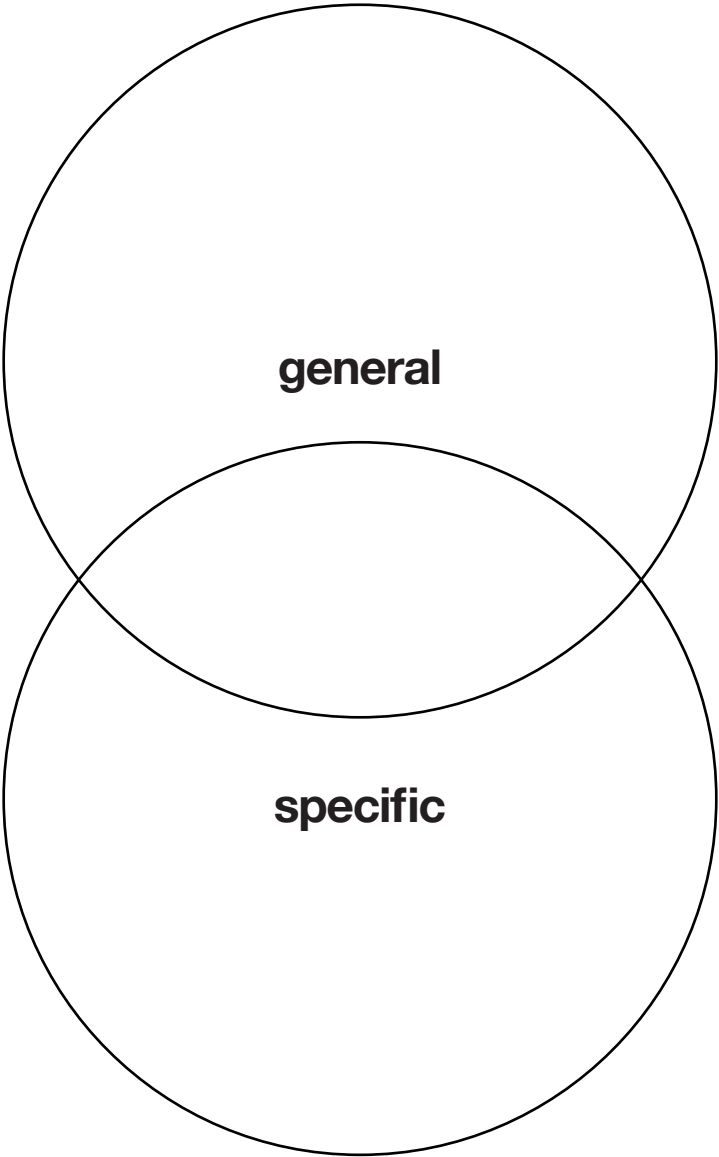
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problems of a  
'common grace'-*only*  
mindset

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problems of a  
'saving grace'-*only*  
mindset

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# 2

**Apparent contradictions in  
the experience of salvation.**

universal + elective

master + messenger

perseverance + preservation

decided + unfolding

death + life

blessings + curses

now + not yet

natural + supernatural

personal + public

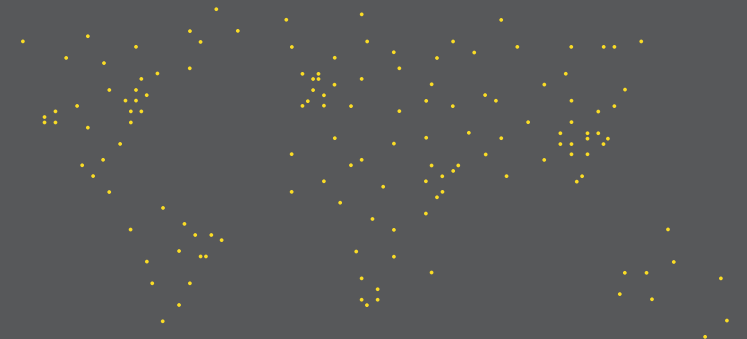
faith + reason

# universal

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# elective

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*This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

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*1 Timothy 2: 3-4*

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*John 17:6*

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*'I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.'*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Neglecting election removes glory from God—from His right to choose us. We may also miss the truth that God electing anyone at all is in itself incredible. He was under no obligation to save us.

Neglecting God's desire for all to be saved—His concern for the lost—would call His goodness into question. God desires that all might come to repentance.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Universal:** **Elective:**

1 Timothy 2:3-4	John 17:6
—	—
Ezekiel 18:23	John 6:65
Matthew 11:28	Acts 13:48
Luke 13:34	Romans 8:33
John 3:16	Romans 9:15-16
John 7:37	Ephesians 1:4-5
Acts 17:30	Colossians 3:12
2 Peter 3:9	1 Timothy 5:21
	Titus 1:1
	James 1:18

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. To what extent would you like it to be true that God saves everyone?

Q. Can you think of scenarios where your own 'will of decree' trumps your 'will of precept' (i.e. you make decisions for positive long term outcomes which also create immediately undesirable results)?

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there is an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Chosen by God*  
R.C. Sproul

*The Pleasures of God*  
John Piper

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you have chosen us to share in your glory. We trust in your good and eternal purposes for us through your election.

Father, we thank you that your heart is for all people to come to a knowledge of the truth—that none may perish.

Amen



benefits of knowing  
God *desires* for  
'all to be saved'

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benefits of knowing  
God 'chooses us'

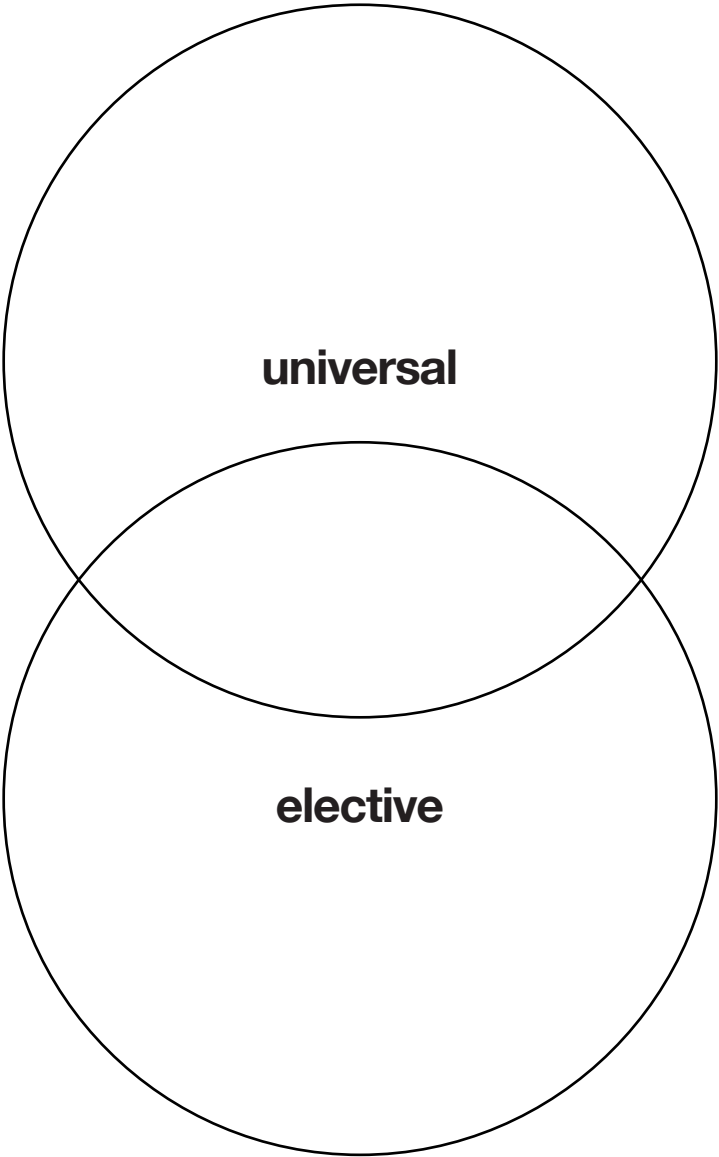
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problems of a  
'universal'-*only* mindset

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problems of an  
'chosen'-*only* mindset

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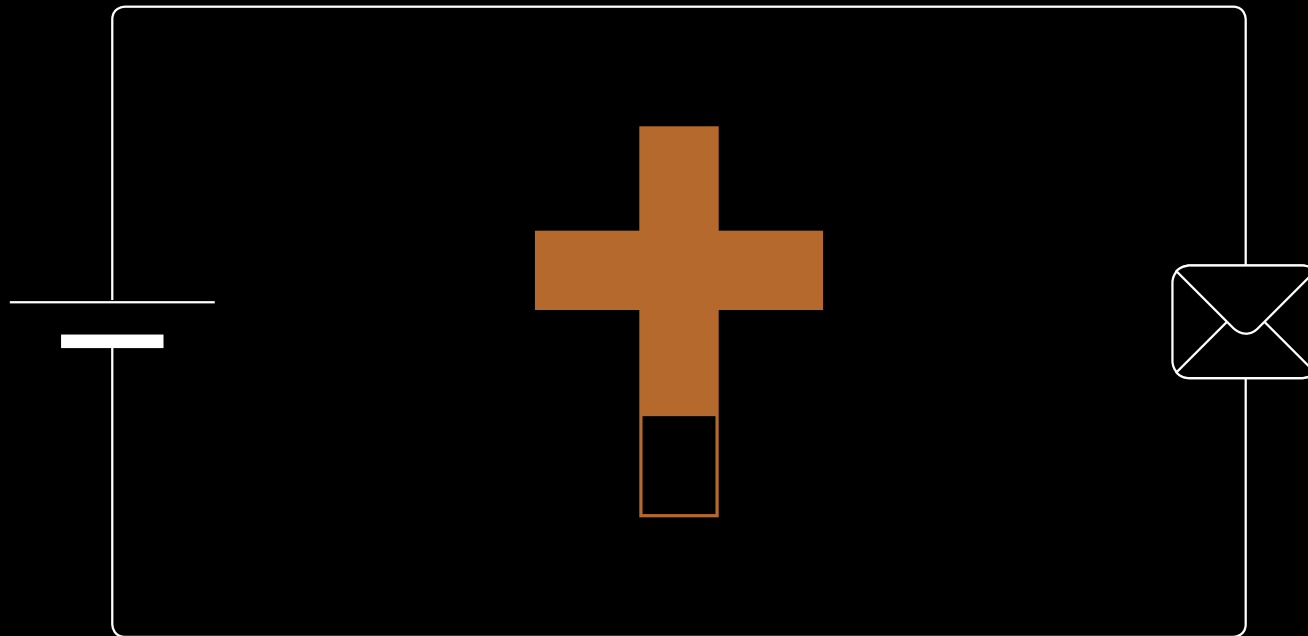


# master

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# messenger

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*'No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.'*

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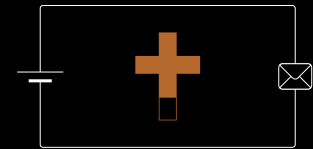
*John 6:44*

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*2 Corinthians 5:20*

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*Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

If we forget God's sovereign hand behind all our actions, we create a foothold for pride or despair based on our own performance.

If we forget our need for action, we absolve all responsibility to share the gospel, and neglect to use the strength that God has bestowed us with.

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Master:	Messenger:
John 6:44	2 Corinthians 5:20
Deuteronomy 31:6	Matthew 28:19
1 Samuel 2:6	John 6:40
Isaiah 46:10	Acts 1:8
Matthew 11:27	Romans 10:14-15
Luke 10:19-20	Ephesians 2:10
Philippians 4:13	
1 John 4:4	

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. What's the difference between being a 'successful' messenger of the gospel and a 'faithful' messenger?  
Q. In which of the above do you find more hope and assurance?

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*  
J.I. Packer

5

## Pray

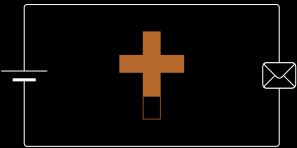
Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you promise to equip our actions. What an incredible thing to have your Spirit empowering us!

Father, give us courage and assurance that you are with us in all our endeavours. Help us to bring your light faithfully to a world in need of good news.

Amen



benefits of knowing  
God is in control

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benefits of knowing  
God works through our  
human actions

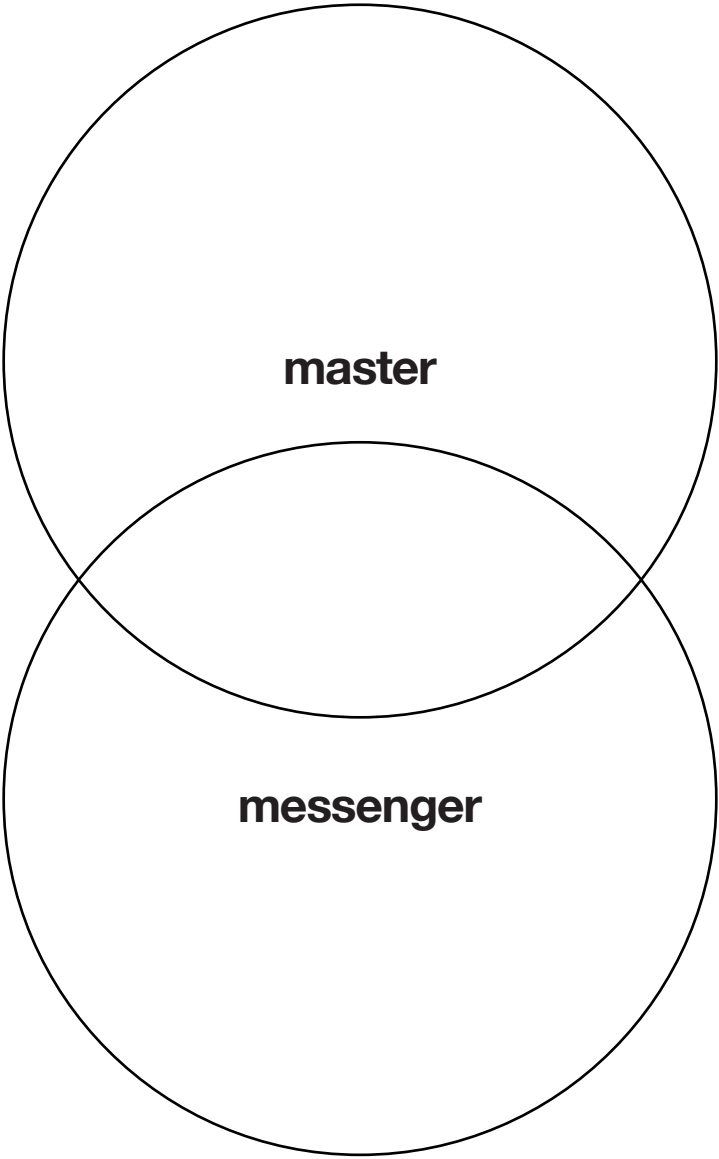
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problems of a  
'God'-only mindset

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problems of a  
'human effort'-only  
mindset

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# perseverance

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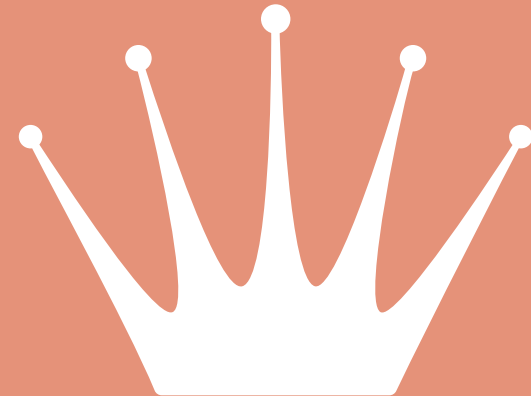
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*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...*

*Hebrews 12:1*

# preservation

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*Philippians 1:6*

*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without God's preservation of us we would have no means to persevere. It is by His power (Spirit and Word) that we are equipped to persevere.

Without our perseverance, we neglect to make use of the very gift of faith that God has given us.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Perseverance:	Preservation:
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Hebrews 12:1	Philippians 1:6
—	—
Romans 12:12	John 5:24
1 Corinthians 9:27	John 6:39
Galatians 6:9	John 10:28
Philippians 3:14	Romans 8:30
2 Thessalonians 3:13	Romans 8:39
Hebrews 3:14	Ephesians 1:13-14
Hebrews 6:11-12	Philippians 2:12-13
James 1:12	Colossians 1:11-12
Revelation 2:10	2 Timothy 1:12
Revelation 3:10	1 Peter 1:5
	1 John 2:19
	Jude 1:24-25

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Do you think of our perseverance and God's preservation of us as two separate things or one and the same?

Q. In what sense is the 'Doctrine of Perseverance' oddly named?

Q. Is it helpful or not to know that we might also persevere for reward in heaven?

—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Pilgrim's Progress*  
John Bunyan

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that your sustaining hand preserves us, even if our faith falters. Thank you that we can rely on your faithfulness and goodness.

Help us to persevere and run the race of faith with endurance, filled with hope for future glory.

Thank you that you took the burden of our sin. In the same way, we ask that you would take the glory of any crown or reward we may receive in heaven.

Amen



benefits of knowing  
we must persevere

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benefits of knowing  
God preserves us

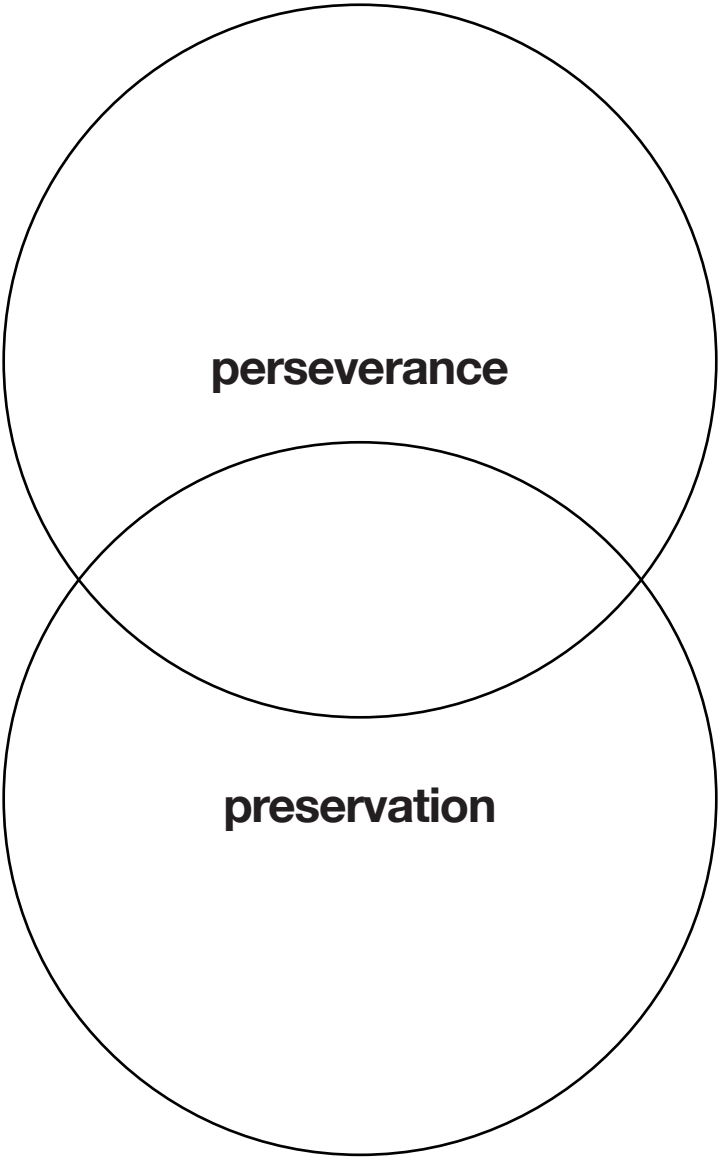
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problems of a  
'perseverance'-only  
mindset

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problems of a  
'preservation'-only  
mindset

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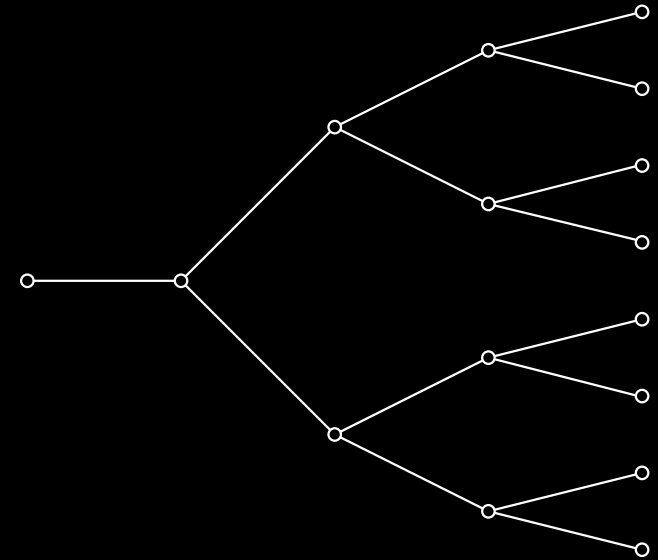
# decided

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# unfolding

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*Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.'*

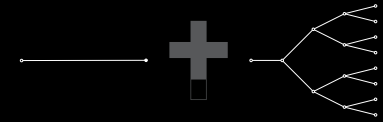
*Isaiah 46:10*

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*2 Corinthians 1:11 (MSG)*

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*I can see your faces even now, lifted in praise for God's deliverance of us, a rescue in which your prayers played such a crucial part.*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

If we acknowledge that everything is already decided but assume we can't make a difference, it will severely limit our motive to pray for change.

If we don't acknowledge that the future is already known by God, it will rob us of security and certainty, and may put too much pressure on our current human efforts to bring about God's kingdom.

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Decided:	Unfolding:
Isaiah 46:10	2 Corinthians 1:11
—	—
Ecclesiastes 3:11	Genesis 18:32
Psalms 147:5	2 Kings 20:5
Luke 22:42	Acts 12:5-6
1 John 3:20	Philippians 4:6
	James 4:2

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Is it comforting or limiting to know that God knows every outcome already?  
Q. Do you believe your prayers still matter?  
Q. How do you set your expectations for God's answering of your prayer?

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)  
Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?  
Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?  
Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?  
Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*The Doctrine of God*  
John Frame

*The Prayer of the Lord*  
R.C. Sproul

*The Valley of Vision*  
Arthur Bennett

*Miracles*  
C.S. Lewis

5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

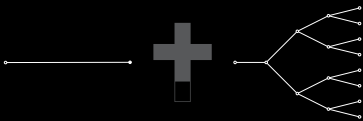
The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks for your omniscience—that you alone know the beginning and the end. Thank you that we can trust your good and perfect plans for us.

Father, thank you that you include us in your plans and, Holy Spirit, empower us to be willing agents, praying for your kingdom to come.

Amen





benefits of knowing  
God has already  
'decided' the future

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benefits of knowing  
God involves us in  
'unfolding' the future

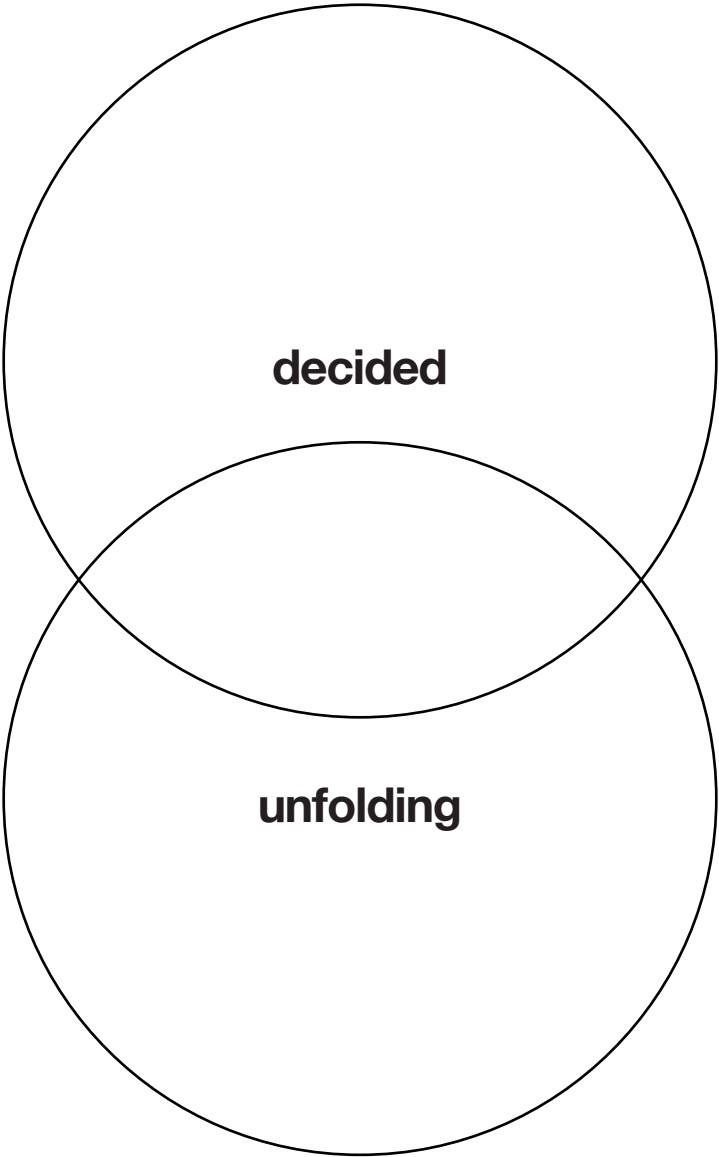
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problems of a  
'decided'-*only* mindset

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problems of an  
'unfolding'-*only* mindset

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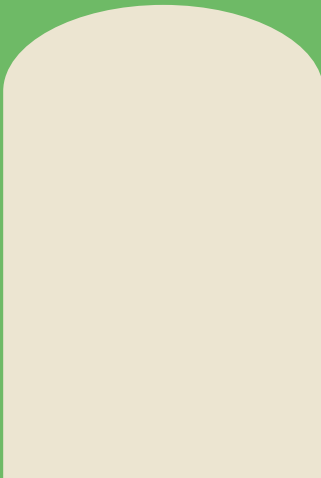
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# death

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# life

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*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death?*

*Romans 6:3*

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*John 3:3*

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*Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without death to the old self there is no resurrection life possible.

Without taking on our new life in Christ, we may remain in an arid cycle of self-denial.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

### Death:

Romans 6:3  
—  
Luke 14:26-28  
Romans 5:12  
2 Corinthians 5:14  
Galatians 2:20  
Ephesians 2:1-2  
Revelation 2:11

### Life:

John 3:3  
—  
Genesis 2:7  
Ezekiel 37:5  
John 10:10  
Romans 6:4  
Romans 6:8-11  
2 Corinthians 5:1-4  
2 Corinthians 5:15  
Galatians 2:20  
Ephesians 2:4-5

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. To what extent are we born 'already dead'?

Q. Should we understand our ongoing need for self-denial as a form of death?

Q. How does the new life in Christ triumph over death?

—  
Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Life in Christ*  
John R. W. Stott

*Death in Adam, Life in Christ (The Doctrine of Imputation)*  
J. V. Fesko

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that just as sin came into the world through Adam, so it is put to death through faith in Christ.

Thank you that death is swallowed up in life. Help us to take joy in our resurrected life in the Spirit, and to look forward with excitement to our new resurrection bodies

Amen



benefits of knowing there  
is 'death' in salvation

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benefits of knowing  
there is 'life' in salvation

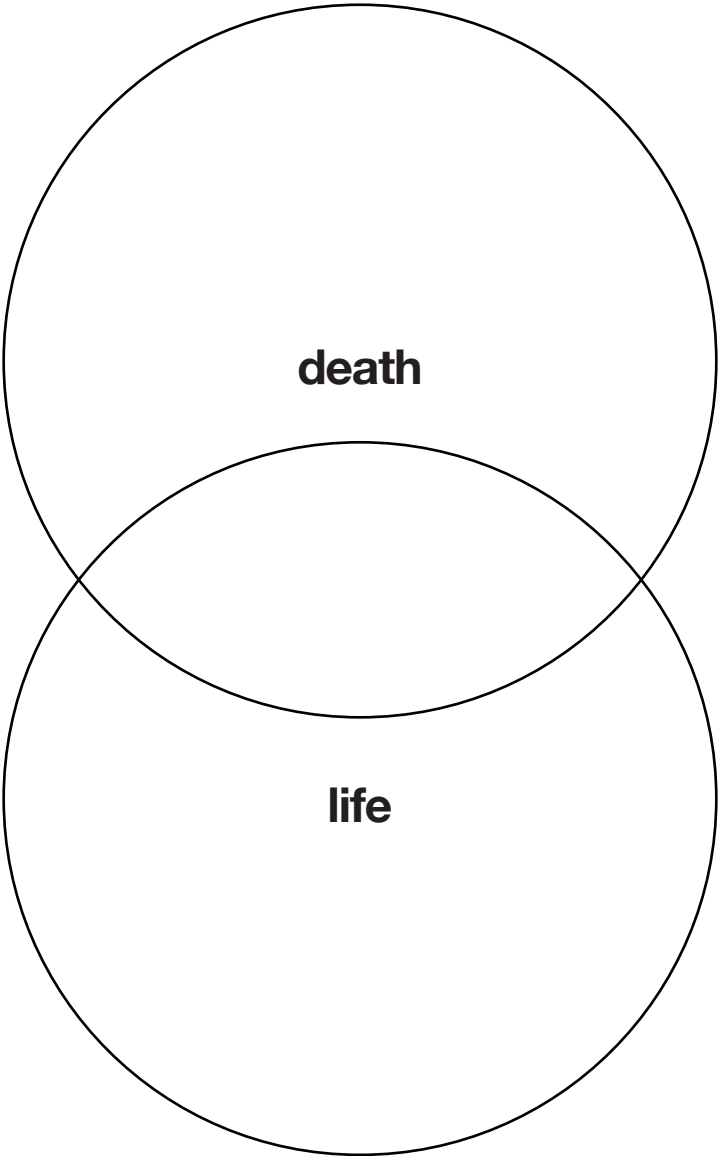
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problems of a  
'death'-only mindset

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problems of a  
'life'-only mindset

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# blessings

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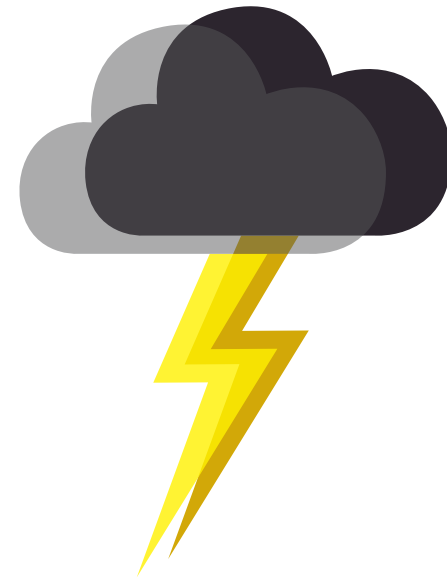
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*'And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God.'*

*Deuteronomy 28:2*

# curses

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*Galatians 3:13*

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*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.'*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without understanding the way in which God's very presence and favour is granted through His covenant promise, we stand to miss all the abundance of blessing in our lives.

Without understanding the curse (the cup of wrath) that Jesus took for us to fulfil His covenant promise, we may go on living in fear that we can be cursed by God.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Blessings:**                      **Curses:**

Deut. 28: 1-2	Galatians 3:13
—	—
Genesis 15:17	Deut. 27: 14-15
Genesis 17:8	2 Samuel 12:10-14
Deut. 30:6	Psalms 76: 8-9
Jeremiah 31:31–34	1 Corinthians 5:13
Ezekiel 37:27	
Luke 22:19-20	
Romans 8:38-39	
2 Corinthians 6:16	
2 Corinthians 10:4	
Revelation 21:3	

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. How do you understand blessings and curses in your life (give examples).

Q. How do covenants help you understand blessings and curses differently?

Q. In what way can you be a blessing to others?

—  
Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Covenants Made Simple*  
Jonty Rhodes

*The Promises of God*  
R.C. Sproul

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks for your covenant promise with us. That you chose to take the burden and the penalty of the agreement.

Thank you that, by faith in you, we are redeemed from the curse of sin, despite our ongoing infidelity.

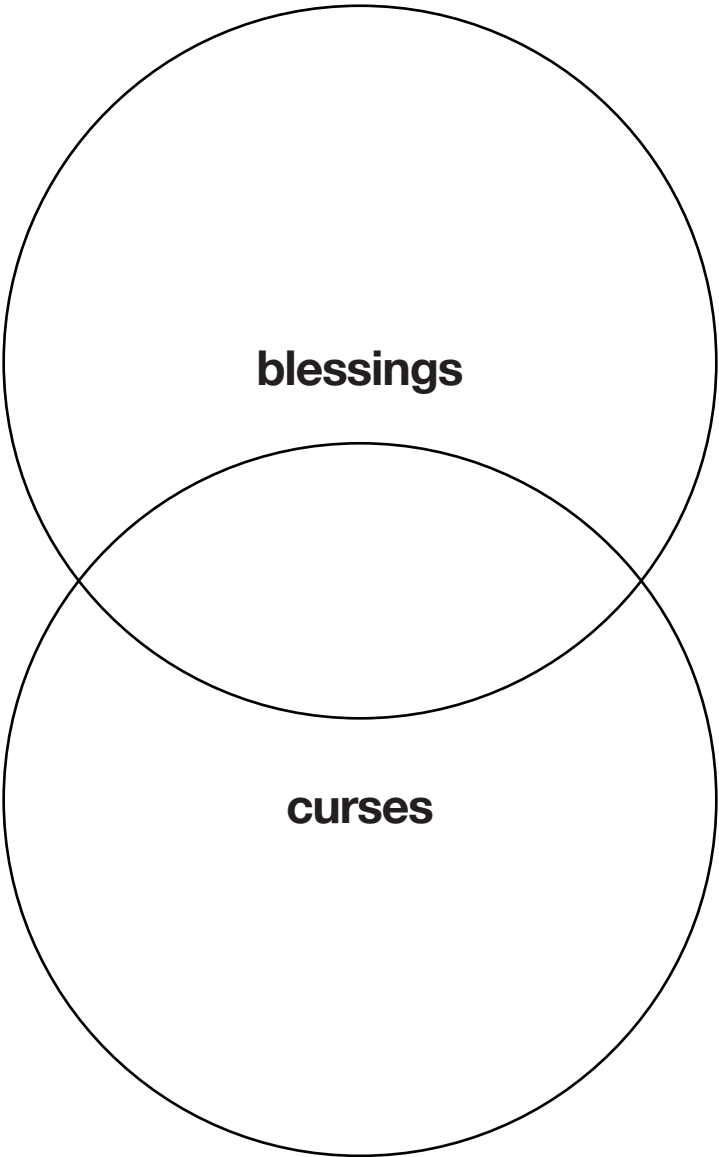
Holy Spirit, transform our hearts and break our cycle of infidelity.

Amen



benefits of 'blessings' in the context of covenant

benefits of understanding 'curses' in the context of covenant



problems of a 'blessing'-only mindset

problems of a 'curse'-only mindset

# now

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*Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, 'The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There!" for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.'*

*Luke 17:20-21*

# not yet

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*1 John 3:2*



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*Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

If we only focus on the 'now' of the kingdom, we can easily create false expectations of God's current actions.

However, without desiring to see God's kingdom breaking into the present, we will inevitably miss out on the full potential of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives today. In particular, the gifts of the Spirit, with which we might enhance and equip the spiritual lives of others.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Now:

Luke 17:20-21

—

Matthew 7:22-23

Matthew 12:28-29

Matthew 13:31-32

Luke 19:11-12

Ephesians 4:11-13

Colossians 1:13

1 John 3:2

Not Yet:

1 John 3:2

—

Matthew 13:31-32

Luke 11:2

Luke 17:20-21

Luke 19:11-12

1 Corinthians 13:12

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. How did Jesus bring the kingdom into the midst of the people?

Q. What kind of kingdom did they expect?

Q. How does it help to understand the kingdom as a rule, rather than just a realm?

Q. How can we bring the kingdom into the lives of others today?

—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*The Gospel of the Kingdom*  
George Eldon Ladd

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you have brought your kingdom into our midst. We thank you that by your Spirit we may be partakers in the kingdom.

Help us to seek your kingdom earnestly today; and to look forward with hope and excitement to its future consummation on your return.

Amen

benefits of knowing the kingdom is here 'now'

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benefits of knowing the kingdom is 'not yet' fully consummated

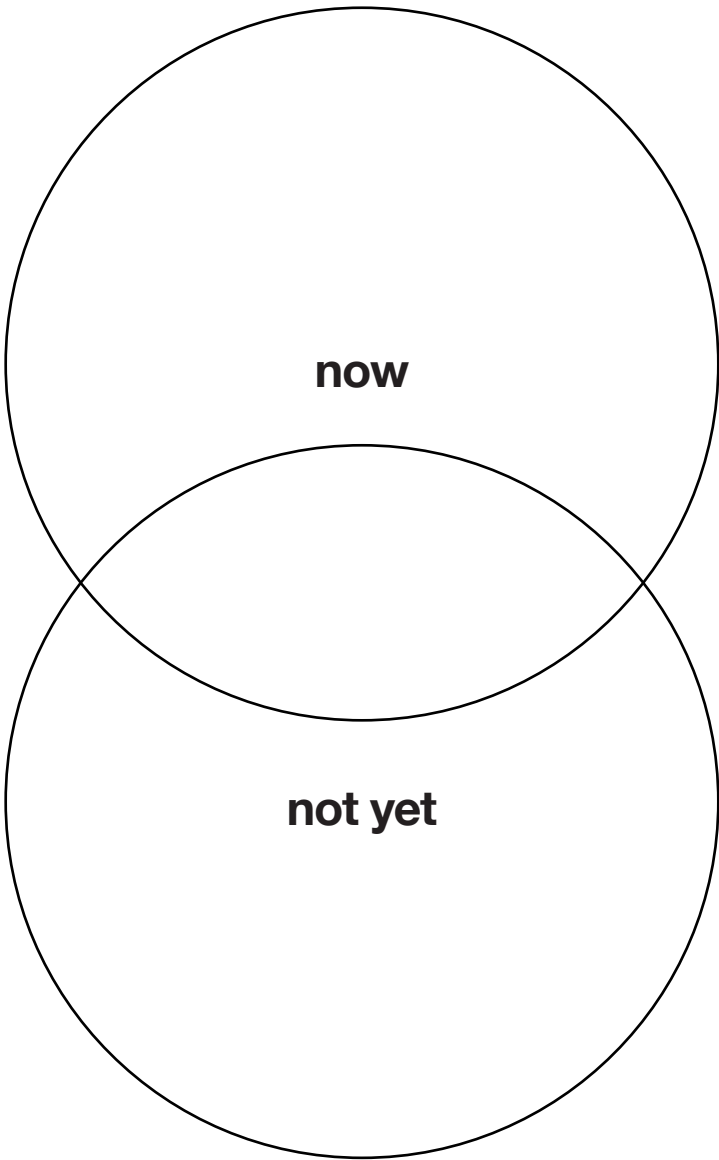
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problems of a 'now'-only mindset

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problems of a 'not yet'-only mindset

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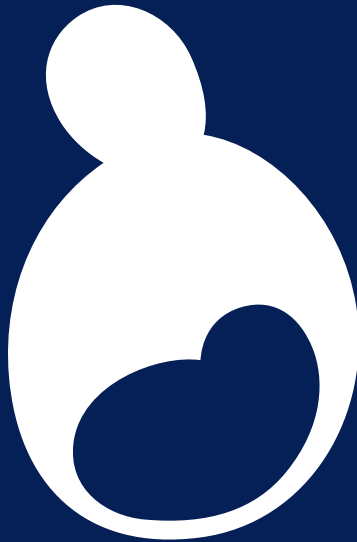
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# natural

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*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

*Isaiah 7:14*

# supernatural

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*Luke 1:34*

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*And Mary said to the angel,  
'How will this be, since I am a virgin?'*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Both the natural and supernatural are omnipresent.

Failing to see the supernatural in the natural robs us of seeing the world with childlike wonder.

Failing to see the natural in the supernatural often minimises the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives—and gives us the credit in His place.

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Natural:**                      **Supernatural:**

Isaiah 7:14	Luke 1:34
—	—
Psalms 19:1-4	John 16:8
Job 38:7	Romans 14:8
Romans 1:20	1 Corinthians 12:3
Exodus 31:1-5	Ephesians 4:1-3

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Are there particular events that we tend to think of as exclusively natural or supernatural?

Q. How might it help to think of both states as being omnipresent in all events?

Q. What work of the Spirit do we take for granted?

—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Miracles*  
C.S. Lewis

*The Mystery Of The Holy Spirit*  
R.C. Sproul

*How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit*  
A.W. Tozer

*The Holy Spirit and You*  
Dennis and Rita Bennett

*Naturally Supernatural*  
Wendy Mann

5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks for the wonder of your miraculous unfolding creation. Help us to see every detail of your hand at work—in our lives, in creation, and especially in your salvation—in the miracle of Jesus' birth, death and resurrection.

By your Spirit, illuminate these things to us LORD, we pray.

Amen



benefits of seeing  
the 'natural' as  
supernatural

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benefits of seeing  
the 'supernatural'  
as natural

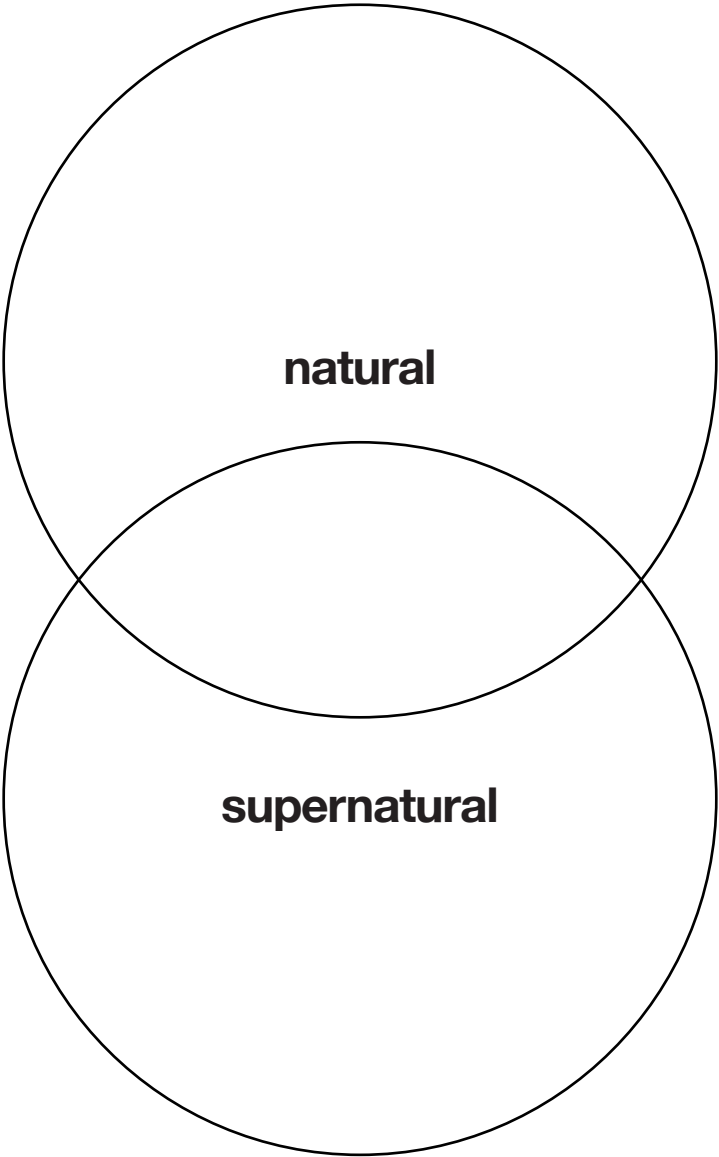
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problems of a  
'natural'-*only* mindset

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problems of a  
'supernatural'-*only* mindset

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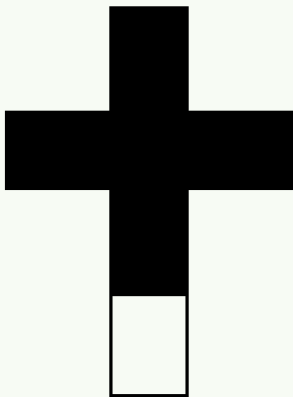
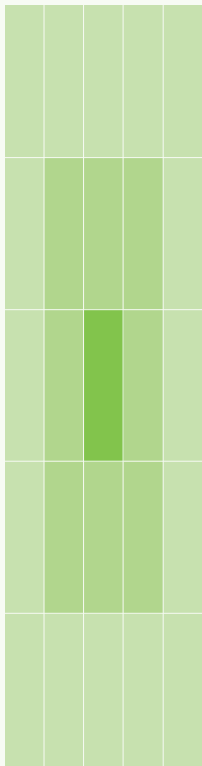
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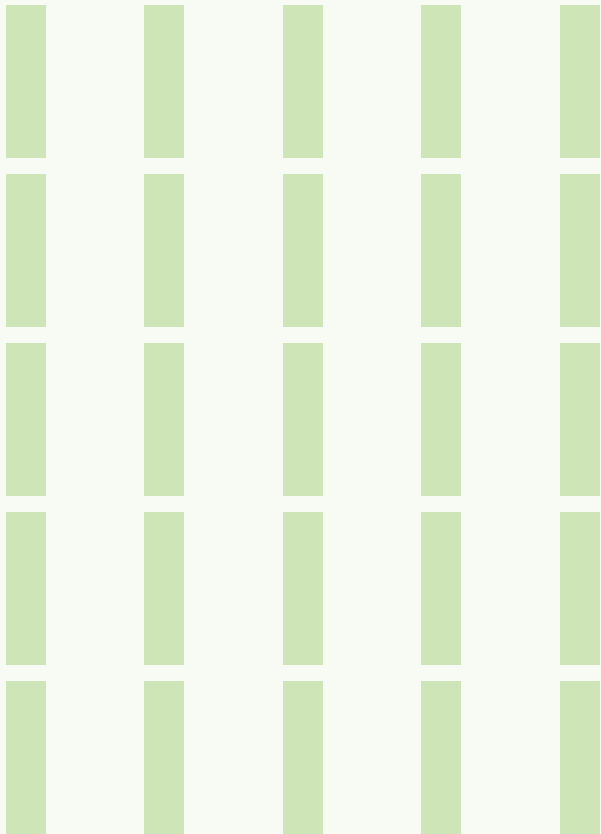
# personal

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# public

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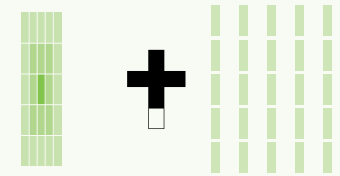
*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

*1 John 4:7-8*

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*2 Timothy 3:16*

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without personal knowledge of God there is no relationship, and we may remain Pharisaical in our faith.

Without public (informational) knowledge of God, we may not know how to discern the very Spirit whom we seek to experience.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Personal:	Public:
1 John 4:7-8	2 Timothy 3:16-17
—	—
Psalms 119:105	Proverbs 30:5-6
Jeremiah 9:23-24	Matthew 22:29
Matthew 22:29	Acts 8:35
John 8:31-32	
John 17:3	
John 20:28	
Philippians 3:10	
2 Peter 1:20-21	
2 Peter 3:18	
1 John 3:6	

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. How do public information and personal experience go hand-in-hand to increase our knowledge of God?  
Q. In what sense does the Word become alive and relational rather than merely informational?

—  
Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)  
Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?  
Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?  
Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?  
Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Knowing God*  
J.I. Packer

# 5

## Pray

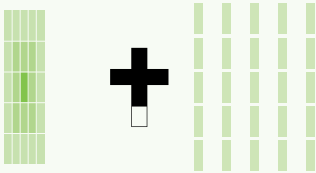
Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks for your Word. That you have made yourself known to us publicly.

We pray for courage and hunger to also know you intimately through relationship and experience. In so doing, would your Word become a lamp to our feet, affirming and directing our lives.

Amen



benefits of a 'personal'  
(relational)  
knowledge of God

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benefits of a 'public'  
(informational)  
knowledge of God

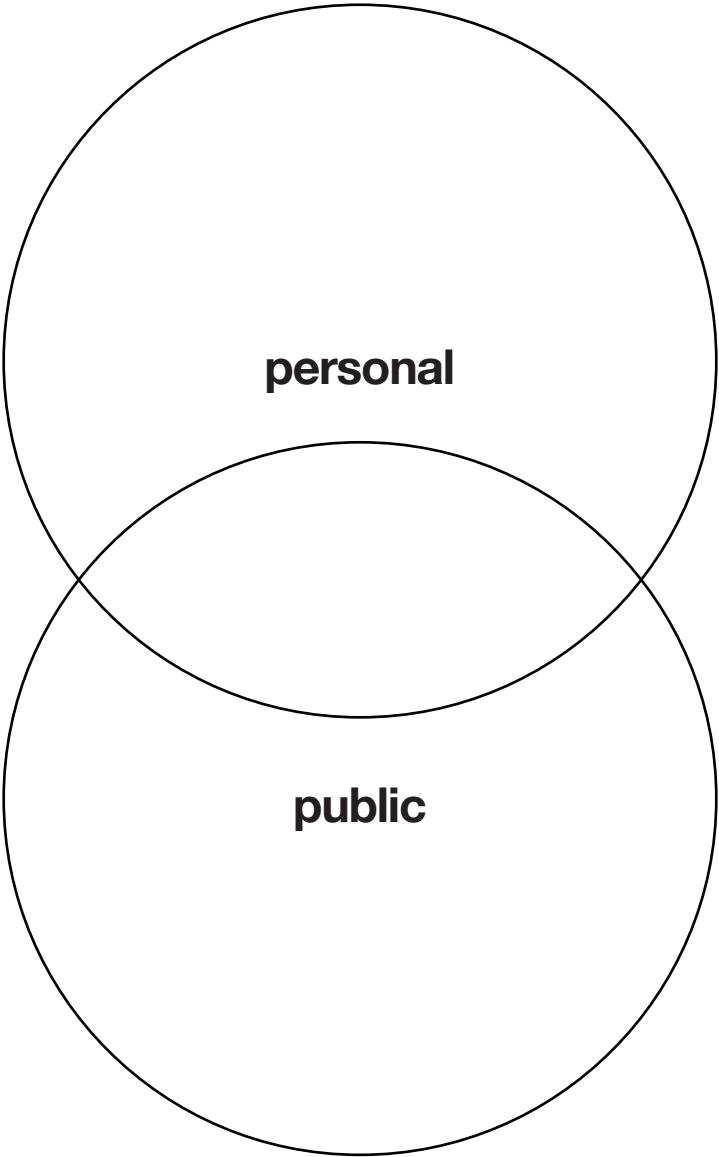
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problems of a  
'personal'-only  
knowledge of God

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problems of a  
'public'-only  
knowledge of God

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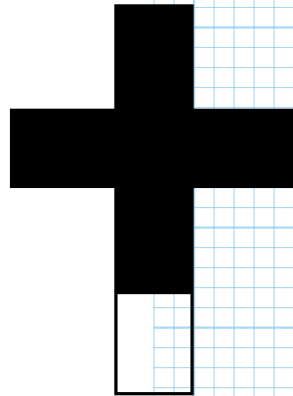
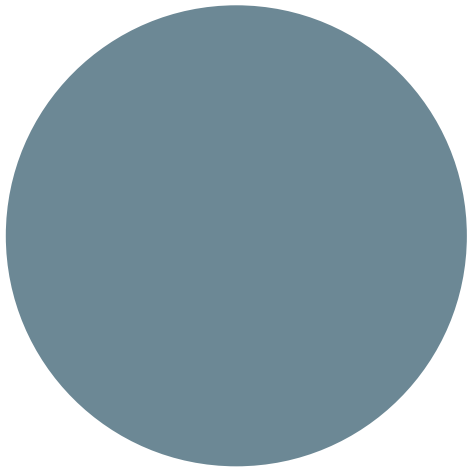
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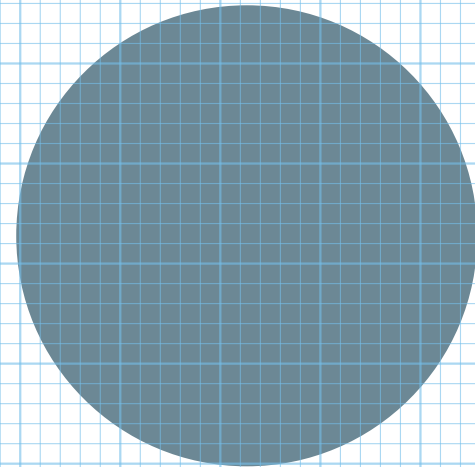
# faith

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# reason

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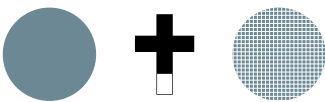
*Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.'*

*John 1:46*

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*Ephesians 1:17-18*

*... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you...*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without reason, we will be ill-prepared to share the gospel faithfully.

Without faith, we have no concrete and tangible assurance of our belief.

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Faith:	Reason:
John 1:46 —	Ephesians 1:17-18 —
Genesis 1:1	1 Peter 3:15

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. How might our view of truth be widened by employing both faith and reason?  
Q. Which way do you think faith and reason relate in our pursuit of truth (four possible models are outlined in the text)?  
Q. How does Jesus engage the necessity for belief in the disciples?  
—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)  
Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?  
Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?  
Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?  
Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Science and Religion in Quest of Truth*  
John Polkinghorne

*Can Science Explain Everything?*  
John C. Lennox

*The Resurrection of The Son of God*  
N.T. Wright

*Who Moved the Stone?*  
Frank Morison

*The Case for Christ / The Case for Faith*  
Lee Strobel

5

## Pray

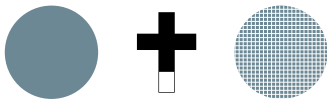
Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks for the many great minds that have gone before us. Thank you that you have equipped and empowered them to illuminate how rational thought and faith must coexist on some level.

Open the eyes of our hearts that we might be filled with a love that surpasses all rational knowledge.

Amen



benefits of 'faith' in  
our salvation

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benefits of 'reason' in  
our salvation

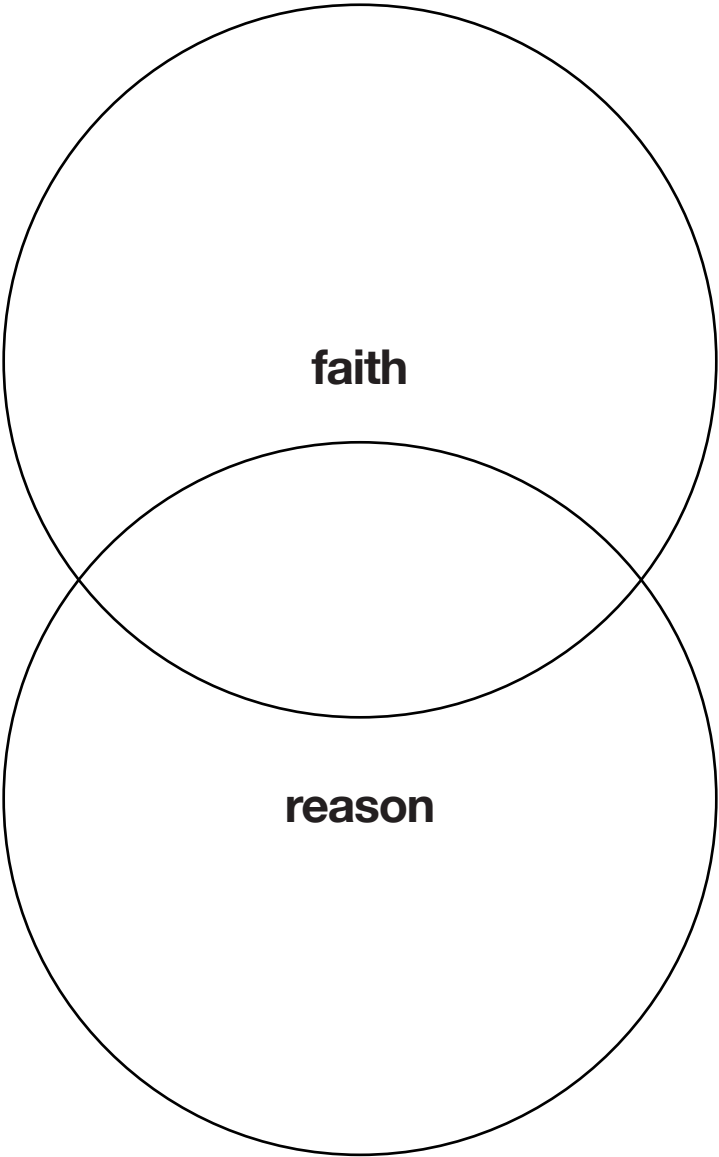
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problems of a  
'faith'-*only* mindset

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problems of a  
'reason'-*only* mindset

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# 3

**Apparent contradictions in  
the characteristics of being  
in Christ.**

sorrow + joy

wealth + poverty

weakness + strength

confidence + humility

slavery + freedom

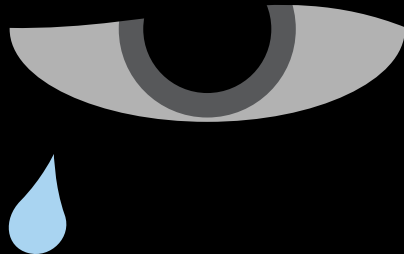
care + abandon

saint + sinner

love + obedience

# sorrow

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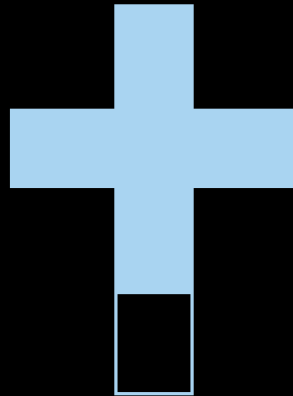


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*Jesus wept.*

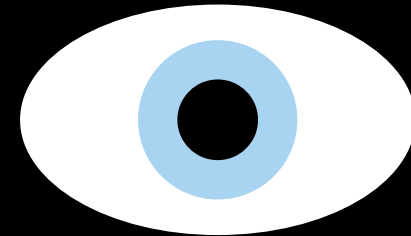
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*John 11:35*



# joy

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*John 16:20*

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*'Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.'*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without sorrow (Godly grief) we cannot arrive at a place of repentance. Nor can we share the burdens of this world.

Without joy (specifically finding our joy in Christ as the sustainer and provider of all things) the Christian life is arid and we cannot serve to glorify God.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Sorrow:	Joy:
John 11:35	John 16:20
—	—
Ecclesiastes 7:3-4	Psalms 47:1-2
Isaiah 53:3	Psalms 51:12-13
Romans 12:15	Isaiah 25:8-9
2 Corinthians 6:8-10	Romans 15:13
2 Corinthians 7:10	James 1:2-3
	1 Peter 1:8-9
	Revelation 21:4

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

- Q. Should we differentiate between joy and happiness?
- Q. For what reasons are we commanded to be joyful?
- Q. To what extent is it right to pursue sorrow?
- 
- Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)
- Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?
- Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?
- Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?
- Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?
- Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Surprised By Joy*  
C.S. Lewis

*A Grief Observed*  
C.S. Lewis

*Desiring God*  
John Piper

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you came to earth and modelled sorrow and joy for us so perfectly.

Help us to find balance so that we may share in the sorrow of this broken world but take joy in your presence with us.

Thank you that we may look forward with hope to a time when all our sorrows will be turned into joy.

Amen



benefits of being  
'sorrowful'

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benefits of being  
'joyful'

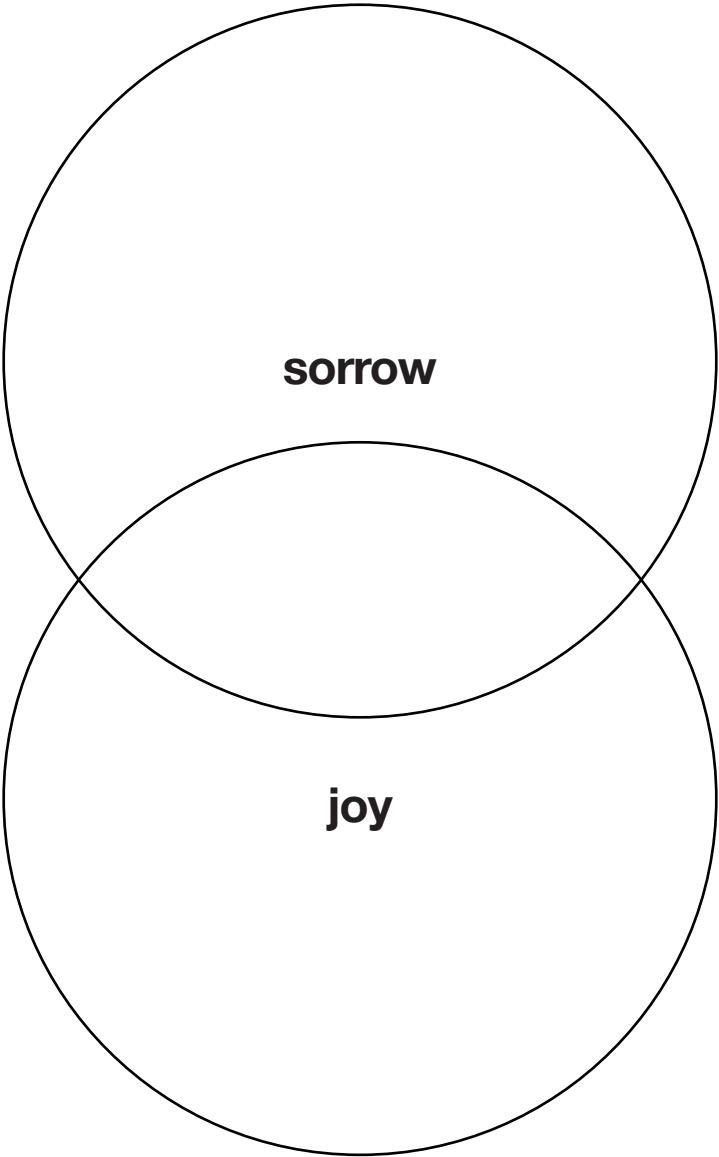
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problems of a  
'sorrow'-only mindset

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problems of a  
'joy'-only mindset

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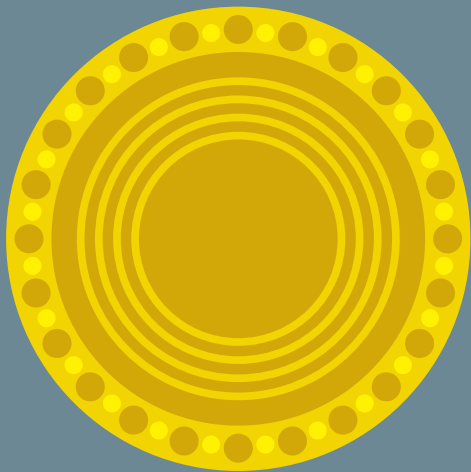
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# wealth

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# poverty

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*'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.'*

*2 Corinthians 8:9*

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*Matthew 5:3*

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*'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'*





# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without recognising our spiritual poverty there is no requirement for our dependence on God.

It is only through that dependence that we receive the riches of heaven. Ironically, it is only by Jesus' impoverishment that those blessings are available to us.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Wealth:** **Poverty:**

2 Corinthians 8:9

—

Job 1:3

1 Chronicles 22:14

2 Chronicles 9:13

Proverbs 30:8-9

Mark 10:25

Philippians 4:12

Matthew 5:3

—

Proverbs 19:15

Proverbs 19:17

Proverbs 22:2

James 2:5

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. To what extent do you think it matters whether you are materially rich or poor?

Q. How do you account for the difference in Matthew and Luke's rendition of the beatitudes (blessed are the poor / poor in spirit)?

Q. What did Jesus' poverty achieve?

—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Just Mercy*  
Bryan Stevenson

*Evangelism: Doing Justice and Preaching Grace*  
Harvie M. Conn

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you so impoverished yourself, even to death on a cross, that we might become spiritually rich and receive all the blessings of heaven.

Open the eyes of our hearts and help us to see our spiritual bankruptcy before you.

Amen



benefits of  
spiritual 'wealth'

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benefits of being  
'poor' in spirit

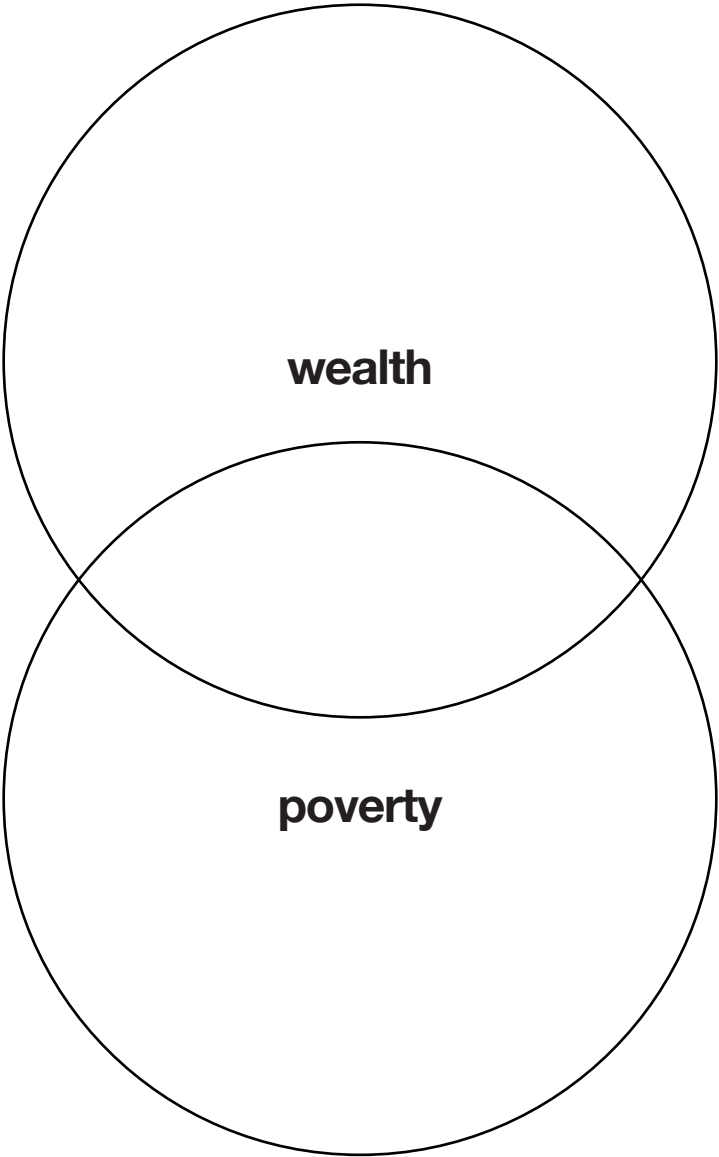
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problems of a  
'wealth'-only mindset

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problems of a  
'poverty'-only mindset

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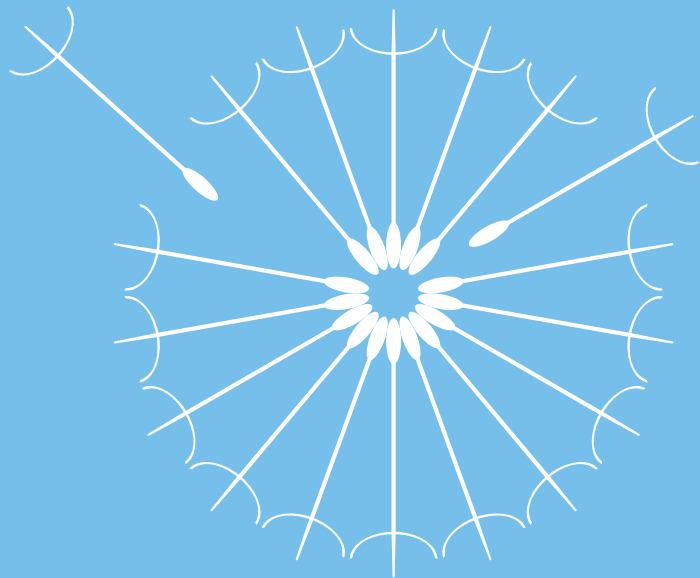
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# weakness

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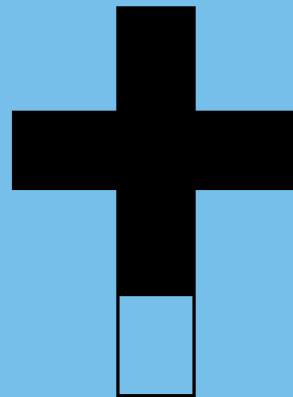
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*But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

*2 Corinthians 12:9*

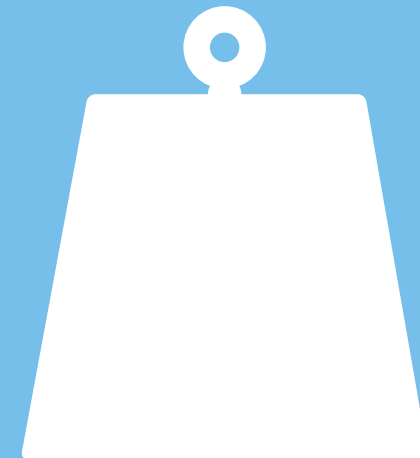
# strength

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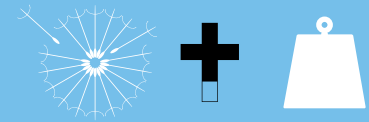
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*2 Corinthians 12:10*



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*For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without registering our weakness and fallibility, we are less inclined to rely fully on God's sustaining strength. When he helps us bear our suffering, His strength is made most evident in us.

Without drawing on His strength, we are effectively becoming self-made men, pridefully setting ourselves up for a fall.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Weakness:**      **Strength:**

2 Corinthians 12:9

—

Isaiah 40:28-31

2 Corinthians 12:10

—

Isaiah 41:10

Ephesians 6:10

Philippians 4:13

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Why do you think we find it hard to show our weakness today?

Q. In what way did Jesus show apparent weakness?

Q. How might we posture ourselves in order to draw strength from Him?

—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Weakness Is the Way: Life with Christ Our Strength*  
J.I. Packer

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks for your passion on the cross. Thank you that you chose to suffer for us. To show such apparent weakness that strength beyond measure was made manifest to us.

Help us to recognise our own weakness and fallibility—our own 'thorn in the flesh'—that we may rely on your might to help us bear our sufferings.

Amen



**benefits of  
acknowledging  
our 'weakness'**

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**benefits of finding our  
'strength' in Him**

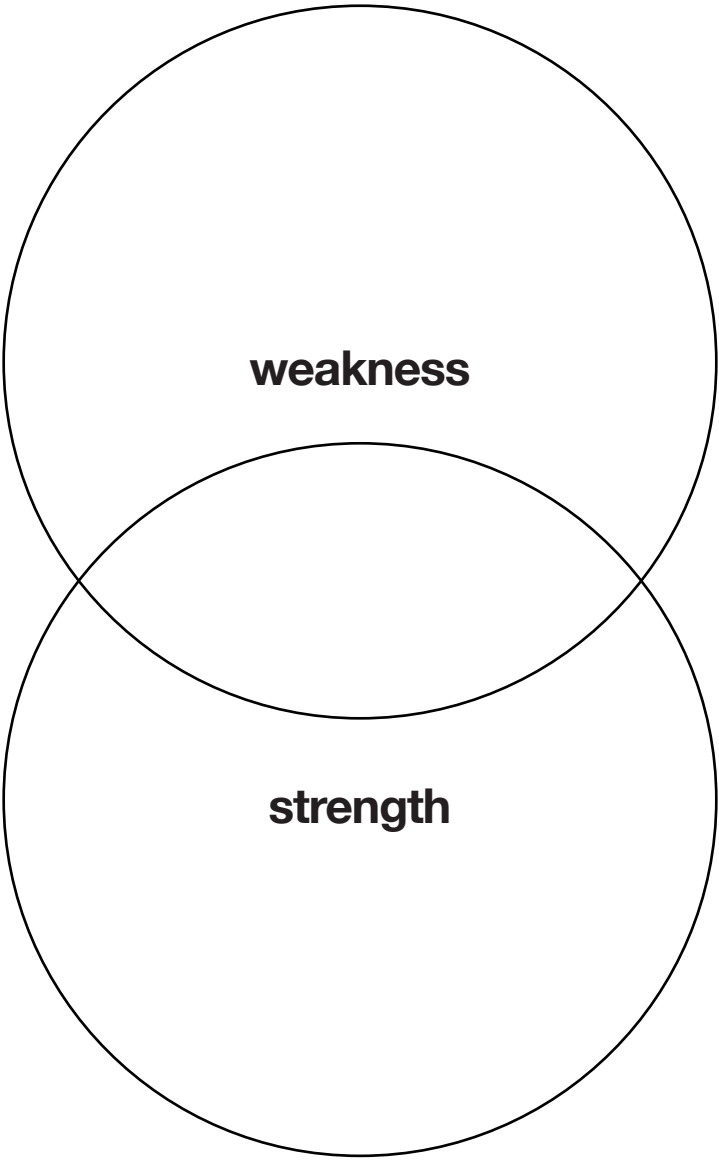
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**problems of a  
'weakness'-only mindset**

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**problems of a  
'strength'-only mindset**

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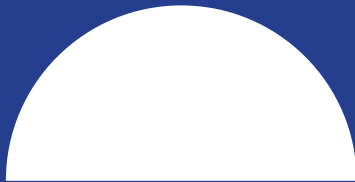
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# confidence

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*Do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the ruin of the wicked, when it comes, for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.*

*Proverbs 3:25-26*

# humility

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*1 Peter 5:6*

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you...*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Confidence and humility are not opposed, but rather, two sides of the same coin.

Without humbling ourselves before God, He will not lift us up on a sure foundation, with Him as our confidence.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Confidence:**      **Humility:**

Proverbs 3:25-26

1 Peter 5:6

Jeremiah 17:7

Genesis 2:7

Ephesians 2:10

2 Chronicles 7:14

Ephesians 3:11-12

Psalm 149:4

Hebrews 4:15-16

Proverbs 3:34

1 Peter 2:9

Isaiah 6:5

1 John 4:16-17

Micah 6:8

1 John 5:14

Luke 14:11

James 4:6,10

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Have you thought of humility as being defined only in our relationship to God—as people of the ground?

Q. How might this help you in your relationship with God and with others?

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there is an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case? Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Humility*  
Andrew Murray

*The Power of Humility*  
R.T. Kendall

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that when we remember our place, as people made from the ground, and humble ourselves before you accordingly, that you become our confidence.

Amen



benefits of  
'confidence'

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benefits of  
'humility'

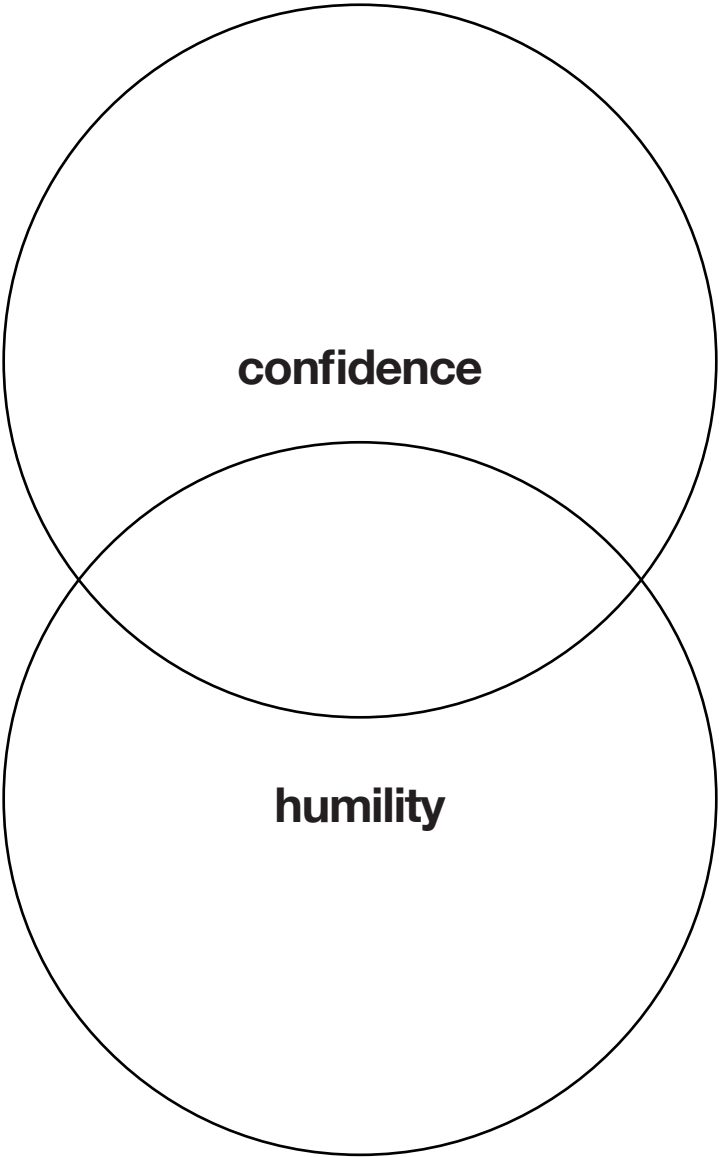
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problems of a  
'confidence'-only mindset

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problems of a  
'humility'-only mindset

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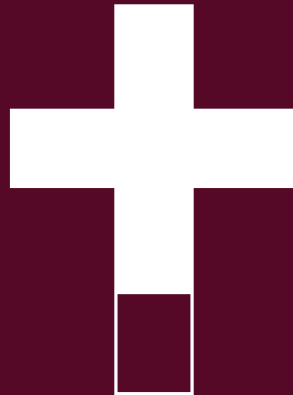
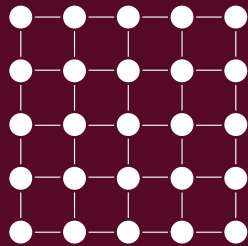
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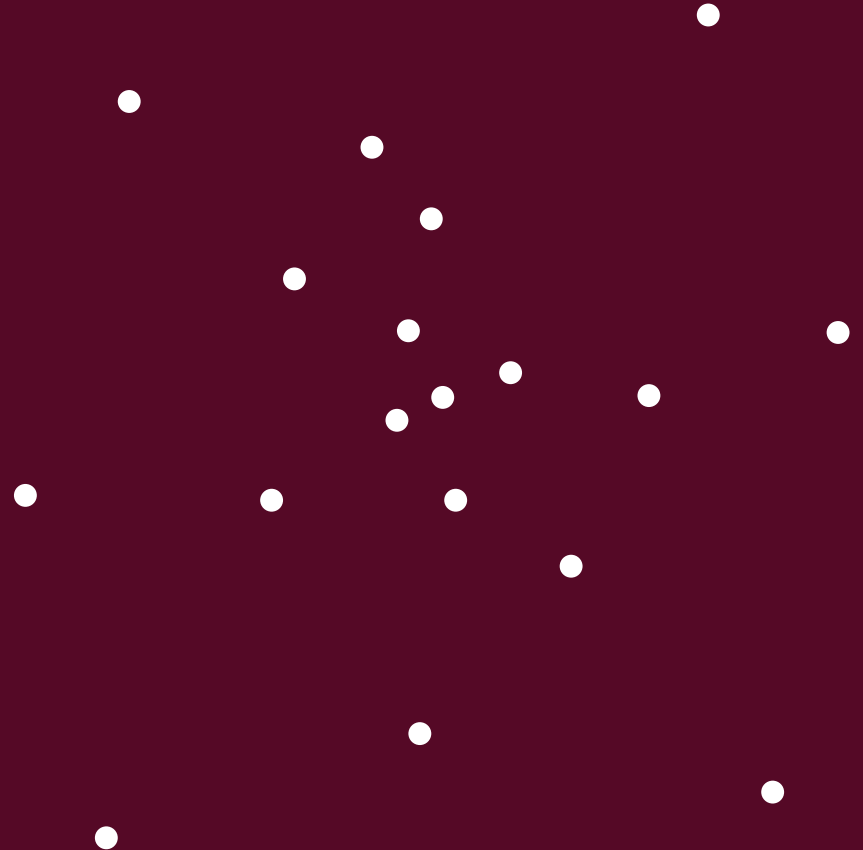
# slavery

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# freedom

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*For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.*

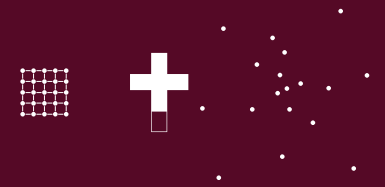
*Romans 6:20-21*

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*Galatians 5:13*

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*For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

If we do not become a slave to Christ, we have no freedom. We remain slaves to sin. Ironically, freedom in the purpose for which we were created, comes from obedient service to our Creator.

If we fail to grasp how taking on Christ's yoke gives us freedom, we may be left feeling like faith is merely a set of rules.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

**Slavery:**                      **Freedom:**

Romans 6:20-21	Galatians 5:13
—	—
Proverbs 30:16	Psalms 5:5
Romans 1:1	Psalms 119:44-45
Romans 6:17-18	Isaiah 58:6
1 Corinthians 7:22	Matthew 11:29-30
2 Corinthians 4:4	Acts 13:39
	Romans 12:2
	Galatians 5:1

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Is understanding sin as addiction a helpful analogy?  
 Q. How does Jesus break the power of sin?  
 Q. What about the ongoing presence of sin?  
 Q. Can true freedom be found in the absence of rules and discipline?  
 —  
 Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)  
 Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?  
 Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?  
 Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?  
 Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?  
 Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*  
 Jonathan Edwards

*Overcoming Sin and Temptation*  
 John Owen

*The Problem of Pain*  
 C.S. Lewis

*Counterfeit Gods*  
 Timothy J Keller

# 5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that taking on your yolk leads to freedom.

We thank you Jesus, that by your work on the cross, the power of sin is removed in the lives of those you have purchased.

By your Spirit, awaken in us a sense of the gravity and destructive power of sin, and help us to remove the presence of sin completely.

Amen



benefits of being a  
'slave' to Christ

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benefits of finding  
'freedom' in slavery

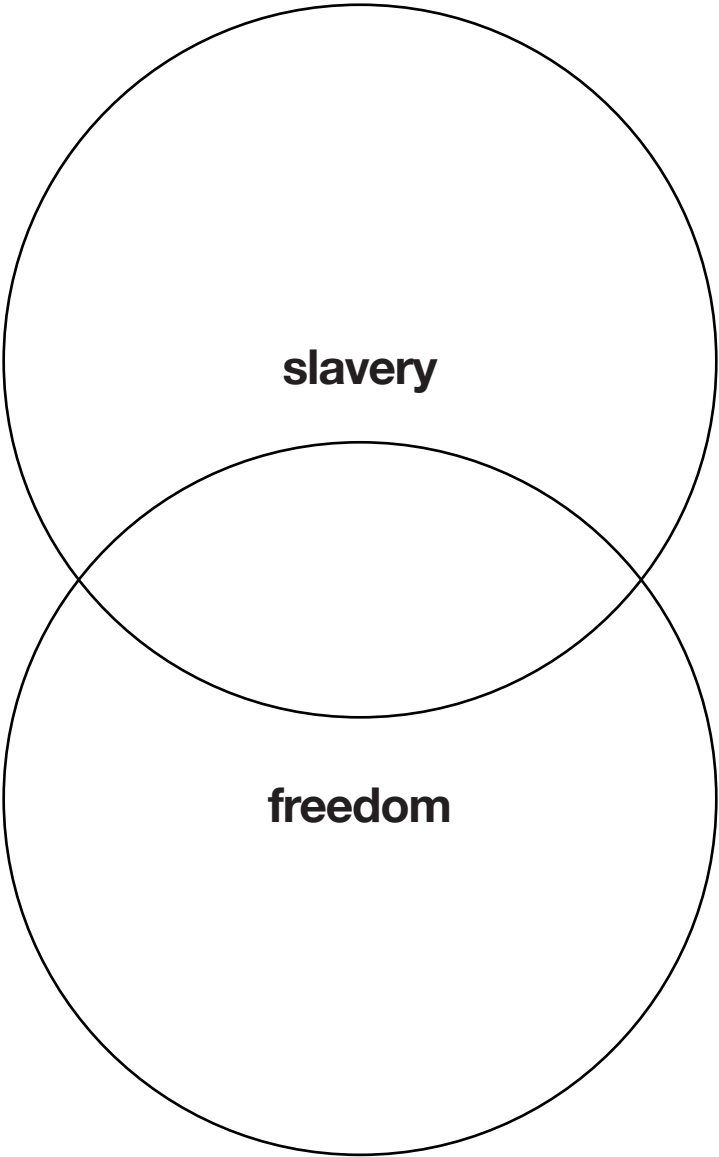
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problems of a  
'slavery'-*only* mindset

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problems of a  
'freedom'-*only* mindset

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care

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abandon

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*But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.*

*Jeremiah 29:7*

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*Genesis 3:17-18*

*... cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you...*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without a care for creation, we neglect our God-given mandate to look after what He has entrusted us with, and what He plans to restore.

Without distancing ourselves from 'the world' we run the risk of being conformed to the prevailing wicked habits of our culture.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Care:	Abandon:
Jeremiah 29:7 —	Genesis 3:17-18 —
Genesis 1:26-28	Romans 12:2
Genesis 2:15, 19	Ephesians 5:11
Genesis 9:15-17	Colossians 3:2
Romans 8:21	Titus 2:11-12
2 Corinthians 5:16	James 4:4
Revelation 21:1-3	1 John 2:15-17

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. How is it possible that Christianity has had a negative impact on the environment?  
Q. What are the arguments for our ongoing care for the creation?

Q. How might we differentiate our need and desire to remove ourselves from sin?

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there is an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*L is for Lifestyle*  
Ruth Valerio

# 5

## Pray

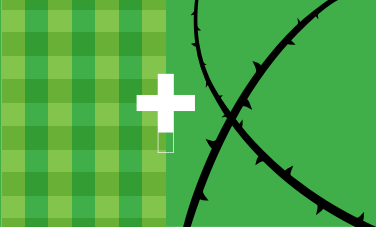
Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that your creation is good. Thank you for your plan to protect and redeem it.

Help us to find balance that we might both be active in our care for your creation but careful not to be influenced by any wickedness in the prevailing culture.

Amen



**benefits of our 'care'  
for creation**

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**benefits of our 'abandon'  
of creation (detachment  
from 'the world')**

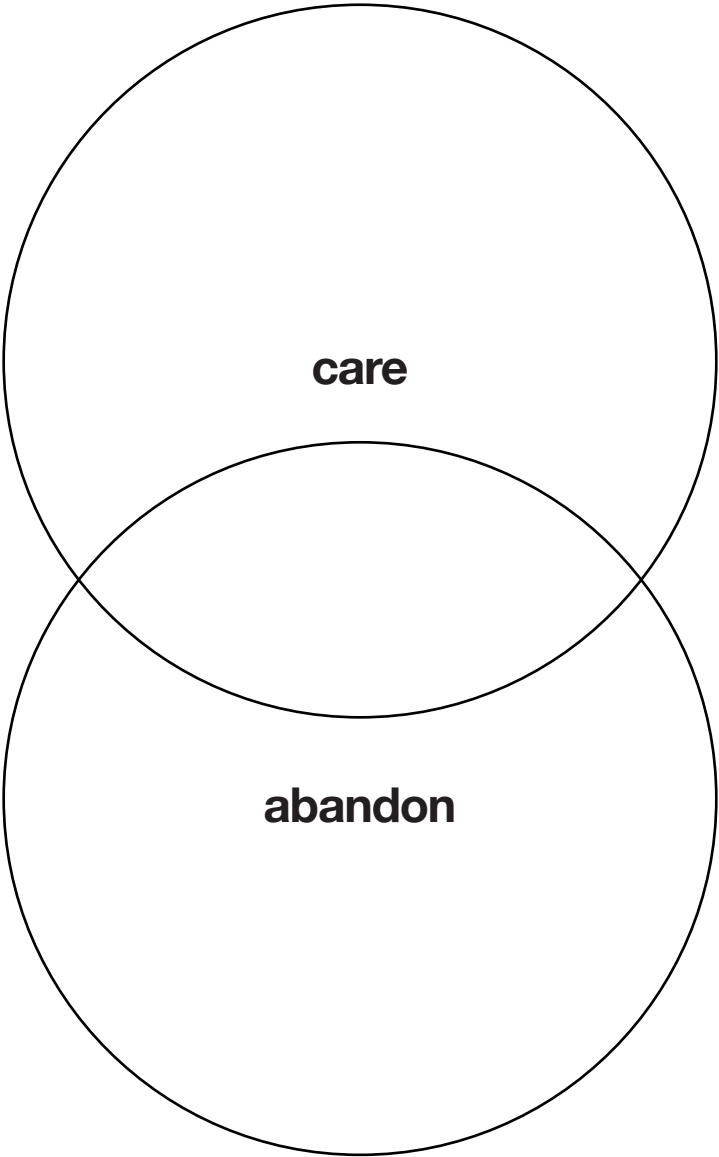
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**problems of a  
'care'-only mindset**

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**problems of an  
'abandonment'-only mindset**

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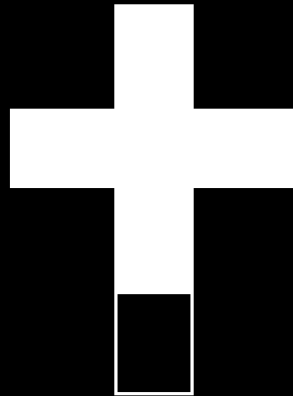
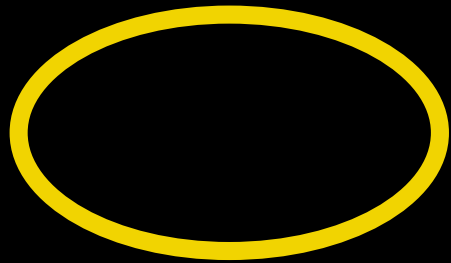
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# saint

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# sinner

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*To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 1:2*

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*1 John 1:8*

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*If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*



1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without recognising our position as saints being inherited by faith in Christ, we miss the important revelation that we are only deemed righteous by His work.

Without recognising our potential to persist in patterns of sin, despite our adoption, we may become prideful and neglect our dependence on God and our requirement to pray for each other.

2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Saint:	Sinner:
1 Corinthians 1:2	1 John 1:8
—	—
Psalms 31:23	Genesis 4:7
Romans 1:7	John 16:8
Acts 9:32	Romans 3:23
Ephesians 2:19	2 Corinthians 7:9-10
Philippians 4:22	Galatians 5:17
Hebrews 6:10	Hebrews 12:16-17
1 John 2:6	James 5:16
1 John 3:6	1 John 2:1
1 John 3:9	1 John 5:16

3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

- Q. Why are there several contradictory notions of what it means to be a saint?
- Q. Why might many Christians appear to be hypocrites?
- Q. Saint—by position/by choice?
- Q. Sinner—by position/by choice?
- 
- Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there is an overall group leaning?)
- Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?
- Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?
- Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?
- Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?
- Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*  
John Bunyan

*Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*  
Martin Luther, William R Russell

*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*  
Jonathan Edwards

5

## Pray

Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that by faith in you we are counted righteous and set apart as saints.

Holy Spirit, continue to convict us of sin in our lives that we might uproot all our sinful patterns and live in accordance with the holiness we see in you.

Amen





**benefits of knowing  
we are 'saints'  
(by position)**

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**benefits of knowing  
we remain 'sinners'  
(by choice)**

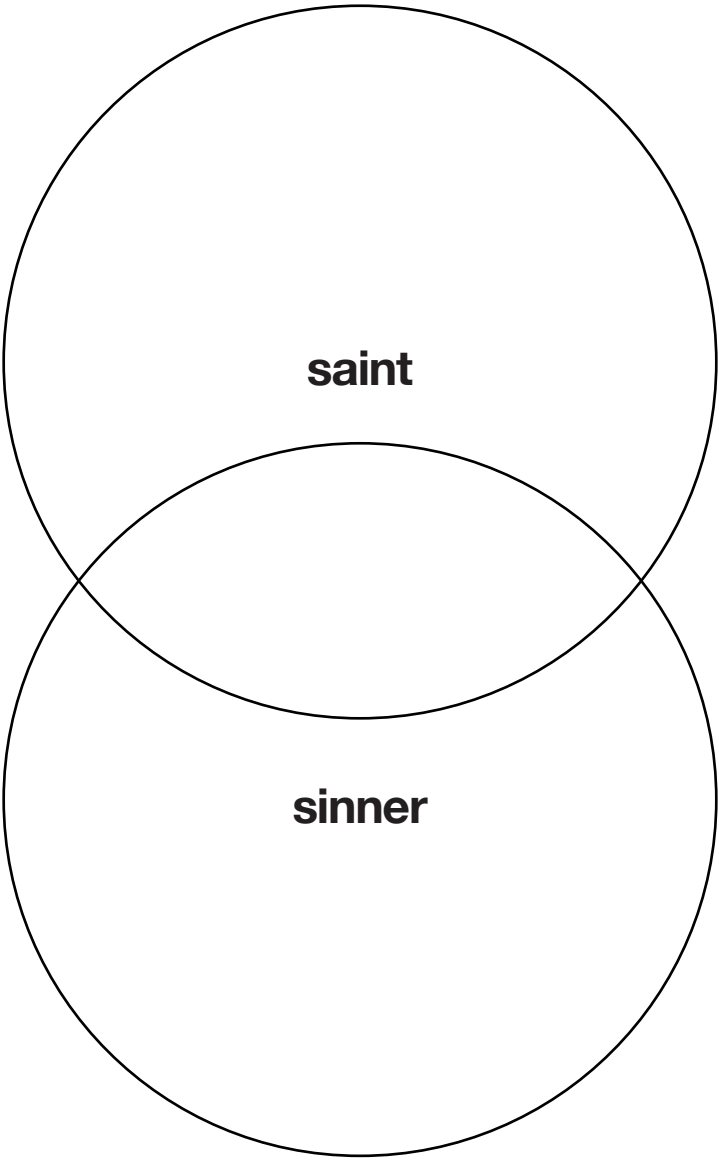
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**problems of a  
'saint'-only mindset**

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**problems of a  
'sinner'-only mindset**

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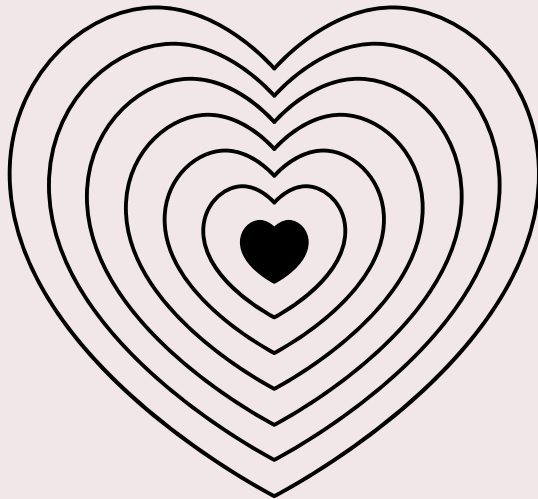
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# love

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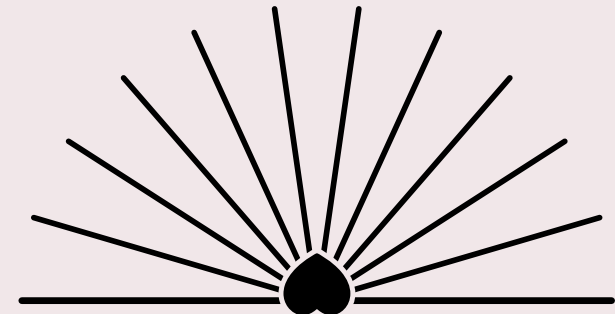
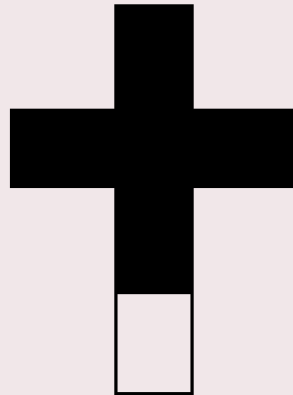
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*'Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.'*

*John 14:21*

# obedience

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*John 14:15*

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*'If you love me, you will keep my commandments.'*



# 1

## Recap

Find out whether everyone in the group has been able to read the relevant chapter from the book. Pitch the detail of your recap accordingly.

Remind the group that the chapter is using Scripture to provide evidence that both sides of the apparent contradiction are true.

You may choose to summarise the danger of having an either-or mentality:

Without God first loving us, we would have no context for the unnatural love that we are called to model and share with one another.

Without obedience to a higher cause (marriage, family, God) love naturally becomes self-centred and driven by feelings first.

# 2

## Read

Read the two key Scriptures aloud to each other and let the truth of each claim settle in your heart.

Time permitting, you may ask the group to read several of the supporting verses.

Love:	Obedience:
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John 14:21	John 14:15
—	—
John 13:8	Deut. 10:12-13
John 13:34	Deut. 30:15-16
Ephesians 5:25	John 4:23–24
1 John 4:7-11	1 John 4:19
	1 John 5:3

# 3

## Ask

Using the questions below as prompts, aim to involve the whole group in open discussion. You may start with the worksheet (next page) if not filled out beforehand.

Q. Why do you think our concept of 'love' might not align immediately with the Biblical model presented?

Q. To what extent do your feelings matter in the context of a loving relationship?

Q. What are the dangers of separating love and obedience?

—

Q. Which side of the apparent contradiction do you tend to favour? (Is there an overall group leaning?)

Q. Why might this specific leaning be the case?

Q. Which Scripture(s) in particular might help provide balance?

Q. Anything you find challenging in the text (or would interpret differently)?

Q. Any other Biblical (or anecdotal) evidence you might add to support either side of the apparent contradiction?

Q. Any other thoughts or comments?

# 4

## Point

The text in each chapter is merely a summation of the apparent contradiction at hand.

Point to more in-depth resources, and ask the group if they have any additional recommendations.

*Exegetical Fallacies*  
D.A. Carson

*The Meaning of Marriage*  
Timothy J Keller

*The Four Loves*  
C.S. Lewis

# 5

## Pray

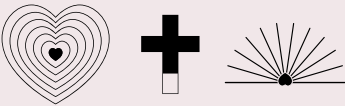
Thank God for this particular revelation. For who He is. For what He has done.

The discussion may also raise specific prayer requests from group members.

LORD, we give you thanks that you first loved us. Jesus, we thank you for the sacrificial love shown on the cross, the result of your obedience to your loving covenant promise to us.

Help us to know your love deeply in our hearts, that we might be able to share that love in our lives and communities.

Amen



benefits of our  
requirement to 'love'

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benefits of our  
requirement to be  
'obedient'

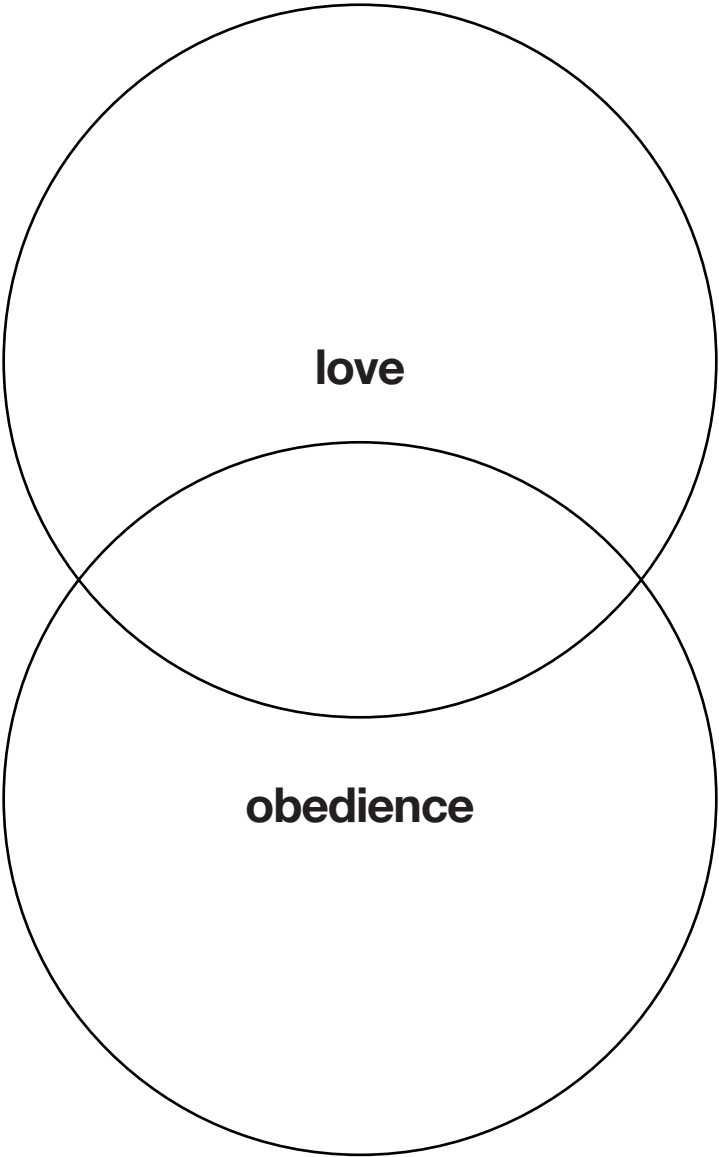
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problems of a  
'love'-only mindset

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problems of an  
'obedience'-only mindset

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# BOTH + AND

**Understanding apparent  
contradictions in Christianity**

Ross Cunningham