

Life in the Spirit STUDY GUIDE

TRUTH FORLIFE

THIS STUDY GUIDE

contains twelve sessions that explore the work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the life of the believer according to Romans 8. You will get the most out of this study by intently reading or listening to the sermons from the series *Life in the Spirit* by Alistair Begg as you progress. The content for each session focuses on a particular sermon Alistair preached on Romans 8.



FIND ALL 12 MESSAGES AT TFL.ORG/SPIRIT

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The following description of the *Life in the Spirit* sermon series provides a good summary of this study's aim:

What does it mean to be a Christian? How does faith in Jesus make a difference in a believer's daily experience? In this series of sermons, Alistair Begg addresses these questions by exploring Romans 8 from the perspective of one who is already in Christ. As Jesus' finished work on the cross is applied in our lives, we receive a new freedom to make choices that please our heavenly Father—and the indwelling Holy Spirit's power enables us to walk in those choices. We think differently because of our new identity in Christ, knowing that hardships and suffering have a purpose in God's ultimate plan. Since we are in Christ by His grace, there is no condemnation; and since we are kept by His eternal love, there is no separation between us and Him forever.

Each session includes four parts:

- 1) **Getting Started**: a brief summary statement or commentary on the sermon, followed by an introductory question
- **2) Key Scriptures**: important Bible verses that were referenced in the sermon and are flagged for further meditation and memorization
- 3) Going Deeper: questions to help you process the main ideas of the sermon
- **4) Giving Praise**: a hymn that can be committed to memory, incorporated in worship, and used as the basis for prayer about what you have learned and considered



SESSION ONE

"In Christ Jesus" | Romans 8:1-2

Getting Started

J. I. Packer, commenting on Romans 8, writes, "Think of the Christian's personal life as a house with different aspects. Romans 7 depicts the cold, shadowed side that faces away from the sun, Romans 8 shows us the warm side where the sunshine is seen and felt. We only get out of Romans 7 into Romans 8 in the sense that, after letting the law speak to us about ourselves, we listen afresh to the gospel." How does Packer's analogy help you understand and appreciate the Gospel?

KEY SCRIPTURES

"Sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good."

(ROMANS 7:11-12)

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

(ROMANS 8:1)

¹ J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1984), 129.

1. Romans 8 outlines the nature of the Christian life. How would you answer the question "What does
it mean to be a Christian?"
2. How does Romans 7:14-25 describe the believer's relationship to sin?
3. Alistair points out that Romans 8:1 takes us into the depths of God's grace. In what ways does this
verse reveal God's grace for sinners?
4. What does it mean to be "in Christ Jesus"? How should this truth shape how we live (Rom. 8:1)?

When the law col		hat promises	in Scripture mig	ght you call to	mind to
There are three cases teach us abou		s: in 5:1, 8:1, ar	nd 12:1. Taken to	ogether, what	do these

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling,
Naked come to Thee for dress,
Helpless look to Thee for grace.
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

"ROCK OF AGES, CLEFT FOR ME"
BY AUGUSTUS TOPLADY

SESSION TWO

"God Has Done What the Law Could Not Do" | Romans 8:2-4

Getting Started

It is true that for those who are in Christ, there is no condemnation. But why is that the case? And how is this truth applied to us? The answer lies with Christ alone, who came to fulfill all that God demanded. In Christ, we are freed from the law as a way of acceptance with God and empowered to keep His law as we walk by the Spirit.

Why do you suppose that people tend to view God's law as a way toward acceptance with Him? Why is this approach ultimately futile?				

KEY SCRIPTURES

"God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

(ROMANS 8:3-4)

"All who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."

(GALATIANS 3:10)

1. How does Galatians 3:10-13 describe the predicament of the human condition?
2. What does Romans 8:3 tell us about the ultimate purpose for which Christ came into the world? How should this truth affect our view of Christ?
3. If Jesus fulfilled the law, what should our relationship to the law then be?
4. Alistair points out that in Jesus, we are set free from sin's guilt <i>and</i> its power. How are these two
aspects of sin different?

5. For the believer, God's law is not a means of acceptance with Him; however, God's commands st serve as guardrails on the path toward holiness. Ask the Lord to highlight areas of your life where yo could grow in obedience and holiness, and note those areas below.
6. How does the law both define sin for us and provoke sin in us? (Consider, for example, the Te Commandments.)
7. Paul says Jesus was sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Why is it essential that Jesus was like sinful humanity yet without sin?

Because the sinless Savior died,
My sinful soul is counted free,
For God the just is satisfied
To look on him and pardon me,
To look on him and pardon me.

"BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD ABOVE"

BY CHARITIE LEES BANCROFT

SESSION THREE

"Two Differing Mindsets" | Romans 8:5-8

Getting Started

The apostle Paul makes a clear and radical distinction between those who live in the flesh and those who are in the Spirit. The former leads to death; the latter produces life. It is only when we look away from ourselves and to Christ in the Gospel that we receive the peace that accompanies eternal life.

n your own ne believer	v would you	briefly sur	n up the tw	o differing	mindsets of	the unbelie	ever and

KEY SCRIPTURES

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'"

(JOHN 3:6-7)

"To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace." (ROMANS 8:6)

1. What does Paul mean when he contrasts the terms <i>flesh</i> and <i>Spirit</i> in Romans 8:5-8?
2. How does Jesus address the spiritual condition of Nicodemus in John 3:3-7? What does this tell us about the nature of and need for salvation?
3. All of us are born hopeless, hostile toward God, and helpless. How does the Gospel provide the solution for each of these three issues?
4. In contrast to the unbeliever, those who live by the Spirit are marked by harmony with God, joy, and hope of life eternal. What should the life of a person with these qualities look like?
riope of the eternal. What should the life of a person with these qualities look like:

5. How might Romans 8:5-8 shape how you pray for others? Write down some specific prayer poin
6. In what sense are unbelievers "hostile" toward God (Rom. 8:7)?
7. God gives us His Spirit so that we might live to His praise. In what areas of your life might you net to rely more fully on the Holy Spirit to live in this manner?

O soul, are you weary and troubled?

No light in the darkness you see?

There's a light for a look at the Savior

And life more abundant and free!

"TURN YOUR EYES UPON JESUS" BY HELEN HOWARTH LEMMEL

SESSION FOUR

"The Indwelling Spirit" | Romans 8:9-11

Getting Started

If someone were to ask you why you are a Christian, what would you say? The Bible teaches that the work of salvation is a miracle of grace. In His great mercy, God has made Himself known in the person of His Son. He draws us to saving faith and gives us life by His Spirit.

What are some way might be described	miraculous event? Wha	at aspects of your own convers	sion

KEY SCRIPTURES

"You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."

(ROMANS 8:9)

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

(1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20)

1. What is significant about the shift in focus from verse 8 to verse 9 of Romans 8?
2. A defining mark of the true believer is that he or she belongs to Christ (Rom. 8:9). What are some implications of belonging to Christ? How should it shape the way we think and live?
3. Alistair describes salvation as a radical change with new allegiance. How was your life without Christ different from your new life in Him?
amerene nom your new me mirmin.
4. How does 2 Corinthians 4:16 help us understand Paul's teaching that "the body is dead because of
sin" (Rom. 8:10)?

5. What promises does Romans 8:9-11 reveal for the believer? Which of these promises are particularly
encouraging to you?
6. Sin affects every aspect of creation. What are some of the effects of sin in our world?
7. With Romans 8:10-11 in mind, how would you counsel a believer who fears death? What hope does this passage provide for us?

Thou art the sinner's Friend,
So I Thy friendship claim,
A sinner saved by grace
When Thy sweet message came.
Mine! Mine! Mine!
I know that Thou art mine;
Savior, dear Savior,
I know that Thou art mine.

"DEAR SAVIOR, THOU ART MINE"

BY ANNA HUDSON

SESSION FIVE

"The Spirit of Sonship" | Romans 8:12-17

Getting Started

The Puritan preacher John Owen wrote, "Let not that man think he makes any progress in holiness, who walks not over the bellies of his lusts." The reality of life in the Spirit brings with it responsibility. Our new position in God's family demands that we put our old way of life to death.

Why	is it so vital that	believers put s	in to death ir	n their own live	es? What are th	ne dangers of a	allowing
sin to	o go unchecked?						

KEY SCRIPTURES

"So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

(ROMANS 8:12-13)

"Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God."

(GALATIANS 4:6-7)

² Of the Mortification of Sin in Believers, in The Works of John Owen, D.D., ed. Thomas Russell (London: Richard Baynes, 1826), 7:341.

1. Paul calls believers "debtors" in Romans 8:12. To whom are we indebted? How are we to repay what we owe?
2. Alistair points out that sin in the Christian is <i>dethroned</i> but not yet <i>destroyed</i> . How does this truth shape how you understand your relationship to sin?
3. What does it mean to be "led by the Spirit of God" (Rom. 8:14)?
4. As adopted children, we relate to God as <i>Father</i> . What does this title reveal about God's nature and our relationship to Him?

5. In light of Paul's instructions, what sins do you need to eradicate from your life? What are som practical steps that, by the indwelling Spirit's power, you could take to deal with those sins?
6. We can tend to be apathetic toward dealing with personal sin. How does Romans 8:12-13 speak t
this issue?
7. How would you describe the role of suffering in the Christian life? Why do you suppose God use trials to form us?

Once I was dead in sin,
And hope within me died;
But now I'm dead to sin,
With Jesus crucified.

"HE LOVED ME"

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON

SESSION SIX

"Our Present Sufferings" | Romans 8:18-21

Getting Started

Paul urges us to view our salvation and present sufferings in the context of God's cosmic purpose. The ultimate plan of God in providing redemption in Christ is to put the universe back together again in a brand-new creation.

How does considering your salvation on a cosmic scale bring you comfort and assurance?	

KEY SCRIPTURES

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

(ROMANS 8:18)

"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds."

(JAMES 1:2)

1. What truths does Romans 8:18-21 include that help us make sense of suffering?
2. Read Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 11:22-25. How was Paul acquainted with suffering? How does it bolster his credibility to write in Romans, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed" (Rom. 8:18)?
3. Romans 8:18-21 speaks to the notion that our world is not as it should be. How could you use this passage to start a Gospel conversation with an unbeliever?
4. How has the Gospel helped you to endure sorrow, sadness, and suffering well?

5. How does the truth that Jesus is not dead but risen and alive change now you view creation in
relation to Him?
6. C. S. Lewis writes, "We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition
when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum
because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at sea." ³ How does this quote show
the importance of believers taking time to consider the cosmic dimensions of God's work in creation
and salvation?

To all life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree
And wither and perish, but naught changeth Thee.

"IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, GOD ONLY WISE"
BY WALTER C. SMITH

³ C. S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory," in *The Weight of Glory: And Other Addresses* (1949; repr., New York: HarperOne, 2001), 26.

SESSION SEVEN

"There Is a Hope..." | Romans 8:22-25

Getting Started

Life on this side of eternity is marked by spiritual groaning. We groan because the present state of creation is broken, marred by the effects of sin. But through Christ's death and resurrection we have redemption as both a present reality to enjoy and a future hope to anticipate.

In which asperfully realized?	ects of your Ch	ristian life are y	you longing ir	n anticipation	for things th	nat are not yet

KEY SCRIPTURES

"Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind."

(ISAIAH 65:17)

"We know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."

(ROMANS 8:22-23)

1. What reasons does Genesis 3:14-19 give for the groaning of creation that Paul speaks about in
Romans 8:22?
2. Using Ephesians 2:12 and 1 Peter 1:3 for reference, explain the kind of a "hope" Paul has in mind in
Romans 8:24.
3. We are to wait for our final redemption both eagerly and patiently (Rom. 8:23, 25). What are the dangers of failing to balance these two qualities in the Christian life?
4. Alistair points out that hope is one of the distinguishing features of the believer. How does hope now characterize your life in a way that it did not prior to your conversion?
The world and the way that it did not prior to your conversion.

are still awaiting o	our adoption as sons (Ror	at we have been adopte m. 8:23)?		OTTI. 0.13) yet
6. Our redemption impacts your daily	n in Christ is both a <i>prese</i> y living.	ent and a not yet fully r	ealized reality. List a fe	ew ways tha

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day; Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away; Change and decay in all around I see. O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

"ABIDE WITH ME:"
BY HENRY FRANCIS LYTE

SESSION EIGHT

"Help in Our Weakness" | Romans 8:26-27

Getting Started

Paul tells us that creation, Christians, and God Himself are groaning. We do so because we are weak, waiting patiently for our redemption. It is vital that believers acknowledge the God-ordained place of weakness in our lives, for it is in our weakness that the Spirit helps us, interceding for us as we pray.

Vhy do you suppose confessing personal weakness is so uncommon and unpopular?	

KEY SCRIPTURES

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

(ROMANS 8:26-27)

"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. 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."

(2 CORINTHIANS 12:9-10)

1. How would you summarize the key elements of Paul's argument so far in Romans 8:1-27?
2. What do 2 Chronicles 20:1-14 and 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 teach us about the role of weakness in the Christian life?
3. Alistair states that a sure mark of the Spirit's indwelling is when we are prepared to say, "I am weak." Why do you think God works through our weakness?
4. When we don't know what to pray, how does the Spirit help us? What comfort should His help give believers?

5. According	to Romans 8:26-	-27 and 8:34, what	: two provisions h	nas God made for	us in prayer?
		it helps us in our v life? Write it dowr			ou need the help of the ayer.

Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near; Thy Savior's gracious promise hear. His faithful Word declares to thee That as thy days thy strength shall be.

SESSION NINE

"The Chain of Salvation" | Romans 8:28-30

Getting Started

One of the great truths in Romans 8 is that for those who love God, all things work together for good. Scripture teaches that the love of God's people for God is based upon the initiative of His love toward them—a chain of events rooted in eternity that brings His people to saving faith.

aspects of this passage are especially encouraging for you?						i not pride? wnic

KEY SCRIPTURES

"Those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."

(ROMANS 8:30)

"In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will."

(EPHESIANS 1:11)

1. What is the context of Romans 8:28? What bearing does it have on how we understand this well-
known verse?
2. According to Deuteronomy 7-8, what is the basis of God's love for His people? How does this inform
our understanding of God's foreknowledge in Romans 8:29?
3. God's predestining purposes are the foundation for our evangelism. Why is this the case?
4. Alietair atatas that our justification is possible only in that Christ have the judgment that the sinner
4. Alistair states that our justification is possible only in that Christ bore the judgment that the sinner
deserved so that we might enjoy a forgiveness that we do not deserve. How should the doctrine of
justification lead us to humble worship?

5. God takes the initiative in creating in us a love for Him. What does this truth teach us about the na and character of God in salvation?	iture
6. There are two caricatures to avoid in understanding the doctrine of election: the notions that (1) one wants to believe may be turned away; and (2) God coerces people to believe even though they do not to. How does Scripture dispel these two errors?	
7. We should read Romans 8:29–30 within the context of Romans 11:33–36. How do these two passa complement one another?	ages

Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

"AMAZING GRACE"
BY JOHN NEWTON

SESSION TEN

"'If God Be for Us...'" | Romans 8:31-32

Getting Started

Romans 8:31–32 marks the beginning of Paul's closing argument for the chapter. By asking a series of basic questions, Paul reasons that if God has given us the greatest and the best in Jesus, then we can be sure He will be on our side. He will not withhold all the blessings of grace from His children.

		walk with the L	.ord. In what w	ays has God s	nown you His	grace and g	giver
ou His blessing	gs?						
		ke a brief inventory of your ou His blessings?					ke a brief inventory of your walk with the Lord. In what ways has God shown you His grace and gou His blessings?

KEY SCRIPTURES

"If it had not been the LORD who was on our side when people rose up against us, then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us."

(PSALM 124:2-3)

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

(ROMANS 8:31-32)

Going Dooper
Going Deeper 1. Paul begins his closing argument by asking, "What then shall we say to these things?" (Rom. 8:31). What does the phrase "these things" point to in this verse?
2. God's defense of Israel amid opposition is a major Old Testament theme (Ps. 124:2-3). How is God being on Israel's side related to His defense of the believer today?
3. Using Matthew 26:39 for reference, explain in what way God did not spare His own Son for us.

^{4.} The commentator John Murray notes that the "all things" of Romans 8:32 is "an expression in universal terms used in a restrictive sense." 4 What blessings do you think Paul has in mind for the believer?

⁴ John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, vol. 1, Chapters 1 to 8, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 326.

he Lord?	of God from Rom	ians 8:31-32 mig	nt you meditate	e upon to strengti	len your waik wit
i. How do the Ol	d Testament acco	unts of Numbers	s 13 and Joshua	11 illustrate the p	rinciple of Romar
3:31—namely, tha	if God is for His	people, no oppo	sition can prev	ail against them?	

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of his Spirit, washed in His blood.

"BLESSED ASSURANCE" BY FANNY CROSBY

SESSION ELEVEN

"Case Closed!" | Romans 8:33-3

Getting Started

We often wonder if our faith will hold true to the end. According to Paul, the case is closed. There is no doubt that God will keep His people secure forever. The promise of security is rooted not in our own ability but in Jesus' finished work—once in Christ, always in Christ.

escribe a time when your faith wavered. How did God bring you through it?	

KEY SCRIPTURES

"This is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day."

(JOHN 6:39)

"Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."

(ROMANS 8:34)

1. How does Romans 8:33-36 expand upon Jesus' own words in John 6:39?
2. How does the Gospel give us assurance when our own hearts (1 John 3:20) or the Evil One (Rev 12:10) accuse us?
3. Paul grounds our confidence in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ (Rom. 8:34). Wh are these facts of the Gospel essential to preserving our faith?
4. Domans 9:75. 76 does not promise the absence of suffering but instead emphasizes the faithfulnes
4. Romans 8:35-36 does not promise the absence of suffering but instead emphasizes the faithfulnes of God in it. How does a proper theology of suffering prepare us to endure trials well?

5. Read Lamentations 3:21-23, taking time to stop and consider the faithfulness of God. Write down a few
of the ways God is displaying His faithfulness to you right now.
6. Why is it important for us to consider the place of Christ in heaven and His intercession for us as we navigate the Christian life (Rom. 8:34)?
7. What evidence does Hebrews 7:25-27 present to show us that the case is closed in relation to sin in
the believer's life?

When I fear my faith will fail,
Christ will hold me fast;
When the Tempter would prevail,
He can hold me fast.

"HE WILL HOLD ME FAST" BY ADA R. HABERSHON

SESSION TWELVE

"No Separation" | Romans 8:37-39

Getting Started

Romans 8 concludes with two great declarations for those of us who are in Christ: "We are more than conquerors," and we are unable to be separated from God's love. It is our conscious dependence on these truths that enables us to navigate trials in the strength Christ provides.

What are a few of the key verses from Romans 8 that have shaped your understanding of God or
strengthened your faith in Him? How so?

KEY SCRIPTURES

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

(ROMANS 8:37-39)

"He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him."

(COLOSSIANS 2:15)

1. Romans 8 begins with no condemnation (v. 1) and ends with no separation (vv. 38-39). How are
these two truths related?
2. Paul is careful to point out that we are conquerors in the midst of our suffering, not in spite of it
(Rom. 8:37). How should this fact affect how we view the role of suffering in the Christian life?
3. Paul says that he is "sure" concerning the believer's security in Christ (Rom. 8:38). Why is it important
to live our Christian lives based on what we know to be true rather than what we feel or see?
4. Nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ (Rom. 8:38-39). In light of your present
circumstances, how does this promise assure you?

•	e believer from	God (Rom. 8:	38)?			
Read Matth	ew 2:1, 26:39, a	nd 27:34. How	do these verse	es display the	love Christ ha	ıs for His peo _l
Read Matth	ew 2:1, 26:39, a	nd 27:34. How	do these verse	es display the	love Christ ha	s for His peop
Read Matth	ew 2:1, 26:39, a	nd 27:34. How	do these verse	es display the	love Christ ha	s for His peo
Read Matth	ew 2:1, 26:39, a	nd 27:34. How	do these verse	es display the	love Christ ha	s for His peo

I know not why God's wondrous grace

To me He hath made known,

Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love

Redeemed me for His own.

But I know whom I have believed

And am persuaded that He is able

To keep that which I've committed

Unto Him against that day.

"I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED" BY DANIEL WEBSTER WHITTLE To see more studies from Truth For Life and Alistair Begg, visit **truthforlife.org/studyguides**.

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