

Crazy Love Study Guide

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enLIGHTening hearts and minds

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Crazy Love – Study Guide

Preface & Chapter 1: Stop Praying

WARNING, READ BEFORE USING

We've all seen the phrase, "Warning, read before using" and most of the time we skip right over all the small print and tear into the item we want to see, touch, and use. Well, I am glad you are stopping and reading this before jumping right into the questions of this study guide. There are three warnings I want you to be aware of before you start.

First Warning: ***Don't compare!*** God is going to do a good work in our lives, therefore, Satan will try and hinder this from happening. One of the ways he is going to try and discourage you is to whisper in your ear, "Hey, look at so and so, she is doing so much for the Lord, what are you doing . . . you'll never be like her . . . why try . . . just be happy with what you have . . . hey, don't think about what you're learning, by the way your favorite TV show is on . . ." Fight the urge to compare yourself with others. God is going to do a good work in each of our lives. We'll all be growing, but some of us will need growing in different areas. God is going to use all of us, but don't compare yourself with another because it will lead you to being discouraged or to feeling prideful. Don't compare!

Second Warning: ***Get ready to see your life and this world differently!*** When you have your eyes open to living sacrificially for Christ, your life is going to change. When you open up your wallet, you'll begin thinking of how you can use it for God's glory. You'll read the newspaper and begin asking yourself if God is calling you to serve others in need. You'll grow in your love for Jesus doing everyday things! You'll see this world as a place to serve God and others, not yourself. You will really grow in your knowledge of 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Third Warning: ***You are beginning an adventure!*** Living a life as a disciple of Jesus Christ should not be lived in drudgery and duty, but one of delight and desire. Have you ever thought that your common life is just passing along and won't add up to too much? I have, but this not true for those who are disciples excited about living for Jesus obediently! When we follow after Jesus, He is going to lead our lives down paths we never expected. He is going to teach us things we never knew about ourselves or others. The Christian life is hard and challenging, but it is also exciting and rewarding. When you live life in faithful obedience to God you will see what an adventure it is to live for Him!

Ready to Start the Adventure?

We as leaders of Lighthouse want you to see this small group series as an adventure of growing in joy for our Savior, Jesus Christ. Like any adventure, there will be tough times, there will be unexpected events, there may even be a time when you'll just want to turn back and say life is so much easier as I was living

it before, but know that there will also be vistas that are unimaginable, there will be growth as a community, and there will be the reward of knowing and savoring Christ intimately.

*Just a quick note about the questions section below. The Bible calls believers to transform their minds (Rom. 12:1) and when we do, it should lead to a change in our thoughts, will, desires, that ultimately leads to our actions, our words, and our attitude.

For Your Mind

1. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
2. Look up the following verses and write down what this verse tells us about who God is.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:14-16 –
 - b. Psalm 102:12, 27 –
 - c. Hebrews 4:13 –
 - d. Daniel 4:35 –
 - e. Proverbs 8:13 –
 - f. Revelation 4:11 –
3. Re-read A.W. Tozer's quote on page 30. What is the purpose of humans on this earth (and in heaven)? When you look at the characteristics of God in question 2, how should that enhance your purpose in life?

For Your Heart

4. Take on this scenario: You've just seen Jesus. One of those courtroom sketch artists has asked you to physically describe what you just saw. What do you say? Be as specific as possible. Try and figure out the sources of some of your descriptions.
5. Now read Revelation 4 and Isaiah 6:1-7. What do you think would come out of your mouth the moment you saw God? What would be the first words you would say?

For Your Life

6. Stop and think about the last prayer you voiced. How did you begin? *Our Father? Dear Lord? Jesus?* What word or phrase did you use to start the prayer? Now, take a minute and consider the prayer you prayed *before* that prayer. How did you begin? Same word or phrase? Different? Sort of different or radically different? If you begin all your prayers in much the same way, ask yourself why.

Read these words from G.K. Chesterton:

A child kicks its legs rhythmically through excess, not absence, of life. Because children have abounding vitality, because they are in spirit fierce and free, therefore they want things repeated and unchanged.

They always say, "Do it again"; and the grown-up person does it again until he is nearly dead. For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony. But perhaps God is strong enough...It is possible that God says every morning, "Do it again," to the sun; and every evening, "Do it again," to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately, but has never got tired of making them. It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we. (*Orthodoxy*)

To temper question 1, remember that you could vary your introductory prayer phrase each time you voice a prayer and still not tap into that eternal appetite of infancy of freshness that Francis Chan talks about in *Crazy Love*. What word will you choose to start your next prayer?

7. How was your relationship with God and your prayer life different this week? If it wasn't different enough, how would you like to see it change?

Challenge for the Week

Pick one day this week and ask God to show you an aspect of who He is. You can look at question two for some of God's attributes. For example, ask Him to show you how He is creator. And then throughout the day, keep your eyes and ears open to how He has created things, big and small. Write down the attribute you chose and what God showed you.

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Chapter 2: You Might Not Finish This Chapter

Life is Just a Vapor

While reading this chapter, there was one sentence that stuck out. Francis Chan said, “Frankly, you need to get over yourself.” My guess is that he needed to be blunt because we live in a world that coddles us and makes us think that we are in the center of the universe. We are not, but God is. We need to remember that our lives are ultimately not in our control, they are in God’s. If God desired, He could take you home today. When we realize that, it puts our lives and who we are in perspective.

For Your Mind

1. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
2. Read James 4:13-17.
 - a. Who is speaking in verse 13?
 - b. What important piece is missing from this business proposal in verse 13?
 - c. James responds in verse 14 by speaking about life. What is our life like?
 - d. In verse 15, what must be included into our plans?
 - e. In verses 16 and 17, what are the two sins James addresses?
3. What is “worry” and “stress”? Why are these two things sinful?
4. How do God’s attributes of His sovereignty and He being creator relate to one another?

For Your Heart

5. Let’s say you have a free evening and you have options to fill your time: Option #1 – Turn on the TV and watch; Option #2 – Take care of the bills and housecleaning; Option #3 – Surfing and shopping on the Internet; or Option #4 – Spending time with God reading and thinking about Him. Which one would you choose, which one would you *really* choose? What does that say about your heart?
6. When Francis talks about just being alone with God, how do you respond to those words? Can you relate? Do you walk with God, intimately and regularly? Or are your experiences with God usually mediated by something or someone (books, sermons, pastor’s voice, fellowship, etc.)?
7. Think about some people in your life who have died abruptly. What were some of their achievements in life and what were their regrets?

For Your Life

8. Name one person in your life who lives as if each day is his or her last. What is this person's effect on people around him or her? Does living that way make him or her seem, well, different? Why?
9. If today was the day you died, what would you regret and why? What can you change about your life today to avoid those regrets?

Challenge for the Week

Go to www.crazylovebook.com

On the left hand side of the webpage, click on "Videos". (Psst, remember this because we'll be coming back here throughout our study.)

Then, click on "The Awe Factor of God" and watch the video.

After you watch the video take some time to reflect and then write a sentence, a paragraph, a page after these two prompts:

1. God is . . .
2. I am . . .
3. Now re-read what you wrote from the two prompts above. What's your response? Are you amazed that God wants to be in fellowship with us? Are you amazed at how you live your "me" centered life? Did that video lead you to worshipping God?

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Chapter 3: Crazy Love

Love and Fear?

These two words, “love” and “fear” seem unlikely to be placed together, unless we are talking about God. The following is how Paul Tripp defines love. “Love is willing sacrifice for the good of another that does not demand reciprocation or the person being loved is deserviving.” The Bible teaches Christians that, “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers” (1 John 3:16). Christ laid down His life so that we may live.

Now on the other hand Jerry Bridges defines the fear, in particular, the fear of God as “reverential awe.” He concludes that the fear of God includes three elements, “*respect* (which toward God means reverence) in recognition of His infinite worth and dignity; *admiration* of His glorious attributes; and *amazement* at His infinite love” (*The Joy of Fearing God*, 26). When we have the fear of God, it leads to a genuine love of who God is and what He means to our lives. The fear of Him draws us to loving Him more. When we are amazed with whom God is and what He has done for us, it should amaze us and cause us to “love” Him and live for Him in a “crazy” way!

For Your Mind

1. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
2. Turn in your Bible to Ephesians 2:1-10 and read through the passage. Don’t rush, but take your time to soak in all the tremendous truths found in these verses.
 - a. Next, re-read verses 1-3.
 - i. In these three verses, Paul is painting such a dramatic picture of the life a person lives when he or she does not know Jesus Christ. Write down a few words or phrases that describe humans before coming to faith.
 - b. Now read verses 4-7.
 - i. Circle or highlight the first two words in verse 4, “But God.” These two words provide the transition from a life that was dead, to a life that is living.
 - ii. Write down the words used to describe God.

- iii. Now underline the title “Christ” in these four verses. Take a few minutes to praise Jesus for what He gave you as a result of Him giving up His life.
- c. Finish by reading verses 8-10.
 - i. Complete the phrases:
 - 1. V. 8 – For _____
 - 2. V. 9 – That _____
 - 3. V. 10 – For _____
 - 4. V. 10 – That _____

For Your Heart

- 3. Hop onto the Internet and go to www.crazylovebook.com and click onto the “videos” section and hit “Chapter 3” and watch.
 - a. What are five words or phrases that come to mind when you think of your earthly father?
 - b. Has your view of your Heavenly Father been affected (positively and/or negatively) by your view of your earthly father? If so, in what way?
 - c. Did the video of Francis and his son, give you a better picture of your Heavenly Father’s love for you?
 - d. Now how about your Heavenly Father? Pick one word to describe your relationship with your heavenly Father. Does your “one word” reflect a reality you’re pleased with or one you’re disappointed in? If you’re pleased, then great! But if not, what one word would describe the way you’d like it to be?
- 4. Francis writes,
 - a. “The Good News—the best news in the world, in fact—is that you can have God Himself. Do you believe that God is the greatest thing you can experience in the whole world? Do you believe that the Good News is not merely the forgiveness of your sins, the guarantee that you won’t go to hell, or the promise of life in heaven?

The best things in life are gifts from the One who steadfastly loves us. But an important question to ask ourselves is this: Are we in love with God or just His stuff?” (62).

- b. Ask yourself and answer the question, “Are you in love with God or just His stuff or just what benefits you?”

For Your Life

- 5. If you ever dated someone, you remember how you would want to spend every waking moment talking to and being with that person if you could. Francis speaks about how we should be so in love with Jesus because of Jesus’ crazy love for us. If we do not understand God’s love for us, shown through Jesus, then chapters 4 through 10 will only be a nice read without leading to lasting change.
 - a. Do you remember when you “got it”? When you first realized you loved God with all your heart, mind, and soul? Write about that time.
 - b. Ask God to grow within you a heart that loves Him more.

Challenge for the Week

Commit to memorizing Ephesians 2:4-5. Write it down on a post-it note, an index card, on a piece of paper and put one on your mirror in your bathroom, one on your car dashboard, and one next to your computer monitor.

How amazing to think that all of us will be meditating on these two verses this week. As we do so, commit to contacting someone in your small group about God’s great love for them. Remind them by sending an email, a text, a phone call, or a card.

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Chapter 4: Profile of the Lukewarm

Crazy Love Logo

Have you taken a look at the cover of your book? Have you really taken a look at the cover of your book, specifically the two arrows pointed in different directions? This logo appears 26 times on the cover and within the book (I was curious). Most of the time logos convey a message or has a meaning. The same goes for the two arrows. Any thoughts on what the *Crazy Love* logo means? The two arrows represent the relationship that God has with a child of His. God shows His love to His child through the sending of His Son to live, die, and be resurrected on this earth. When a child of God receives the love found in Jesus Christ, he now lives a life that is lived solely pointed to God's glory.

On page 179, there is a conversation with Francis. The first question asks Francis to tell us about the title *Crazy Love*. He responds with the following:

The idea of *Crazy Love* has to do with our relationship with God. All of my life I've heard people say, "God loves you." It's probably the most insane statement you could make to say that the eternal Creator of this universe is in love with me. There is a response that ought to take place in believers, a crazy reaction to that love. Do you really understand what God has done for you? If so, why is your response so lukewarm?

Hopefully the first three chapters have awakened our awe of how great and grand our God is! If we have an accurate picture of God, then it will help us have an accurate picture of who we are. Chapters 7 through 10 will now be focused on examining yourself. At times this will not be easy, but remember God's grace. It is His grace that will allow us to be transformed. Also remember that you are on an adventure of seeing how God is going to use your changed and "on fire" life!

*Before reading this chapter, get onto the Internet and go to the Crazy Love website, hit the "videos" section and watch "Chapter 4."

For Your Mind

10. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
11. Beginning with page 68 there are 18 lukewarm descriptions. Pick and choose 6 of them and summarize what a lukewarm person looks like or lives like, then write down one verse and summarize what the verse is saying (you may have to look at the verses before and after to have a better understanding).
 - a. #1 – Lukewarm people . . .

- i. Verse:
- b. #2 – Lukewarm people . . .
 - i. Verse:
- c. #3 – Lukewarm people . . .
 - i. Verse:
- d. #4 – Lukewarm people . . .
 - i. Verse:
- e. #5 – Lukewarm people . . .
 - i. Verse:
- f. #6 – Lukewarm people . . .
 - i. Verse:

For Your Heart

12. Read and discuss a verse with your group that jumped out at you from this week's chapter.
13. Look at question #2 and the six characteristics of a lukewarm person. Some of you may have chosen the first six, but I am assuming some of you chose the six that were most meaningful to you. Out of the six you chose, pick two or three of them and reflect how they are part of your life. Take time to meditate on the verse(s) that correspond to the lukewarm characteristic. Ask yourself for each characteristic, "Why am I acting like that?" Repent and ask God to forgive you.

For Your Life

14. Look at question #4 and look at the two or three areas where you are lukewarm in. Think what you can do to make changes in those areas. Write down what you will do to change your lukewarm life for each characteristic.
 - a. #1:
 - b. #2:
 - c. #3:
15. Turn in your book to page 66. Read Matthew 13:44 and the next two paragraphs. Remind yourself of the wonderful gift of Jesus Christ in your life. Write down a prayer expressing your love for Him.

Challenge for the Week

Look at question #5 and pick one lukewarm characteristic to focus on this week. Spend 15-20 minutes getting to the heart of this lukewarm characteristic.

1. Identify the main sin of this lukewarm characteristic.
2. Find verses that combat this lukewarm characteristic. You can look in a study Bible, a concordance, by asking a mature Christian.
3. Pray, asking God to help you to battle this sin.
4. Think of one or two tangible things you can do this week to help you fight against this lukewarm characteristic. It may mean fasting one meal, getting up early one morning to pray, getting home early to spend an afternoon walking outside and talking with your child about God. Be creative in your application.

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Chapter 5: Serving Leftovers to a Holy God

Surprise!

I think most of us like good surprises, but we never liked the surprise that began, “Take out a piece of paper and clear off your desk.” We all know that feeling of being unprepared for the pop quiz. As a teacher I didn’t mind giving them, but for the pleading students they knew they were going to be examined on whether or not they were listening to the lectures and whether or not they read the chapter they were supposed to.

We don’t like to be examined because it exposes us, but that is what chapters 4 through 10 are intended to do. They are to expose who we really are and what we really believe in. Maybe some of you got a taste of this as you examined your heart in the last chapter. The purpose of chapter 4 was to “Examine your heart for Christ.” This week will be, “Examine your life as a disciple.”

I remember growing up in church and when I heard testimonies of missionaries and pastors, I thought they were the “spiritual” ones and the rest of us were ordinary Christians. This separation does not exist in the Bible. Jesus taught that His disciples live for Him and His kingdom. Disciples understand that this life is only temporary and so are the things in it. Disciples follow and obey God’s Word, rather than our desires and what the world says. Disciples believe that glorifying God in our lives is our ultimate goal.

May this chapter give us a clearer picture of what it means to live as Christ’s disciple.

In the future, I hope all of us will be surprised when we stand before Jesus’ throne and hear Him say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” And I earnestly hope none of us are surprised with, “I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.”

Last Chapter’s Key Thought: Your Heart for Christ.

Key Thought for This Chapter: Examine your life as Christ’s Disciple.

For Your Mind

16. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
17. Go to the Crazy Love website and watch the video for chapter 5. Francis speaks about this difference between disciples and Christians. Before watching this video, did you think there was a difference between the spiritual ones (missionaries, pastors, small group leaders, etc.) and Christians? What are the dangers of thinking there is a difference for those who just see themselves as “Christians?”

18. Open your Bible and look up the following verses. Write down what the author is teaching next to the verse.
- James 2:19:
 - 1 John 2:3-4:
 - Matthew 16:24-25:
19. A newer Christian comes up to you after reading chapters 4 and 5 and says to you, "After reading these chapters I don't think I'm a Christian, I've given my life to Jesus, but there are still areas in my life where I sin." What would you tell this person? Re-read the bottom of page 87 and the middle of page 88.

For Your Heart

20. Turn in your book to page 86 and read the second, third and fourth full paragraphs. Have you ever asked or wanted to ask a mature Christian one of these questions or similar ones? What kind of heart do these questions reveal about the person asking them?
- Fill in the blank with your own words or with words you hear quite often from others:
Can I _____ and still get to heaven?
21. "God wants our best, deserves our best, and demands our best." During the days of Malachi, the priests were not offering to God their best, rather, they were offering their leftovers. Francis writes, "The priests of Malachi's day thought their sacrifices were sufficient. They had spotless animals but chose to keep those for themselves and give their less desirable animals to God. They assumed God was pleased because they had sacrificed something" (91). Read Malachi 1:8. Create a list of things that Christians give to God as leftovers.
22. Being as honest as you can, discuss with the group any doubts you had with your salvation or your relationship with God after reading this chapter. Where did this chapter leave you?

For Your Life

23. There are often many reasons we have for not following Jesus. One of the more common is fear, although we rarely admit it. What is one thing that Jesus is asking you to do? One thing you know He's asking of you, but you're afraid of? What is the worst that could happen if you followed Him in that way? What's the best?
24. We are all programmed to worship, as Christians we are to worship God, but there are times when we worship the things of this world. Identify three "idols" that you have been worshipping recently. What can you do to break free from worshipping these idols and turning wholeheartedly to Jesus?

Challenge for the Week

Writer Annie Dillard says, "How we spend our day is, of course, how we spend our lives." Pick a day from last week. Beginning with the moment you awoke, go back through the day and write down everything you can remember regarding how you "spent" the day. We don't save time: we just spend it. Don't embellish or fudge the truth; just write down your day. Is that "day" reflective of how you're spending your life? Don't answer too quickly.

Now pick a day that is coming up and try and live that day giving your best first to God. Here are some examples:

- Giving the beginning of your day to be with the Lord in His Word (yes, even before opening the sports section of the newspaper or the latest magazine).
- Giving God the first few minutes of each new hour to quickly pray with Him (Set a timer).
- Think about how you can encourage someone during the day.
- Spend your commute listening to worship music.
- Tell someone about what God is teaching you.
- Eat with a grateful heart to God.
- Pray for your child before they go to bed.
- Use your sanctified imagination to live for God!

Before going to bed ask the Lord, "Did I fulfill what you asked of me today?" You can also reflect if you saw God work in your life.

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Chapter 6: When You're In Love

Life Change through Love Exchange

In this chapter I had to ask myself a convicting question, “Do I really love Jesus more than anyone and anything else in this world?” The Christians who can answer “yes” to this question are often times the ones who stand out in our minds. They are the ones who don't live perfect lives but embrace being forgiven. They are the ones who face struggles but have a peace about themselves. They are the ones who have “crazy” testimonies because they are the ones living by faith.

On the other hand, many of us are caught in the cycle of loving others and the things of this world more than Jesus Christ. We know we need to make changes in our lives, but we overlook our sins and get used to living a life in bondage to sin.

Francis writes, “God wants to change us; He died so that we could change” (103).

Do you *really* want to change?

Here's a simplistic flow of thought when we recognize our sins and see the need to change. We ask ourselves the question, “How do I break out of this sinful cycle of loving this world?”

Option #1: Be motivated by fear, which leads to guilt and duty. “I need to try harder to be a better Christian.” This works until the next time you sin.

Option #2: Be motivated by love, which leads to freedom and joy. “I need to ask Jesus to grow my love for Him.” This works because you want to obey and be changed because of the one you love. This is what it means to live in the grace of Jesus Christ and the gospel.

Milton Vincent wrote in “A Gospel Primer” about his burden in needing to maintain his righteous standing before God. When he stopped being led by fear and turned to Jesus' love found in the gospel he was able to write, “I also found the grace of the gospel producing in me a huge passion to love and obey God. In moments of temptation, I enjoyed saying to myself, *‘You know, I can commit this sin, and God's grace would abound to me all the more as He maintains my justified status . . . But it is precisely for this reason that I choose not to commit this sin!’*” (96). Liberating and freeing!

Our hope is that you will experience God's love and that you will be transformed by it so that you will experience what Jesus said in John 10:10, “I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full.”

Last Chapter's Key Thought: Examine my life as Christ's disciple.

Key Thought for This Chapter: Examine my love for Jesus.

For Your Mind

1. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
2. Define the word “love” from a Christian perspective. How is God’s definition different from the world’s definition of “love?”
3. Turn in your Bible to 1 John 4:7-21. Read these verses and underline or highlight when you come to the words “love” or “loved.” This passage can be broken down into three smaller sections.
 - a. *Section 1: Verses 7-12*
 - i. Verse 7: Why are we to love one another?
 - ii. Verse 8 contrasts the truth found in verse 7.
 - iii. Verses 9 and 10 are a description of what love is.
 1. Verse 9: Love is God sending

 2. Verse 10: Love is God sending

 3. Define the word, “propitiation”.
 - iv. Verses 11 and 12: God uses His church to be a visible example of His love. Is there someone at Lighthouse who you can “love?”
 - v. Verse 12 ends with two statements about believers. First, “God abides in us” and second, “His love is perfected in us.”
 - b. *Section 2: Verses 13-16*
 - i. Verses 13 through 16 are elaborating on the two statements from verse 12.
 - c. *Section 3: Verses 17-21*
 - i. Verse 17 speaks about what event to come?
 - ii. Verse 18: Re-write this verse. Christians do not have to fear what? (See verse 17). The Bible teaches that those who are genuine believers do not need to fear losing their salvation. Is it reassuring to know that John wrote verse 18? List what Jesus’ death on the cross provided for Christians.
 - iii. Verse 19 reminds us of where this love originated, not in us, but in God.

For Your Heart

4. Turn in your book to page 100 and re-read John Piper’s quote from *God Is the Gospel*. How would you answer the question John Piper poses? Why?
5. Intimacy vs. Reverence: which do you struggle with in your relationship with God?
6. Is it hard for you to say, “I love you Jesus”? Why or why not?

For Your Life

7. Francis says, "There is nothing better than giving up everything and stepping into a passionate love relationship with God." Point to something in your life that indicates you believe those words. If you believe them, there ought to be some evidence in your life that you believe them. If there's nothing to point to, do you have the courage to be honest with God and your friends about it?
8. What kind of baggage do you carry around with you in your life? Make a quick list and then pick one to think about. Take some time searching the Bible and asking the Lord to begin to bring change in that one area of your life. Let that one area come under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
9. Turn to page 110 and begin re-reading the section on "SomeOne I Can Be Real With." Don't sprint, take a stroll. Read a sentence and then pause to speak with Jesus.

Challenge for the Week

After spending a number of weeks going through Jesus' seven sayings from the cross I was really looking forward to celebrating Easter. Jesus' death on cross and his resurrection from the dead were both absolutely necessary.

What comes to mind when you think of Easter? Eggs, lilies, candy, fake plastic grass, Peeps? I hope that we would also think about victory, celebration, new life, power, amazement, and love! I hope this past Easter helped deepen your love for Jesus and all that He went through in order to save us.

What can you do this week to respond to Jesus' love for you as shown on the cross and by being raised from the dead? Do something tangible.

Be ready to share in your group what you did and the result.

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Chapter 7: Your Best Life . . . Later

The Question

Francis Chan asks many good and thought provoking questions, but there was one question that stood out from all the rest. The question was posed to Francis by his Bible college professor, “What are you doing right now that requires faith?”

When I read that while traveling in Japan, I was moved. What was I doing that really requires faith? Would we have enough faith to move to a different country if God called us? Have we been generous in giving of our time, money, and resources to the point of requiring faith?

I hope you didn’t skim over the question, “What are you doing right now that requires faith?” And I hope you didn’t skim over what the author of Hebrews writes about faith, “And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

Let us live lives of faith now!

Last Chapter’s Key Thought: Examine my love for Jesus.

Key Thought for This Chapter: Examine my faith in Jesus.

For Your Mind

1. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
2. Define the word “faith” from a Christian perspective. How is God’s definition different from the world’s definition of “faith?” (Hint: Look up Hebrews 11:1)
3. Turn in your Bibles to Hebrews 11. Read verses 7 through 16. There are three people commended for their faith in these verses. Write down what they had to do in faith. Also write down what may have kept them from acting in faith.

a. Noah (v. 7):

b. Abraham (vv. 8-10):

c. Sarah (vv. 11-12):

- d. Verses 13 and 14. Why were the three individuals above able to do what they were asked to do?

For Your Heart

4. What keeps you from living a life of faith? Take time to really think about this question. To start, think about your motivations, your idols, your desire for control, and your beliefs. Now is the hard part, find verses that teach you how to have God honoring motivations, desires, and beliefs that will help you to live a life of faith.
5. Rather than talking about the sinfulness of owning and buying things, talk about the silliness of the things you own in light of eternal rewards. Make a list of the top 5 things you own. Why are they special?
6. What keeps you from thinking about the needs of your extended family? Friends? Neighbors?
7. Below is a short list of groups of people in need:
 - a. The homeless in Los Angeles
 - b. The lepers in India
 - c. The immigrants in the Los Angeles area
 - d. The 127 million people in Japan almost all, who do not know Jesus Christ
 - e. The rising number of seniors in nursing homes
 - f. The “human trafficking” of children in Thailand
 - g. The number of teens getting pregnant leading to abortions
 - h. The poverty of millions in Africa due to political oppression, changing environment, AIDS/HIV
 - i. The number of drug addicts in Los Angeles
 - j. Another group in need . . .
 - i. Pick one group and do some research on this group. What are some of the needs in this group? What could be done about this issue? How is the Christian church involved with this issue? Take time to pray for the people.

For Your Life

8. Take a few moments and answer this question: What am I doing right now that requires faith? Nothing is gained here by trying to sound spiritual or concocting some answer that isn't true. Maybe it helps to break the sentence in half. First, answer: What am I doing right now? Then look at those "right now" things and ask if any of them requires faith.
9. Click onto the website and watch the "chapter 7" video, then look at question 7 and your response, what will you do?
10. "What are you doing right now that requires faith?" Make a list of things that you are doing in faith. Now make a list of three to five things you can commit to doing in faith with regards to giving materially and giving your time.

Challenge for the Week

What of your "silly things" can you give away to someone who is in need? Give it away. No excuses, give something away that you own.

Crazy Love – Study Guide

Chapter 8: Profile of the Obsessed

“All Units, Be on the Look Out For . . .”

If you have ever watched a television show or movie with police officers you may have heard the line, “All units, be on the look out for. . .” The sentence usually continues with a profile of a suspect or a vehicle. How would your close friends and family members describe you if they had to give a profile of you to another person? I’m not talking about a physical profile, but your life profile.

How would your close friends and family answer these following questions about your life?

- If _____ was given \$5,000 what would he/she do with it?
- Does _____ have vitality and joy in living his/her life?
- What are _____’s dreams and hopes for his/her life?
- Where is most of _____’s time spent?
- Can you see a difference in the way _____ lives his/her life in comparison to the world?

Chapter 8 gives us a profile of thirteen characteristics of a person obsessed with living for Jesus and for heaven. I know most of us are going to be discouraged again as we read this chapter, but think about how God is in the process of molding you. I think back at what one of my seminary professors told the class, he said (paraphrasing), “I know most of you are discouraged in using Greek, but if you keep using it each day, I will guarantee that five, ten years down the road you will all be proficient and you’ll no longer be discouraged.” May all thirteen characteristics be part of our profile one day, but this day, pick one and ask God to make it a part of your life.

I don’t know if you remember the three warnings given in chapter 1’s study guide but they were, “*Don’t compare,*” “*Get ready to see your life and this world differently,*” and “*You are beginning an adventure.*”

Let the Holy Spirit bring change to your life and when He does you will see this world differently. You will also see what an adventure it is to fulfill God’s work here on this earth. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

Take a few minutes to watch the video for chapter 8. You can watch it at www.crazylovebook.com

Last Chapter’s Key Thought: Examine my faith in Jesus.

Key Thought for This Chapter: Examine my obsession with Christ.

For Your Mind

25. Write down the main point of the chapter.

a.

26. Beginning on page 130 there are 13 profiles of the obsessed. Pick and choose 6 of them and summarize what an obsessed disciple looks like or lives like, then write down one verse and summarize what the verse is saying (you may have to look at the verses before and after to have a better understanding).
- a. #1 – Obsessed people . . .
 - i. Verse:
 - b. #2 – Obsessed people . . .
 - i. Verse:
 - c. #3 – Obsessed people . . .
 - i. Verse:
 - d. #4 – Obsessed people . . .
 - i. Verse:
 - e. #5 – Obsessed people . . .
 - i. Verse:
 - f. #6 – Obsessed people . . .
 - i. Verse:

For Your Heart

27. Brainstorm an ongoing list of the ways in which we, as believers in Christ, live lives dictated by culture and tradition instead of the Bible. From the silly to the super-serious, come up with as many as you can.
28. Open up your Bible to Acts 2:37. At this point in the book, Simon Peter (the one who denied Jesus three times) had just finished preaching a sermon about Jesus Christ being the way to salvation. Read from verse 37 to verse 47. As you read, make another list of things that the early church did that appeals to you.
- a. Write down why we can or can't live like they did in the days of the early church.
29. We as Christians are called to live differently from the world. The thirteen characteristics are totally contrary to what the world teaches.
- a. Define "obsessed":
 - b. Are you obsessed with the world or obsessed with Christ?

- c. In our own power we cannot be obsessed with Christ, but we can ask that God will create within us an obsession each new day. Will you ask God to help you tear your obsession with the world and help cultivate an all consuming obsession with Him? What are steps you can take to change your heart?

For Your Life

30. Look at question #2 and pick two or three profiles you want to grow in. Take time and ask God how He may grant you the grace to be one of those profiles. Write down what you will do to change your life in different areas to a life that is obsessed with Jesus Christ. Be creative in your applications, this is the adventurous part!

a. Profile #1:

i. Motivation

- 1. God wants me to be _____ (profile) because . . .

ii. Application

- 1. God wants me to . . .

b. Profile #2:

i. Motivation

- 1. God wants me to be _____ (profile) because . . .

ii. Application

- 1. God wants me to . . .

c. Profile #3:

i. Motivation

- 1. God wants me to be _____ (profile) because . . .

ii. Application

- 1. God wants me to . . .

Challenge for the Week

Look at question #6 and do the things you wrote down this week.

Crazy Love – Study Guide

Chapter 9: Who Really Lives That Way?

Men and Women Saved by Grace and Who Live by Grace

Chapter 9 contains stories of men and women who lived extraordinary lives. Some of these individuals were uniquely gifted, while others were quite ordinary, but the one common thread with all of them was the gift of God's grace. When the souls of these men and women encountered God's saving grace they began to live life anew. No longer were they held captive to their sinful desires and trivial pursuits, but they experienced the freedom to live and do as God had created them. They were able to see others in need and were now willing to do something about it. They hold their money and see its potential uses for God's kingdom. They heard the commands of God and had a desire to obey. And they saw a glimpse of heaven and showed others the way.

My hope is that while reading these stories that you will *not* think that they were special people who were different than you, but you will see that in many ways they were very similar to you. They were sinners who needed a Savior and through the grace of God their souls were saved. The results were men and women who lived with focus to obey the One who saved them and were willing to step out in faith to do great things through God's grace each day. The same God they worshiped and trusted in is the same God who will work through you.

Last Chapter's Key Thought: Examine my obsession with Christ.

Key Thought for This Chapter: Examine my obedience to Christ.

For Your Mind

31. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
32. In your opinion, what were the most "amazing" testimony and the most "surprising" testimony from chapter 9? Why?
33. In 2 Corinthians the apostle Paul makes a defense against false apostles in the church who are denying Paul's genuine apostleship. Paul defends his life and ministry for Christ because what is at stake are souls that can be deceived to believe the false doctrine from these false apostles. In chapter 11 Paul moves to a poignant description of his life of suffering for the sake of the gospel. Verses 16 through 21 are a stinging condemnation on the Corinthian church through the use of sarcasm. Verses 22 through 33 describe Paul's "boasting" obedience to Christ, even at the cost of suffering and risk of death.

- a. Read through verses 22-33 and write one to three things from his list that may fit under the type of suffering Paul faced to obey God's call for him to preach the Good News to the Gentiles.
 - i. Physical suffering:
 - ii. Relational suffering:
 - iii. Mental suffering:
- b. Read verse 30. Why does Paul want to boast in his weakness?
- c. Why did Paul write what he did in verse 31?
- d. What can a believer learn about Paul's obedience to Christ from his life?

For Your Heart

34. Pick one person from the different testimonies shared in chapter 9. Place yourself in that person's shoes and circumstance.
 - a. Make a list of all of the things that went through that person's mind, or things the this person may have read or heard from others on why he/she should not do what he/she felt God was calling them to do.
 - b. Make a list of what went through that person's mind, or things this person may have read or heard from others that confirmed what he/she was called to do.
35. Take a few moments and watch the chapter 9 web video at www.crazylovebook.com.
 - a. After watching the video, write down a few thoughts or feelings that arose from this man's sharing.
36. What kind of legacy do you want to leave behind? What do you want to be known for?

For Your Life

37. Obey God's command to encourage each other in the faith. Contact someone in your small group this week and encourage them in their faith.
38. Do something "risky" for God this week.
39. As a Christian, who are three people you look up to and why?

Challenge for the Week

We can learn much from godly men and women who have journeyed on the path of faith before us. I have included links and recommendations of different biographies to listen to or read. Take some time to listen and learn from one of these Christians on how they viewed and lived for God.

Audio Biographies Through Desiring God

- This is the ministry of John Piper. Each year Dr. Piper holds a pastor's conference and he focuses a message on an influential Christian from the past. The messages are geared towards pastors, but I believe you can still gain much from listening to their lives.
- This link will let you see the list of biographies:
<http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/>
- Here's a partial list:
 - o Jonathan Edwards
 - o John Bunyan – On suffering in life
 - o Adoniram Judson – Missionary to Burma
 - o George Mueller – A man who lived for others
 - o Charles Spurgeon – “The Prince of Preachers”
 - o John G. Paton – Missionary to New Hebrides
 - o George Whitefield – You'll have to look it up under the 2009 Pastor's Conference. An amazing man created by an amazing God!
 - o Martin Luther – The man who sparked the Reformation.
 - o John Newton – Author of “Amazing Love” and describes how his life was dramatically changed.
 - o David Brainerd – An American missionary to the Native Americans.
 - o William Cowper – A man who found peace with God amidst severe depression.
 - o John Owen – A man who let his theology influence his outlook on life.

Audio Book (visit ChristianAudio.com)

- “A Short Life of Jonathan Edwards” by George Marsden
 - o “Jonathan Edwards is one of the most extraordinary figures in American history. Arguably the most brilliant theologian ever born on American soil, Edwards (1703–1758) was also a pastor, a renowned preacher, a missionary to the Native Americans, a biographer, a college president, a philosopher, a loving husband, and the father of eleven children.”
 - o This is an excellent book to read or listen to!

Books – (Thanks to Dave Lee for this List)

- George Marsden, *A Short Life of Jonathan Edwards*
- Courtney Anderson, *To the Golden Shore: The Life of Adoniram Judson*
- Sharon L. James, *My Heart in His Hands: Ann Judson of Burma* (Thanks to Lorraine Kajikawa for this recommendation.)
- Iain Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*
- Augustine, *Confessions*
- Jonathan Edwards, *The Life of David Brainerd*
- Arnold Dallimore, *George Whitefield*, 2 vols.
- John Piper, *Amazing Grace in the Life of William Wilberforce* (free PDF download from Desiring God, found [here](#))

- John Piper, *Contending For Our All* (Athanasius, John Owen, J. Gresham Machen)
- John Piper, *The Hidden Smile of God* (John Bunyan, William Cowper, David Brainerd)
- John Piper, *The Legacy of Sovereign Joy* (Augustine, Luther, Calvin)
- John Piper, *The Roots of Endurance* (John Newton, Charles Simeon, William Wilberforce)
- Noel Piper, *Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God* (Thanks to Jen Kira for this recommendation.)

***Crazy Love* – Study Guide**

Chapter 10: The Crux of the Matter

Comfort Zone

We now enter the last chapter of Francis Chan’s book, “Crazy Love.” What comes to mind when you look back on the book and study? Francis writes, “My hope and prayer is that you finish this book with hope, believing that part of your responsibility in the body of Christ is to help set the pace for the church by listening and obeying and *living* Christ” (172). It is exciting to know that God works through individuals and through His Church collectively.

As we have read in the previous nine chapters, learning, obeying, and living for Christ will inevitably lead us outside of our comfort zones. Often times our human nature wants what is easy, what is comfortable, what is secure in our minds, and what is popular. In contrast is God’s way that is counter-cultural and challenges our sinful human nature.

Francis said, “I’ve made it a commitment to consistently put myself in situations that scare me and require God to come through” (169). Have you put yourself in that situation lately? If you have, I’m sure that your faith and trust in God grew!

I hope that this journey has awakened your faith and helped your eyes to see that there is so much more to the Christian life than just going to church on Sunday, giving a check, and punching in the clock by doing Christian things. God wants to use our lives to spread His kingdom so that He will gain the glory! May you continue this adventure of leaving your comfort zone and living in the faith zone of Jesus Christ!

Last Chapter’s Key Thought: Examine my obedience to Christ.

Key Thought for This Chapter: Examine my commitment to live for Jesus.

For Your Mind

1. Write down the main point of the chapter.
 - a.
2. God has challenged you to examine your relationship with God and how it is impacting the way you live your life. Our hope is that the changes you have made will not be temporary, but life-long. The Apostle Paul wanted nothing more in life than to know Jesus Christ crucified. It was the gospel that changed his life and gave him the power to live each day for the glory of God.
 - a. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.
 - b. From verses 1-2, what did Paul proclaim to the Corinthians?

- c. List what Paul's life was like when he visited and shared with the believers in the city of Corinth. See verses 3-4.
- d. What does a believer need to remember from verses 4 and 5 when serving God?

For Your Heart

3. Watch the chapter 10 video online.
 - a. Hebrews 10:23-25 says,
"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."
 - b. Has your life made a positive impact upon the Lighthouse church family or has it had a negative one, or even a neutral one? What are ways you can begin or in other cases continue to be a positive impact upon the Lighthouse church family?
4. Do you really want to love Jesus more each day? Make a list of 5-8 different ways that you can grow in your love for Jesus.
5. What are some of the truths that have made an impact upon your life through this study?

For Your Life

6. Read Romans 14:10-12. If the Lord was to take you home tonight, would you be able to say that you did not waste your life, but lived it for God's kingdom?
7. What do you have to do before your life is over? Pursue it by being motivated by our passionate love for Jesus.

Challenge for the Week

Fast from something this week. This may mean that you fast for one meal, you fast from shopping online, you fast from watching television, you fast from working out, you fast from work (just kidding, your boss may not go for it). Use that time to spend with the Lord in prayer asking Him what He wants you to do as a result of this study. Is there a change in your lifestyle, a change in your spending habits, a change in your view of sin, a change in your heart attitudes, or a change in how you see and love God? Spend that time with the Lord thanking Him that He has chosen you for salvation and to be used for His glory and His kingdom.