

Selections from the
NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

THE STORY

THE BIBLE AS ONE CONTINUING STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE



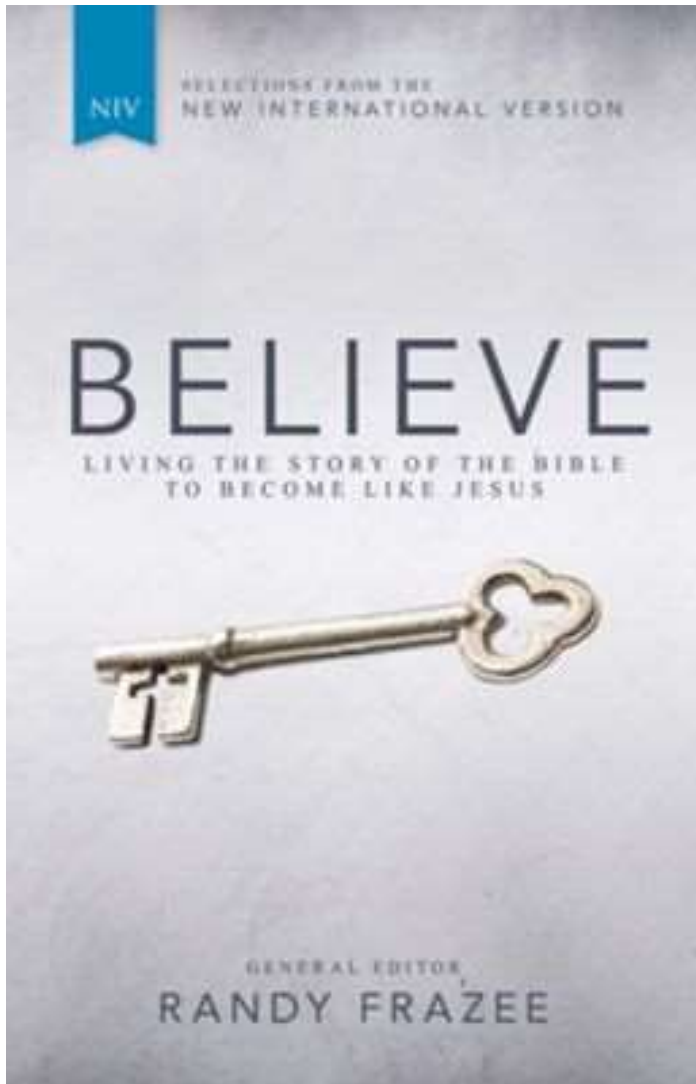
FOREWORD BY
MAX LUCADO & RANDY FRAZEE

- **31 CHAPTERS**
- **UPPER STORY**
- **LOWER STORY**
- **YOUR/MY STORY**

1. Creation: The start of the human story
2. God builds a nation
3. Joseph: From slave to deputy pharaoh
4. Deliverance
5. New commands and new covenant
6. Wandering
7. The battle begins
8. A few good men and women
9. The faith of a foreign woman
10. Standing tall, falling hard
11. From shepherd to king
12. The trials of a king
13. The king who had it all
14. A kingdom torn in two
15. God's messengers
16. The beginning of the end
17. The kingdoms fall
18. Daniel in exile
19. Return from exile
20. The queen of beauty and courage
21. Rebuilding the walls

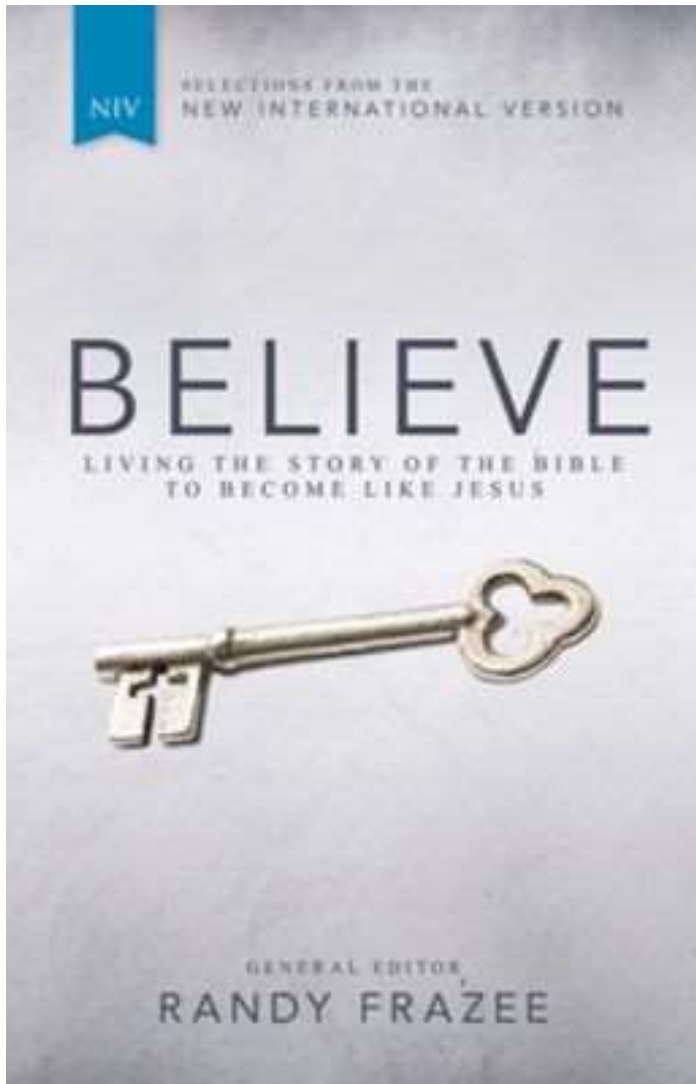


22. The birth of the King
23. Jesus ministry begins
24. No ordinary man
25. Jesus, Son of God
26. The hour of darkness
27. The resurrection
28. New beginnings
29. Paul's mission
30. Paul's final days
31. The end of time



Think, Act, and Be More Like Jesus

1. What do I believe?
2. What am I to do?
3. Who am I to become?



Think, Act, and Be More Like Jesus

1. What do I believe?
2. What am I to do?
3. Who am I to become?



CHRISTIAN'S GOAL

To be Like Christ

Romans 8

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

29 ¶ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

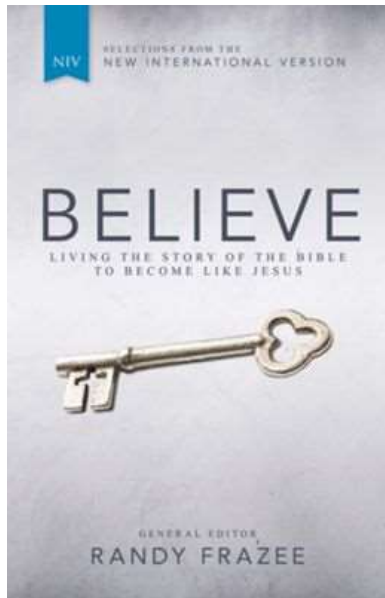
1 Corinthians 15

48 As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.

49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

2 Corinthians 3

18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.



What do I believe?

Luke 6

43 "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.

44 Each tree is recognised by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn-bushes, or grapes from briars.

45 The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

CHRISTIAN'S GOAL

To be Like Christ

THINK

Philippians 2

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Matthew 11

29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,..

Romans 13

14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ...

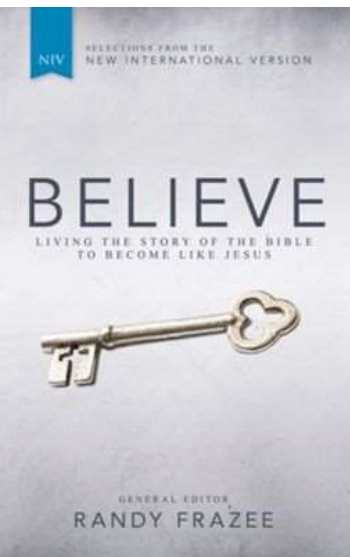


Table of Contents

Preface | 7

Introduction | 9

THINK

What Do I Believe?

Chapter 1. God | 15

Chapter 2. Personal God | 29

Chapter 3. Salvation | 45

Chapter 4. The Bible | 62

Chapter 5. Identity in Christ | 77

Chapter 6. Church | 92

Chapter 7. Humanity | 110

Chapter 8. Compassion | 127

Chapter 9. Stewardship | 142

Chapter 10. Eternity | 158

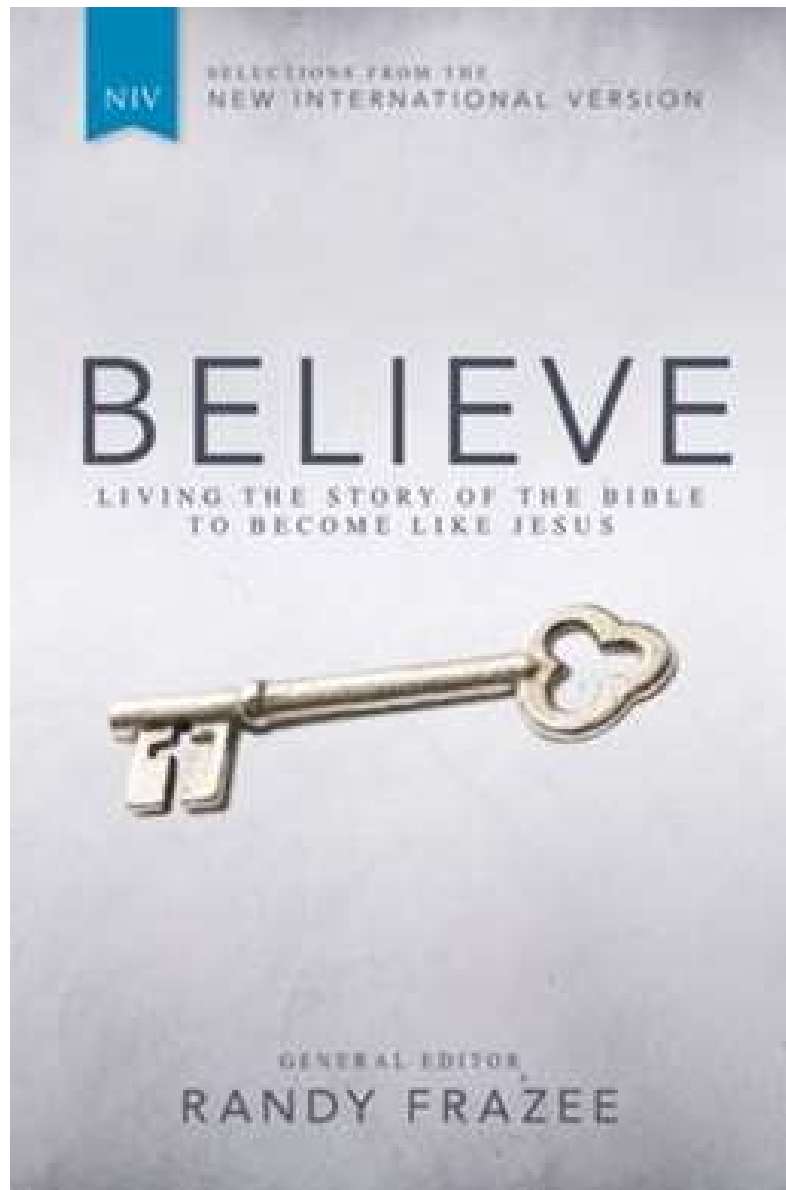


Table of Contents

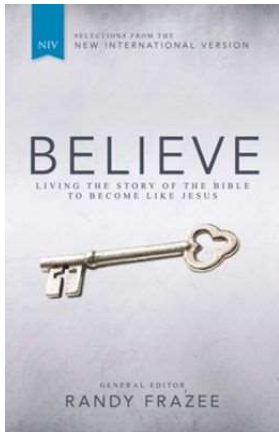
Preface | 7
Introduction | 9



THINK

What Do I Believe?

- Chapter 1. God | 15
- Chapter 2. Personal God | 29
- Chapter 3. Salvation | 45
- Chapter 4. The Bible | 62
- Chapter 5. Identity in Christ | 77
- Chapter 6. Church | 92
- Chapter 7. Humanity | 110
- Chapter 8. Compassion | 127
- Chapter 9. Stewardship | 142
- Chapter 10. Eternity | 158



What should I do?

1 Corinthians 9

24 ¶ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last for ever.

26 Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air.

27 No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

CHRISTIAN'S GOAL

To be Like Christ

THINK

John 6

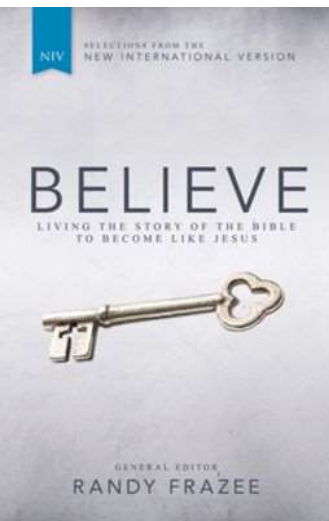
28 ¶ Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

ACT

Romans 12

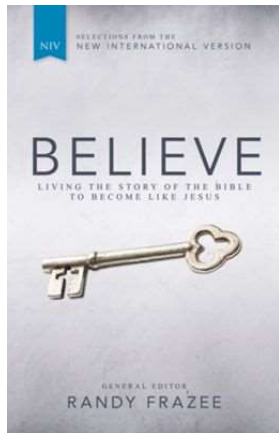
1 ¶ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.



ACT

What Should I Do?

- Chapter 11. Worship | 175
- Chapter 12. Prayer | 192
- Chapter 13. Bible Study | 209
- Chapter 14. Single-Mindedness | 225
- Chapter 15. Total Surrender | 240
- Chapter 16. Biblical Community | 257
- Chapter 17. Spiritual Gifts | 275
- Chapter 18. Offering My Time | 289
- Chapter 19. Giving My Resources | 304
- Chapter 20. Sharing My Faith | 320

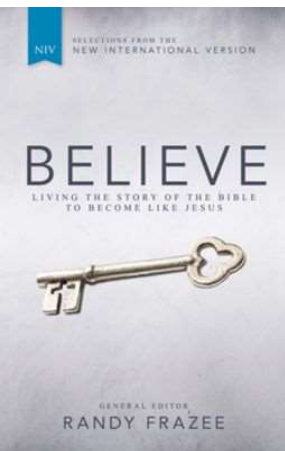


Who am I to become?

John 15

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.





BE

Who Am I Becoming?

Chapter 21. Love | 339

Chapter 22. Joy | 353

Chapter 23. Peace | 369

Chapter 24. Self-Control | 385

Chapter 25. Hope | 401

Chapter 26. Patience | 418

Chapter 27. Kindness/Goodness | 434

Chapter 28. Faithfulness | 451

Chapter 29. Gentleness | 466

Chapter 30. Humility | 481

Epilogue | 499

Chart of References | 500

**CHRISTIAN'S GOAL
To be Like Christ**

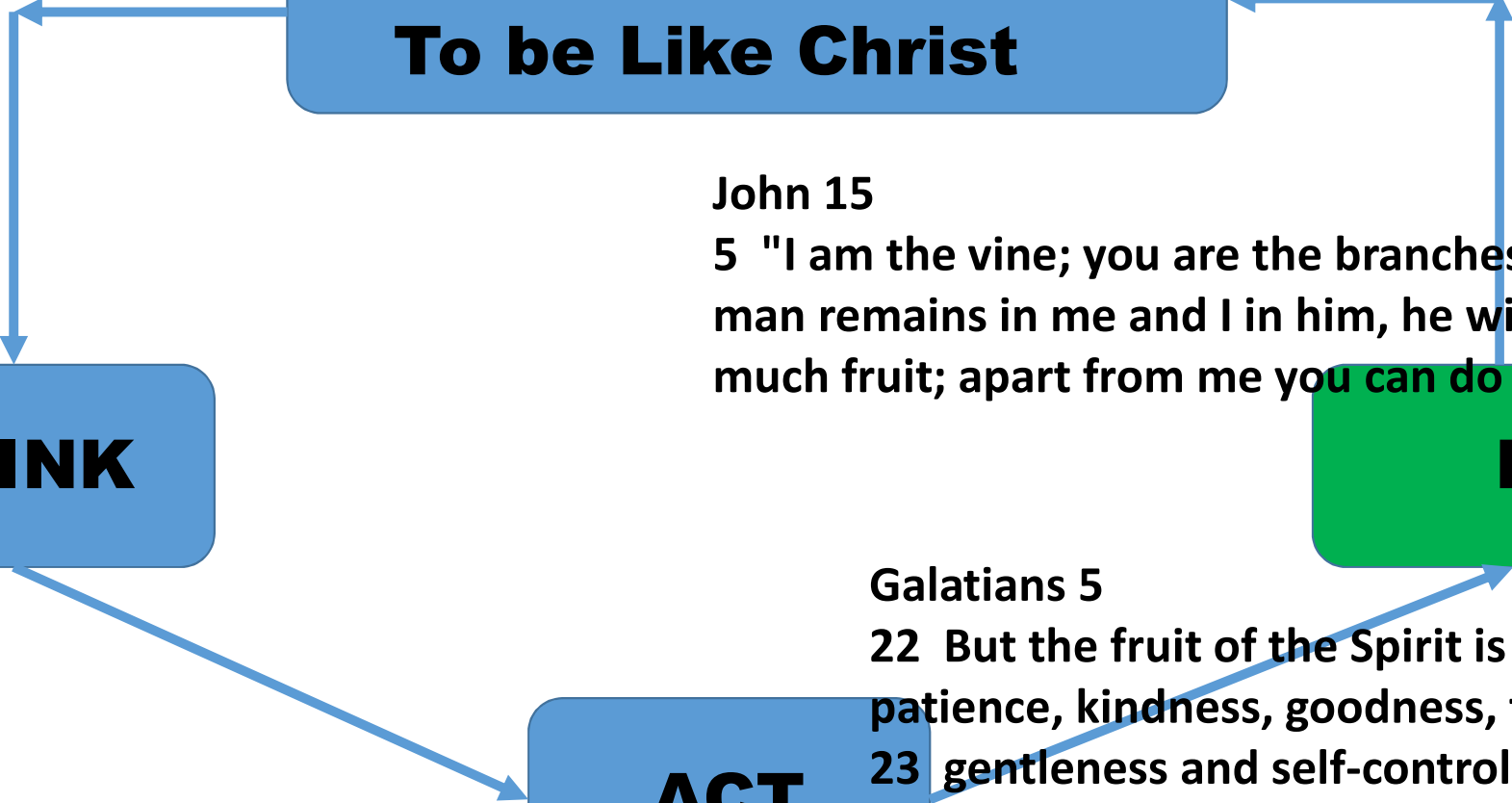
THINK

ACT

BE

John 15
5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Galatians 5
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness and self-control.



**CHRISTIAN'S GOAL
To be Like Christ**

2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

THINK

GOD

BE

ACT



What about the poor and the oppressed?

KEY IDEA
I believe God calls of Christians to show compassion to people in need.

KEY VERSE
Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the needy. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. Psalm 82:3-4

ON I BELIEVE

Our belief in humanity calls on us to see people as God sees them, and our compassion gives a new faith by compelling us to feel their pain. Compassion literally means "suffer with." God calls us to see the plight of people who are hurting and suffer with them to the very end. It doesn't mean we can fix the problem, but if we do, we can enter into their pain. Before we act to practice this belief, we must believe in God's call on the life of Christ followers. When we believe that in our hearts, we will show compassion to all people, especially to those in need. This is not a "do as you would be done by" command from the Lord. God himself is merciful and full of compassion. This is where our journey into compassion starts.

In this chapter we will read about:

- God: Full of Justice and Compassion
- Israel: Called to Compassion
- Jesus: Model of Compassion
- Following: The Ongoing Call to Compassion

GENE FEEL OF JUSTICE AND COMPASSION

Throughout their history, the Israelites struggled to stay true to God. Sometimes they followed God, but those periods of faithfulness were followed by times of sin and rebellion. But God's love for his people was always evident. His compassion was constant as he offered the Israelites a way out of the misery caused by their own sin. In this passage, the Israelites are back in the promised land after suffering years of exile and hardship. The Israelites asked the people to stand in their feet as they rehearsed together the history of God's compassion toward them from the very beginning of time until that very moment.

As you read this passage from Nehemiah 9, look for some of the ways God showed both compassion and justice to the Israelites.

The Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. Those of Israel bowed low

ON I BELIEVE

Our belief in humanity calls on us to see people as God sees them, and our compassion gives a new faith by compelling us to feel their pain. Compassion literally means "suffer with." God calls us to see the plight of people who are hurting and suffer with them to the very end. It doesn't mean we can fix the problem, but if we do, we can enter into their pain. Before we act to practice this belief, we must believe in God's call on the life of Christ followers. When we believe that in our hearts, we will show compassion to all people, especially to those in need. This is not a "do as you would be done by" command from the Lord. God himself is merciful and full of compassion. This is where our journey into compassion starts.

In this chapter we will read about:

- God: Full of Justice and Compassion
- Israel: Called to Compassion
- Jesus: Model of Compassion
- Following: The Ongoing Call to Compassion

GENE FEEL OF JUSTICE AND COMPASSION

Throughout their history, the Israelites struggled to stay true to God. Sometimes they followed God, but those periods of faithfulness were followed by times of sin and rebellion. But God's love for his people was always evident. His compassion was constant as he offered the Israelites a way out of the misery caused by their own sin. In this passage, the Israelites are back in the promised land after suffering years of exile and hardship. The Israelites asked the people to stand in their feet as they rehearsed together the history of God's compassion toward them from the very beginning of time until that very moment.

As you read this passage from Nehemiah 9, look for some of the ways God showed both compassion and justice to the Israelites.

The Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. Those of Israel bowed low

what you believe.

Key Verse

The key verse for each be most important Scripture about the subject. The 30 key verses are also to commit to memory, so you have the power of God's Word at the time you need it.

Our Map

The Our Map section originates from the belief, practice or virtue you want to explore. You will get the big picture of what the chapter is about and a view of the topics that will be covered.

Transitions

The transition paragraphs connect Scripture text appear in italics. They are written to guide you through the chapter and connect the dots between the story. The transitions have been fully crafted to avoid telling you what to believe; it is important that you believe; it is important that you believe. These segments are designed to bring you into the meaning and message of the Scripture.

Key Stories

Look for Key Story symbols at the beginning and end of one Old Testament and one New Testament story in each chapter. The Bible characters in these stories best exemplify that belief, practice or virtue.

10-11-11-12
The one who stands on the far side of the sea...
"When the Son of Man comes in his glory..."
"The Son of Man will sit on his throne..."
"Whoever has ears to hear..."
"The Son of Man will come like a thief in the night..."
"Whoever has eyes to see..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."

Core Truths

As you read the Scripture text, you will see core truths or main ideas bolded. The core truth is the essence of the message of that Scripture and helps you understand why that particular passage was selected to convey that truth.

Chapter 8: Compassion | 218
"When the Son of Man comes in his glory..."
"The Son of Man will sit on his throne..."
"Whoever has ears to hear..."
"The Son of Man will come like a thief in the night..."
"Whoever has eyes to see..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."

Reflection Questions

There are five reflection questions embedded in each chapter. These questions and suggestions are there to help you get the most out of your reading. When you come to a question, pause and reflect. You will grow to understand the Bible better if you take the time to explore the issues raised by these questions. You can record your answers and observations in a journal, the companion study guide or right in your book. Then talk about your discoveries with someone. Sharing your thoughts with others is a great way to dig deeper into what you've learned.

Chapter 8: Compassion | 218
"When the Son of Man comes in his glory..."
"The Son of Man will sit on his throne..."
"Whoever has ears to hear..."
"The Son of Man will come like a thief in the night..."
"Whoever has eyes to see..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."
"The Son of Man will be like a man..."
"Whoever has a heart to understand..."

Chapter 8: Compassion | 141

dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

JAMES 2:19-23

What are the attitudes that James advocates? How can you adopt those same attitudes?

WHAT WE BELIEVE

What about the poor and injustice? We begin by taking our cue from God himself. He showed the ultimate compassion toward humanity by sending Jesus as a sacrifice when we did not deserve it. Throughout Israel's history, time and time again, God showed amazing compassion to rescue his people and provide for their needs. When we look back on our own lives, we will see the same pattern.

Israel was given laws to govern them regarding how to show compassion to each other and to strangers. The story of Ruth provides a beautiful example of the spirit of these laws lived out. And Jesus, the ultimate example of one who suffered for our sakes, calls believers to a life of compassion not because the law demands it but because God's love in us compels us. Living such as life begins when we embrace the belief in our heads and our hearts that God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

What We Believe

At the conclusion of each chapter, the What We Believe section wraps it all up. The big ideas of the belief, practice or attitude are recapped in a helpful summary that you can recall everything you learned in the chapter and put it all together in a cohesive way.

BELIEVE

LIVING THE STORY OF THE BIBLE
TO BECOME LIKE JESUS



IDENTITY IN CHRIST

I believe I am significant
because of my position
as a child of God.