

LEADER GUIDE

ELIZABETH WOODSON

LIVE FREE

A STUDY OF
GALATIANS

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LEADER GUIDE

Welcome! Before you read any further, we want to say how thankful we are for you, the leader. Thank you for your willingness to dive into Scripture, brew the coffee, place the chairs, and set aside the time regularly to meet with other women.

Live Free is a video- and discussion-based Bible study from Elizabeth Woodson. The teaching videos were filmed in Nashville, Tennessee. This Bible study book is designed to be used in a specific way, with the days of personal study walking you through the three-step study process of observation, interpretation, and application. However, the homework will also prepare you for two other essential components of this study: small group discussion and video teaching.

Our study of the Bible happens best in community. Your time in community with Elizabeth through the video teachings and with your small group will help resolve the questions that arose during your personal study.

Our goal is for this leader guide to help you feel equipped to facilitate and guide your Bible study group gatherings in a way that fosters deep conversation and prayer for you and the women you're leading. We want to encourage you to use this study however it works best for you and your group. If you want to follow this leader guide to the letter, do that! If you want to do your own thing, feel free! Our goal is to give you all the tools you might need, but we are certain God has ordained your time with your specific group in your specific setting.

We are grateful for you and praying for you as you lead this study.

Lifeway Women

WEEKLY GROUP MEETING

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

8 Group Meetings • Meeting Length: 1.5 hours

SESSION ONE—Introduction: Distribute Bible study books, get to know one another, and watch the Session One video.

SESSION TWO—Discuss the Session Two personal Bible study and watch the Session Two video.

SESSION THREE—Discuss the Session Three personal Bible study and watch the Session Three video.

SESSION FOUR—Discuss the Session Four personal Bible study and watch the Session Four video.

SESSION FIVE—Discuss the Session Five personal Bible study and watch the Session Five video.

SESSION SIX—Discuss the Session Six personal Bible study and watch the Session Six video.

SESSION SEVEN—Discuss the Session Seven personal Bible study and watch the Session Seven video.

SESSION EIGHT—Discuss the Session Eight personal Bible study and watch the Session Eight video.



HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR GROUP TIME

Each group session contains the following elements. We've included a suggested amount of time based on a 1.5 hour group meeting. Adjust as you need to for the time you have together!

GATHER (10 MINUTES) This is a time to greet and welcome everyone and to get them talking. In the first session, you're provided with some general discussion questions. In the subsequent sessions, you'll notice a list of questions to help participants review the previous week's personal study. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions based on the needs of your group.

DISCUSS (35 MINUTES) You'll find a suggestion of questions for each week in this Leader Guide. Pick and choose the ones you want to discuss with your group. These questions are designed to help you facilitate conversation around the week's Bible study and personal reflection. As you go through your own study during the week, put a star by any questions or statements you might want to discuss with your group.

WATCH (35 MINUTES) During this time play the teaching video, encouraging the women to take notes on the Viewer Guide page for that specific session.

CLOSE (10 MINUTES) Close your time in prayer for one another.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU LEAD.

HOW TO WATCH YOUR VIDEOS. The videos for this study are available for streaming through the digital access code on the last page of your Bible study book. Look for the cardstock page labeled “Here’s Your Video Access” and follow the two steps that prompt you to enter your unique redemption code to gain your video streaming access.

If your group doesn’t have adequate Internet connection for video streaming, DVD sets are available for purchase at lifeway.com/livefree.



Each video is intended to be viewed after completing the accompanying week of personal study. We strongly recommend you use the teaching videos as a part of this study, but you can still discover truth from Scripture and grow in your walk with God by simply doing the print portion if your setting doesn’t allow for video.

GET THE WORD OUT. Be sure to advertise the study early and utilize all methods for getting the word out. Post it on your church’s website, send emails to potential attendees, and promote it on all forms of social media. It’s best to start advertising the study four to six weeks before it begins. The study is seven sessions long, which means you will meet seven or eight times. Visit lifeway.com/livefree for free promotional materials to help get the word out about your study.

SCHEDULE. Be sure to make everyone aware of the schedule ahead of time and start promptly each week to honor everyone’s time. In your group time, you will watch the teaching video together and discuss what you’re learning. You’ll also be encouraged to spend a good bit of time in prayer.

STAY IN TOUCH. Prepare a sign-up sheet with space for names, email addresses, and phone numbers. You may also include information like birthdays, social media handles, and favorite candy so that you can foster community among group members.

GET COZY. Make an effort to create a comfortable environment for group meetings. Arrange chairs in a circle to encourage conversation. If your group is large, you may want to watch the teaching video together and then split into smaller groups for the discussion

time. If you choose to do so, enlist discussion leaders for each group to keep the conversation moving and focused.

CHILDCARE. Be sure to check with participants to see if childcare is needed and organize leaders and space for the children in advance.

BIBLE STUDY BOOKS. Each participant will need a Bible study book. Make sure you leave plenty of time for all the books to be ordered and received between announcing and starting your Bible study. Consider offering a scholarship or buy one-give-one option for those who cannot afford a study book on their own.

EARLY PREP. We encourage you to read through the entire leader guide before the first session and evaluate how this will work best for your group. Highlight specific questions from the leader guide you want to make sure you cover during your group time. We recommend watching the teaching video sessions prior to your meeting, taking note of anything you may want to highlight from the teaching. And be sure you stay on top of your own personal study between each meeting! We've left room in the leader guide for you to write down additional talking points and questions you want to pull in from the personal study.

PERSONAL STUDY. Between each meeting, there are five days of personal study to complete in the Bible study book.

PRAYER. Most importantly, be sure to pray for the women who attend the study. And pray for yourself as you prepare to lead. Ask God to draw the women closer to Him as they learn more about the freedom the gospel brings.

EVALUATE. At the end of each group session, ask yourself: *What went well? What could be improved? Did you see women's lives transformed? Did your group grow closer to Christ and to one another?* Also, do a final evaluation at the close of the study.

CONNECT. Find ways to interact and stay engaged with each member of your group throughout the study. Make use of social media, email, text messages, and handwritten notes to encourage them. Continue these connections even after the study ends.

Next, we've provided a discussion guide for each session. Remember these are simply suggestions for how to use your time together. We want to empower you as you lead to do what is best for your group!

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Session One

INTRODUCTION

GATHER Welcome participants to the study and distribute Bible study books to each group member. Encourage discussion by asking the following questions:

Invite each woman to introduce herself and share basic get-to-know-you information.

How are you with this book of the Bible? What do you know about this book (its author/themes) or any key verses?

WATCH the teaching video for Session One. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session One Video Viewer Guide pages 20-21.

DISCUSS Elizabeth's video teaching, using these questions as a starting point:

What drew you to studying the book of Galatians?

What's one thing Elizabeth said that stuck with you from the video?

Elizabeth described why Paul wrote Galatians, speaking to the cultural context of the book. How do you see the same needs in the modern church? In your own life?

Ask a volunteer to give a quick summary of the key themes for the book of Galatians, which Elizabeth described during the video. (Be prepared to do this yourself if no one volunteers!) Which of these themes stands out to you as something you're curious to learn more about?

CLOSE Lead the group in a closing prayer, asking God to open up His Word to you in new ways over the coming weeks. Pray for prepared hearts, diligent minds, and the vulnerability to grow together.

REMIND Encourage group members to complete their personal study before the next session.

Session Two

PAUL'S DEFENSE OF GOSPEL FREEDOM (GAL. 1)

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Ask participants to share which day of study they found most interesting and which one had the most impact on them.

Remind your group that Elizabeth intentionally leaves some questions unresolved to encourage personal study and engagement with God's Word. What questions do you have after this week's study?

Ask a few women to share the summary statements they came up with for the main idea of Galatians (p. 24).

READ GALATIANS 1 ALOUD.

DISCUSS the personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide. We've included one observation/interpretation question and one reflection question set from each day of study, but there may be others you want to discuss as well.

1. Have a volunteer read Ephesians 2:1-5. How does this passage help you understand why Paul says we needed to be rescued (1:4)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: Look back to Paul's description of God the Father and Jesus Christ in 1:1-4. What are some practical ways you can glorify God for His gracious gift? Give one or two examples.

2. How does comparing 1:7 in the CSB and NIV help you understand the impact of the "different gospels" the Galatian Christians encountered?

REFLECT & RESPOND: What are some examples of "different gospels" that are being taught today, either from church pulpits or online? What is the danger of believing these modern-day false gospels? How can we be more discerning about the spiritual information we hear in these spaces?

3. What was the goal of God's work in Paul's life?

REFLECT & RESPOND: What tends to make us believe that our past actions can prevent God from using us for ministry? In these moments, how can Paul's testimony encourage us?

4. How does the Judean church respond to reports about Paul's ministry (1:22-24)? In light of Paul's life before Christ, why is their response significant?

REFLECT & RESPOND: After his conversion, Paul spends many years in solitude with God, learning gospel truth from Him. Why do we as believers need to spend time in silence and solitude with God? What obstacles prevent us from regularly practicing this spiritual habit? Which do you struggle with most?

5. WRAP-UP REFLECTION: What did God teach you about Himself through Galatians 1?

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Two. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Two Video Viewer Guide page 43.

CLOSE your group time in prayer.

Session Three

FREEDOM FROM THE LAW (GAL. 2)

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Ask participants to share which day of study they found most interesting and which one had the most impact on them.

Discuss observations and thoughts around the repeated words and themes from this week's read through of Galatians (p. 46).

READ GALATIANS 2 ALOUD.

DISCUSS the personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

1. What reason does Paul give as to why he and Titus resisted the demands of the "false brothers" (2:5)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: What is the benefit of partnering with others in ministry? Who are the people you would consider your "coworkers" in the faith? Pray for God to strengthen your relationships. If you are in need of ministry coworkers, pray for God to give you wisdom for how you can meet other like-minded believers and the courage to take the first step of faith in response to what He tells you to do.

2. Share the definition you came up with for entrusted (2:7). Based on your definition, describe the weight of responsibility that accompanies Paul's ministry assignment.

REFLECT & RESPOND: Ask someone to read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 aloud. What ministry have we been entrusted with, according to 2 Corinthians 5:17-21? What are some ways we can be more intentional about stewarding this responsibility well? Give one or two examples.

3. Describe how Peter's actions "deviate[d] from the truth of the gospel" (2:14).

REFLECT & RESPOND: Why is it difficult for us to offer others the same grace we have received from God? What truth from Scripture can we internalize to help us resist the temptation to withhold grace from other people? Read Ephesians 2:8-9 for help with your answer.

4. If we don't earn God's favor by obeying His commands, what is our motivation for obeying Him (2:17-20)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: What are some actions we perform or abstain from because we believe it makes us more acceptable to God? What is the downside to embracing these legalistic behaviors? Why is it important for us to remember that God blesses us with salvation because of His love for us, not our good works?

5. WRAP-UP REFLECTION: What did God teach you about Himself through Galatians 2?

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Three. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Three Video Viewer Guide page 65.

CLOSE your group time in prayer.

Session Four

FREEDOM BY FAITH (GAL. 3:1-14)

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Ask participants to share which day of study they found most interesting and which one had the most impact on them.

Discuss responses to the Day One activity and question (p. 68).

READ GALATIANS 3:1-14 ALOUD.

DISCUSS the personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

1. Have someone read Romans 4:3-5. What is the difference between righteousness being credited to Abraham and Abraham earning righteousness?

REFLECT & RESPOND: Think about a current life situation in which you need to be like Abraham and believe God. What is one practical step you can take this week to walk in obedience to God's direction?

2. What do we need to do to receive the blessing God promised to Abraham (3:9)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: What do you learn about faith from Abraham's actions in Genesis 22:11-19 and God's response? How does this story help you understand what it means to live by faith?

3. Read 3:11-12 in the NLT and then discuss the chart on page 79.

REFLECT & RESPOND: Why is it important for us to talk about sin and the consequences for not following God's law before we talk about the good news of Christ rescuing us? What do we miss out on if we don't do this?

4. What did Christ's sacrifice accomplish for the Gentiles (3:14)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: Spend time in prayer together, thanking Jesus for His gracious sacrifice on your behalf.

5. **WRAP-UP REFLECTION:** What did God teach you about Himself through Galatians 3:1-14?

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Four. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Four Video Viewer Guide page 87.

CLOSE your group time in prayer.

Session Five

FREE THROUGH CHRIST (GAL. 3:15–4:7)

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Ask participants to share which day of study they found most interesting and which one had the most impact on them.

Discuss observations and takeaways from the Day One activity (p. 90).

READ GALATIANS 3:15–4:7 ALOUD.

DISCUSS the personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

1. Why isn't the basis for Abraham receiving the inheritance both the law and the promise (3:18)? Read Ephesians 2:8–9 as you discuss.

REFLECT & RESPOND: What are some ways you have seen God be faithful in your life? Share one or two examples. How does a regular remembrance of God's faithfulness help us trust Him more?

2. In 3:22, Paul shares how the law acts like a mirror that shows us a reflection of ourselves that, on our own, we can't get away from or change. What specifically does the law show us about ourselves? Read Romans 3:9–20 for help as you discuss.

REFLECT & RESPOND: Why is it necessary for us to regularly reflect on our own life and confess any sin that we have committed? Have someone look up and read 1 John 1:9. What might prevent us from doing this? How does unconfessed sin impact your relationship with God? How does it impact your relationship with others?

3. In 3:28, Paul mentions three different groups. What relational dynamic within these groups has dissolved? Discuss why.

REFLECT & RESPOND: Paul closes this section by highlighting the unity and oneness that should characterize the church. How is this characteristic true of the church, both local and global? How can we do better with living out our identity as one unified body? What steps do you need to take to pursue oneness in your church community?

4. When did God send Christ into the world (4:4)? What does this teach us about the intentionality of God's plan of redemption?

REFLECT & RESPOND: Ask someone to look up and read Mark 14:32-38. What does Jesus's use of the phrase "Abba, Father" in this passage communicate about His relationship with God the Father? Paul says the Holy Spirit who dwells in us calls out to God the Father with this same phrase (4:6). What does this communicate about the closeness of our relationship with God? Is this how you view your relationship with God? Explain why or why not.

5. **WRAP-UP REFLECTION:** What did God teach you about Himself through Galatians 3:15-4:7?

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Five. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Five Video Viewer Guide page 109.

CLOSE your group time in prayer.

Session Six

CHILDREN OF THE FREE WOMAN (GAL. 4:8-31)

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Ask participants to share which day of study they found most interesting and which one had the most impact on them.

Encourage each group member to share the memory verse she chose and why (p. 112).

READ GALATIANS 4:8-31 ALOUD.

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

1. Which is a more serious offense—worshiping idols when you don't know the truth or choosing to return to your idols after knowing the truth about God? Explain your answer.

REFLECT & RESPOND: What are some modern-day idols we worship? Why are we tempted to go back to our idols after having experienced the power of God in our lives?

2. Think about the pain level of labor pains. What does Paul's use of this phrase communicate about his concern for the Galatians (4:19)? What is driving his concern? Have someone read Ephesians 4:11-15 for help with your discussion.

REFLECT & RESPOND: As believers, we are called to make disciples, which requires us to spiritually invest in someone else's life. What does it look like for us to help someone grow into spiritual maturity? How can we as disciple makers stay committed when, like Paul, we see those we are discipling straying away from the faith?

3. Take a few minutes to share how you filled in the chart on page 121 to summarize the details given about Hagar and Sarah.

REFLECT & RESPOND: Have you ever chosen to fix a situation in your life instead of waiting on God to fix it? What do we miss out on when we don't wait on God? How can we encourage ourselves to keep waiting, even when it's hard?

4. What are the eternal implications of the Galatians, and us, being children of the free woman (4:31)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: How should we respond to the grace we've received? What is one thing you can do to reflect this truth in your walk with Christ?

5. **WRAP-UP REFLECTION:** What did God teach you about Himself through Galatians 4:8-31?

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Six. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Six Video Viewer Guide page 129.

CLOSE your group time in prayer.

Session Seven

SPIRIT-LED FREEDOM (GAL. 5)

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Ask participants to share which day of study they found most interesting and which one had the most impact on them.

If anyone in your group noted new questions on page 132, discuss those at this time.

READ GALATIANS 5 ALOUD.

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

1. How is our faith in Christ displayed in our lives (5:6)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: In what way do we as Christians elevate our religious practices over love for others? Give a few examples.

2. What is the ultimate goal of our freedom? What happens if we lose sight of this goal (5:14-15)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: How does the world's definition of freedom differ from the freedom we have in Christ? When faced with the temptation to prioritize your personal desires over what glorifies God, how can you resist?

3. Why is there a battle between the Spirit and our flesh (5:17-18)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: What biblical encouragement can we hold onto when we experience this battle in our lives? Have a couple of volunteers look up and read 1 Corinthians 10:13 and Philippians 2:13 to add to your discussion.

4. Discuss each aspect of the fruit of the Spirit and its opposite from the chart you filled out on page 144.

REFLECT & RESPOND: How do you see the fruit of the Spirit growing in your life? What does it look like for you to “keep in step with the Spirit”?

5. **WRAP-UP REFLECTION:** What did God teach you about Himself through Galatians 5?

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Seven. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Seven Video Viewer Guide page 149.

CLOSE your group time in prayer.

Session Eight

LIVE FREE (GAL. 6)

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Ask participants to share which day of study they found most interesting and which one had the most impact on them.

READ GALATIANS 6 ALOUD.

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

1. What temptation(s) might we face as we try to help someone caught in sin (6:1)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: In order for us to carry one another's burdens we must be willing to ask for help or give help to a brother or sister in need. What are some things that hinder us from doing this? Which ones do you struggle with? How would the church be different if we did a better job of emulating Paul's words in 6:2?

2. What can we do to persevere in our efforts to please the Spirit (6:9-10)?

REFLECT & RESPOND: Think about one or two people who belong to your household of faith (6:10). What is one practical way you can serve them this week? Share your response with the group and then follow up to share about your experience.

3. Read 6:15-18 again. According to Paul, how will the Galatians experience the peace, mercy, and grace of God? What do these verses communicate about Paul's hope for the Galatians?

REFLECT & RESPOND: Take a moment to reflect on Paul final words in 6:15-18. Based on Paul's words, how can you experience the peace, mercy, and grace of God?

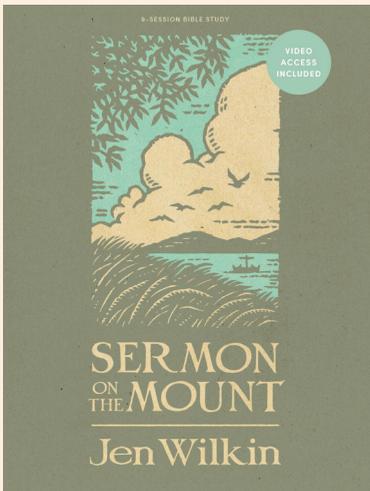
4. As you wrap up your time together in Galatians, share responses to the following reflection questions from page 165-166: *How has the book of Galatians transformed your view of God? How has it transformed your understanding of who you're called to be as an image bearer? What are your three main takeaways from this study? How will they help you LIVE FREE?*

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Eight. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Eight Video Viewer Guide page 169.

CLOSE your group time in prayer. Give your group members the opportunity to voice their own prayers of praise and gratitude to God for everything He has revealed to them through His Word.

FINISHING WELL

NEXT STEPS Even after the study concludes, follow up and challenge women to stay involved through another Bible study, church opportunity, or anything that will continue their spiritual growth and friendships. Provide several options of ministry opportunities the members can participate in individually or as a group to apply what they have learned through this study.



What's Next?

If you enjoyed this study, check out *Sermon on the Mount* by Jen Wilkin.

lifeway.com/sermononthemount



INTRODUCING BIBLE STUDIES with VIDEO ACCESS INCLUDED!

As trends in media consumption changed from DVDs to streaming videos, Lifeway made the decision to invest in technology that would allow for Bible studies to be accessed through mobile devices and smart TVs in addition to our website.

The concept of a Bible study book with video access allows us to use the technology to give all participants easier access to teaching videos. This will alleviate a concern we have heard from many group leaders of members who stop coming to their group after they miss a week of study.

How will customers access the videos that come with their Bible study book with video access?

There is a unique access code printed in each Bible study book. They will access their video content at my.lifeway.com or through the Lifeway On Demand app.

How long will they have access to the videos that come with their Bible study book?

There is no expiration date on the video access that comes with their Bible study book. They'll be able to access it as long as it is available through our Lifeway On Demand video apps.

What are the benefits of video access being included in each Bible study book?

- This provides more flexibility for group meeting time. Groups now have the option to have group members watch video sessions outside of group meetings to allow more time for discussion.
- If a group member misses a weekly group meeting due to sickness or travel, they will be able to access the video content on their own and continue in their study.
- Group members can re-watch video sessions that were particularly impactful on their own time.

- This simplifies what a group leader needs to facilitate Bible study. You'll now get everything you need with just the Bible study book.
- Our goal is to provide an affordable option for both individuals and churches who are looking for Bible study options.

What do churches and individuals need to lead a group?

Each group member will need a Bible study book, which will include video access. There is also a DVD option for groups who want a non-streaming viewing option. In addition, select studies provide a Video Streaming – Group option for groups who choose not to use the Bible study books. For the best experience, we recommend each group member have a Bible study book.

When do group leaders need a DVD Set?

Because the Bible study book includes video streaming access, the purchase of the DVD set is optional (not essential) for group leaders. This option is for groups who may not have reliable streaming internet access.