

8-SESSION BIBLE STUDY WITH VIDEO ACCESS

FULLY DEVOTED

From FIRST STEPS *to*
FULLY SURRENDERED

INCLUDES TEACHING VIDEOS FEATURING

ALEX KENDRICK AND STEPHEN KENDRICK

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From FIRST STEPS *to*
FULLY SURRENDERED

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CONTENTS

About the Authors	4
How to Use This Study	6
Tips for Leading a Small Group	8
Week 1: Come to Me	12
Week 2: Receive in Me	26
Week 3: Surrender to Me	40
Week 4: Abide in Me	54
Week 5: Sent Out in Me	68
Week 6: Love Like Me	82
Week 7: Commit Like Me	96
Week 8: Send Like Me	110

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

STEPHEN KENDRICK is a writer, speaker, and film producer with a passion for sharing the truth and love of Jesus among the nations. He produces the Kendrick Brothers' films and has cowritten (with Alex) the *New York Times* bestsellers *The Love Dare*, *The Resolution for Men*, and *The Battle Plan for Prayer*. Stephen is a frequent speaker on marriage, fatherhood, discipleship, and prayer. He and his wife, Jill, have six children.

ALEX KENDRICK is an accomplished author, actor, and film director, whose credits include *Facing the Giants*, *Fireproof*, *Courageous*, *War Room*, *Overcomer*, and, most recently, *The Forge*. A creative artist with a pastor's heart, Alex speaks internationally on the power of film and the surpassing power of Christ. He and his wife, Christina, have six children.

FULLY DEVOTED

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This Bible study book includes eight weeks of content for group and personal study.

GROUP SESSIONS

Regardless of what day of the week your group meets, each week of content begins with the group session. These sessions are meant to facilitate simple yet meaningful interaction among group members through God's Word and the teaching of Priscilla Shirer and Stephen and Alex Kendrick. Each group session uses the following format.

START. This page includes questions to get the conversation started and to introduce the video teaching.

WATCH. This page provides space to take notes on the video teaching.

Codes to access the video teaching are included with your purchase of this book and can be found on the insert located at the back of this book.

Slow or unreliable internet connection? Your Bible study videos can be downloaded to your device so you can play them offline. Simply download your videos on the Lifeway OnDemand App when you are in a place with strong internet connection. Then, you'll be able to watch your session videos anywhere, any time. Look for the download symbol beside your video.

DISCUSS. This page includes questions and statements that guide the group to respond to the Kendricks' video teaching and explore relevant Bible passages.

PERSONAL STUDY

Each week includes five days of personal Bible study and learning activities for individual engagement between group sessions. The personal study revisits Scriptures and themes introduced in the video teaching so that participants can understand and apply them on a personal level. The days are numbered 1–5 to provide personal reading and activities for each day of the week, leaving two days off to worship with your church family and to meet as a small group. If your group meets on the same day as your worship gathering, use the extra day to reflect on what God is teaching you and to practice putting the biblical principles into action.

TIPS FOR LEADING A SMALL GROUP

PRAYERFULLY PREPARE

Prepare for each group session with prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to work through you and the group discussion as you point others to Jesus through God's Word.

REVIEW the personal studies and the group sessions ahead of time.

PRAY for each person in the group.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Do everything in your ability to help people focus on what's most important: connecting with God, with the Bible, and with one another.

Create a comfortable environment. If group members are uncomfortable, they'll be distracted and therefore not engage in the group experience.

Take into consideration seating, temperature, lighting, refreshments, surrounding noise, and general cleanliness.

Thoughtfulness and hospitality show guests and group members they're welcome and valued in whatever environment you choose to gather. And even if your guests don't fully recognize your effort, taking these steps will ensure that they will not be distracted during your group discussion.

INCLUDE OTHERS

Your goal is to foster a community in which people are welcome just as they are but encouraged to grow spiritually. Always be aware of opportunities to include anyone who visits the group and invite new people to join your group.

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION

A good small-group experience has the following characteristics.

EVERYONE PARTICIPATES. Encourage everyone to ask questions, share responses, or read aloud.

NO ONE DOMINATES—NOT EVEN THE LEADER. Be sure your time speaking as a leader takes up less than half of your time together as a group. Politely guide and redirect the discussion if one of the group members dominates.

NOBODY IS RUSHED THROUGH QUESTIONS. Don't feel that a moment of silence is a bad thing. People often need time to think about their responses to questions they've just heard or to work up the courage to share what God is stirring in their hearts.

INPUT IS AFFIRMED AND FOLLOWED UP. Make sure you point out something true or helpful in a response. Don't just move on. Build community with follow-up questions, asking how other people have experienced similar things or how a truth has shaped their understanding of God and the Scripture you're studying. People are less likely to speak up if they fear that you don't actually want to hear their answers or that you're looking for only a certain answer.

GOD AND HIS WORD ARE CENTRAL. Opinions and experiences can be helpful, but God has given us the truth. Trust Scripture to be the authority and God's Spirit to work in people's lives. You can't change anyone, but God can. Continually point people to the Word and to active steps of faith.

KEEP CONNECTING

Think of ways to connect with group members during the week. Participation during the group session always improves when members spend time connecting with one another outside the group sessions. The more people are comfortable with each other and involved in one another's lives, the more they'll look forward to being together. When group members move beyond being friendly to truly being friends who form a community, they come to each session eager to engage instead of merely attending.

ABOUT THE MOVIE

Isaiah Wright has some growing up to do. A year out of high school with no plans for his future, Isaiah is challenged by his single mom and a successful businessman to start charting a better course for his life. Through the prayers of his mother and biblical discipleship from his new mentor, Isaiah begins to discover that God's purpose for his life is so much more than he could hope for or imagine. From the Kendrick Brothers, the creators of the number one hit *War Room*, comes *The Forge*, a faith-filled movie with old friends and inspiring twists.

IN THEATERS AUGUST 2024

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WEEK 1

COME TO ME



START

*Welcome everyone to session 1, “Come to Me.”
Ask participants to introduce themselves. As they do, invite them to
share one daring, adventurous thing they have done in their lives.*

When you consider the call Jesus gives you to follow Him, does that strike you as a “daring” decision? Explain.

This week’s title, “Come to Me,” likely strikes different people in different ways. A person who lives with deep regret over personal decisions might think that invitation is only for someone else. A person who has recently decided to follow Jesus might be eagerly anticipating what Jesus’s invitation involves. A person who has been a Christian for years might think it has little application in their lives because they answered that invitation long ago.

Jesus’s invitation means more than any of us might imagine—and we begin to realize that as we learn His example to us, realize His impact on us, and experience His life in us. The life of a disciple of Jesus Christ is a daring adventure for all of us, whether we are coming to Him in faith for the very first time or we are continuing a journey with Him that started years ago.

With this in mind, what do you hope to gain from this study on what it means to be fully devoted to Jesus?

To prepare for video session 1, pray together.

God, help each of us accept Your invitation to do a daring thing and decide that we’re going to seek You.

WATCH

Use these statements to follow along as you watch video session 1.

Coming to Jesus for salvation is a gift of grace.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

God takes us deeper and reveals more of Himself as we seek Him.

HEBREWS 11:6

We want to go our own way thinking we don't need God, but He continuously looks for and helps those who are seeking Him.

PSALM 14:2,5-7

DISCUSS

After viewing the video, discuss the following questions with your group.

Read Hebrews 11:6 and Ephesians 2:8-9. What is the starting point for any person to be fully devoted to God? Why?

How do you respond to knowing that God wants to take you deeper in relationship with Him than you are currently?

Alex explained that “God takes us deeper and reveals more of Himself as we seek Him.” In what ways has already God done that in your life?

Read Psalm 14. What does this psalm teach you about who you are and who God is?

Stephen challenged us to do a daring thing and choose to seek the Lord. What steps can you take in the days ahead to make that daring choice?

Close in prayer.

Prayer Requests:

DAY 1

THE INVITATION OF JESUS TO YOU

Follow Me. Each of the four Gospel accounts record Jesus repeating those two words multiple times and to various people in different circumstances. It is an open invitation, yet Scripture records no instance where a person's *yes* was accepted by way of compromise. There were those who tried—with what might seem to us to be perfectly good reasons. Still, Jesus never expressed His invitation to come and follow Him as a choice of anything less than total devotion. That's important for us to know! We are tempted to create our own definitions about following Christ. But Jesus defines what it means to come to Him for salvation—we don't. And His invitation completely changes our lives.

Use the chart to record who Jesus invited to follow Him and what accepting that invitation required.

	Who Jesus Invited	What Was Required
Matthew 4:18-20		
Mark 2:14		
Luke 9:59-60		
Matthew 10:1-6,37-39		
Mark 8:34-35		
Mark 10:17-22		
John 1:43		
John 10:24-28		
John 12:20-26		
John 13:36-38		
John 21:18-22		

COME TO ME

When did you first hear Jesus’s invitation to follow Him? Did you respond with total devotion? How can you respond with total devotion now?

Jesus makes it clear: He’s inviting you to something more than intellectual agreement that He is Savior and Lord. He’s calling you to abandon everything else and find your security, identity, and purpose in Him. He also makes it clear that if you answer that call, you will gain far more than you could ever possibly lose.

What does Matthew 13:44 teach you about what it’s like and what it’s worth to follow Jesus?

Following Jesus is like:

Following Jesus is worth:

What does Matthew 13:45-46 teach you about what it’s like and what it’s worth to follow Jesus?

Following Jesus is like:

Following Jesus is worth:

Accepting Jesus’s invitation changes everything because it demands everything—and offers so much more in return. The price you’ll pay to accept Jesus’s invitation pales in comparison to the treasure you’ll receive in knowing and following Him. His kingdom is worth everything you have and are.

What do you need to do to experience the joy and satisfaction of God’s kingdom treasure?

Reflect on the following words from Jesus to you and all His followers. Thank Him for His open invitation to come and follow Him and receive the only treasure that will satisfy your soul.

“Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

MATTHEW 11:28-30

DAY 2

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS FOR YOU

Name one reason why it is hard for you to live fully devoted to following Jesus.

Jesus's invitation to follow Him is a big, life-changing ask. When we consider it in light of the earthly treasures we pursue or attain, it can seem impossible. That's the way it hit the rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-22. That guy certainly isn't alone. What's hard for any of us to see on the front end of the decision to follow is that Jesus doesn't leave us on our own to carry it out. He is willing to be fully devoted to us from beginning to end.

Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, Jesus also shared in these, so that through his death he might destroy the one holding the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death.

HEBREWS 2:14-15

According to Hebrews, what do you have in common with Jesus?

Why is it important that Jesus knows and has experienced everything you have or ever will experience?

Jesus took on the fullness of your humanity—because He loves you. When He came to earth, He became “flesh and blood” to share in all the emotion and temptation human experience contains. He lived in the world as you do, with one critical difference—He never sinned. Jesus's invitation to come and follow Him is one of complete understanding. He is the ultimate example.

COME TO ME

*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory,
the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

JOHN 1:14

*They were astonished at his teaching because he was teaching
them as one who had authority, and not like the scribes.*

MARK 1:22

**In addition to perfect obedience to God's commands, in what other ways
is Jesus's life an example to you?**

Following Jesus is about more than learning from the greatest teacher of all time (though it is certainly not less than that). Through His flesh-and-blood life, we see God's glory. We learn through Jesus's example and teaching the fullness of grace and the fullness of truth. We can embody these same truths with His divine help.

Jesus is the greatest person who has ever lived. He is the greatest teacher of all time. He is the most loving, selfless person the world has ever known or will ever know. And He took on your humanity perfectly so that you can know and walk alongside Him for all eternity.

*Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus,
who, existing in the form of God,
did not consider equality with God
as something to be exploited.
Instead he emptied himself
by assuming the form of a servant,
taking on the likeness of humanity.
And when he had come as a man,
he humbled himself by becoming obedient
to the point of death—
even to death on a cross.*

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8

Thank Jesus for taking on your humanity so that you can know and follow Him. Ask Him to show you ways you can better follow His example. Fully devote yourself to walking alongside Him in His instruction.

DAY 3

THE IMPACT OF JESUS ON YOU

Jesus Christ has had more impact on the world than anyone else in history. Few argue this fact. Even unbelievers through the centuries have acknowledged the vast influence Jesus has had on music, art, poetry, science, philosophy, human rights, human behavior, and more. His impact is so significant that He became the dividing line of history—B.C. (“before Christ”) and A.D. (“anno domini,” which means “in the year of our Lord.”)

Yet His impact reaches much farther than general historical or cultural influence. If we consider Handel’s *Messiah*, Da Vinci’s *The Last Supper*, and Dante’s *Inferno* as the ultimate examples of Jesus’s influence, we’ve missed the point. Jesus didn’t come to make your life better; He came to change it altogether. When you answer Jesus’s call to come and follow, His impact on you doesn’t end when you take your last breath—it lasts throughout eternity!

Read Jesus’s seven “I AM” statements from the Gospel of John. In each verse, circle who Jesus is and underline the resulting impact He has on your life. Then, below each one, write what it means to you personally.

“I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again.

JOHN 6:35

Jesus spoke to them again: “I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.”

JOHN 8:12

COME TO ME

“I am the gate. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.”

JOHN 10:9

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

JOHN 10:11

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live.”

JOHN 11:25

Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

JOHN 14:6

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.”

JOHN 15:5

Considering these truths about Jesus, what testimony can you give about Jesus’s impact on you?

What kind of change do you need to experience in your life? Reflect on what you underlined regarding how who Jesus is impacts you. What do you need to do to experience Jesus in this way?

As you conclude today’s study, thank Jesus for His impact on you by praying the seven “I AM” statements. Change each “I am” to “You are,” and ask God to help you live in such a way that others see the significance of Jesus’s impact on you.

DAY 4

THE LIFE OF JESUS IN YOU

What is one word you would use to describe your life?

“A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance.”

JOHN 10:10

Based on this Scripture, what two invitations do we receive every day?
What are their effects?

How have you seen the reality of this verse in your life?

Think about everything you’ve learned this week so far. Answering Jesus’s invitation to come and follow Him requires total devotion. It also means you’ll find Him to be the only treasure that is worth making such a life-altering decision. And while the path you’ll take in following Jesus isn’t easy, He doesn’t leave you to walk it alone. He has given you His life as an example, His Word as instruction, and His Spirit as your ever-present help. That’s not all! While you are becoming more like Jesus, He fills you to complete satisfaction, lights your way in the darkness, and impacts others through you. It’s easy to see why Jesus said that life in Him is abundant!

And it is a choice to receive that abundance each day of your life. That doesn’t mean you can lose your salvation—you can’t. Once you choose to trust and follow Jesus, you are a child of God, always and forever. But walking in the abundant life

COME TO ME

He gives is a *daily decision*. As Jesus offers you the invitation to come and follow Him each moment of each day, Satan tempts you to turn away. His aim is death and destruction. Jesus's gift is an eternal abundance of life.

*And my God will supply all your needs
according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*

PHILIPPIANS. 4:19

Read Philippians 4:10-19. What words or phrases did Paul use that infer the abundant life of Jesus in him?

What is the promise of abundant life in verse 19?

Paul wrote Philippians from a first-century prison cell. His life was not one any of us would look at and consider "abundant." Yet he used that very word to describe himself: fully supplied, in abundance. Even more, he was joyful and content. In his difficult circumstance, Paul experienced the abundant life of Jesus in himself and knew these Philippian believers would, too. And so can you. The abundant life of Jesus in you is a future eternal promise, and it is also a promise for *today*.

Read Matthew 6:25-34. What are some worries that tend to make you think and act as though your life is less abundant than the life Jesus offers?

Read verse 33 again. How can you experience the abundant life of Jesus in you—even in those worries?

Thank Jesus for the abundant life He gives you, now and for eternity. Acknowledge the ways Satan is trying to wreck the abundant joy and contentment of Jesus in you. Ask God to help you to seek His kingdom and righteousness above all else.

DAY 5

NEXT STEPS TO FOLLOW

“One step forward, two steps back.” This is a well-known phrase and an even more deeply well-known experience. In fact, you should probably go ahead and expect to feel this way a time or two as you walk through these eight weeks of study—if you haven’t already! It happens to us all, particularly those of us who trust Christ with our lives. We often think we’ve devoted ourselves fully to Jesus only to fall short in a way that makes it obvious we still have far to go.

Disciples of Jesus follow Jesus, and following Jesus involves a lifelong path of learning and growth. It begins with Jesus’s invitation to come and follow Him. It continues until our transformation is complete—and our transformation isn’t complete until we are resurrected from this life to new life where we will dwell forever in God’s magnificent glory. Until then, we take next steps to continue following Jesus right here and now—growing and learning to be more like Him along the way.

That’s why each week of this study will include time for reflection and consideration of *Next Steps*. Jesus is calling you to come to Him and follow after Him. That invitation is ongoing. There will never be a day in your life when He will not extend that same offer. So take some time to reflect on what you’ve been studying and the next steps Jesus is leading you to take as you walk with Him. Let Him show you how you can become more fully devoted to Him.

*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory,
the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

JOHN 1:14

Read John 1 in your Bible. Let it guide a time of prayerful reflection about devoting yourself fully to Jesus.

COME TO ME

Record some next steps you'll take to answer Jesus's invitation to come follow Him.

Using the columns below—on the left, identify ways you're growing in Christ. On the right, identify the other ways you are seeking change, renewal, and repentance.

Growing	Changing

Count the cost.

We must not fear what following Christ might cost us in this life, but what we are missing by withholding anything at all from Him.



In a culture of rampant confusion and half-hearted beliefs, people desperately need to see followers of Jesus living sincerely and wholeheartedly for Him. It's time to show this generation what it means to be fully devoted. This study will help you:

- Gain a biblical understanding of the gospel and the call of discipleship
- Place deepening trust in Jesus and give your all to Him
- Teach and serve others in the manner that Jesus would
- Encourage others to become true disciples

To enrich your study experience, be sure to access the videos available through a redemption code printed in this *Bible Study Book*.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Fully Devoted eBook

Includes the content of this printed book but offers the convenience and flexibility that come with mobile technology.

Bible Study eBook with Video Access

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More resources can be found online at lifeway.com/theforge

Price and availability subject to change without notice.

GO FROM BELIEVING TO FOLLOWING.

Not every believer in Christ is a true disciple. Though salvation is a gift from God, being a disciple of Jesus includes a radical willingness to give Him everything. This powerful, eight-session study will take you on a journey through Jesus's invitation to come to Him as you are, trust Him with your faith, surrender to Him with your heart, follow Him with your life, and then intentionally make disciples of others.

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