

Crazy Love Study Guide

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enLIGHTening hearts and minds

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the HOLY BIBLE, ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION

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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 deserving.” 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).