

BIBLE
STUDIES
FOR LIFE

DO OVER

EXPERIENCE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

SAMPLE



BEN MANDRELL

Why did I do that? I need a do over.

Do you ever wish your life had a big rewind button? Any time things go awry, just hit the rewind button and do it over.

In the world of golf, this concept is known as a “mulligan.” Anyone with a set of clubs knows the beauty of the mulligan. When the ball goes astray, drop another and get on with it.

In your personal life, what do you constantly wish you could replay?

In the Book of Romans, the apostle Paul argued persuasively that Jesus Christ alone can cancel a person’s past. Through the blood of Jesus, new mercies are available each and every day.

- ▶ Feel tethered to an embarrassing outburst?
- ▶ Ashamed by the way you handled a criticism?
- ▶ Wish you could re-do the decisions that led you to this point?

If so, this study is for you. This Savior is for you. Jesus offers us the do over we’ve been looking for.



Ben Mandrell

Ben Mandrell serves as senior pastor of Englewood Baptist Church in Jackson, TN. As husband to one, father to four, and pastor to many, Ben has come to realize his enormous need for do overs. In addition to leading Englewood, Ben’s happy moments include beach retreats with his wife, jumping on the trampoline with his kids, reading classic books, and encouraging couples to invest in their marriages.

Ben is a graduate of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (M. Div.) and is working on a Doctor of Ministry degree from Union University. You can follow him on Twitter: [@BenMandrell](https://twitter.com/BenMandrell).

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SESSION 1

A PROBLEM YOU CAN'T SOLVE



*When have you recently wanted
a do over?*

THE POINT

You can't meet God's standard on your own.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Jay was no handyman. He knew that, but he also had confidence this project would raise his reputation. Hanging before him was a monstrous mirror, stuck to the wall with indestructible tacks. Even when the screws failed to hit the studs, Jay went the extra mile and drove in those silly anchor things. A 9.9 earthquake could not bring this baby down. His wife would be so impressed. And she was.

Until 3:37 a.m. when the crash caused them to spring from the bed and flick on the lights. Beams of light sprinted across every section of the hardwood floor. The once beautiful glass was shattered. The floor sparkled from corner to corner with broken shards.

This is the portrait of planet Earth painted by Paul in the opening section of the Book of Romans. The whole planet has fallen. Creation calls out for a do over. A look around shows people lonely and wounded; their lives filled with pain. That's the backdrop of this potent book, but the good news comes on the heels of the bad. God has not left us marooned.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Romans 1:16-17; 2:5-11; 3:9-12 (HCSB)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek.

17 For in it God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.

2:5 But because of your hardness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment is revealed.

6 He will repay each one according to his works:

7 eternal life to those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality;

8 but wrath and indignation to those who are self-seeking and disobey the truth but are obeying unrighteousness;

9 affliction and distress for every human being who does evil, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek;

10 but glory, honor, and peace for everyone who does what is good, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek.

11 There is no favoritism with God.

3:9 What then? Are we any better? Not at all! For we have previously charged that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin,

10 as it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one.

11 There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.

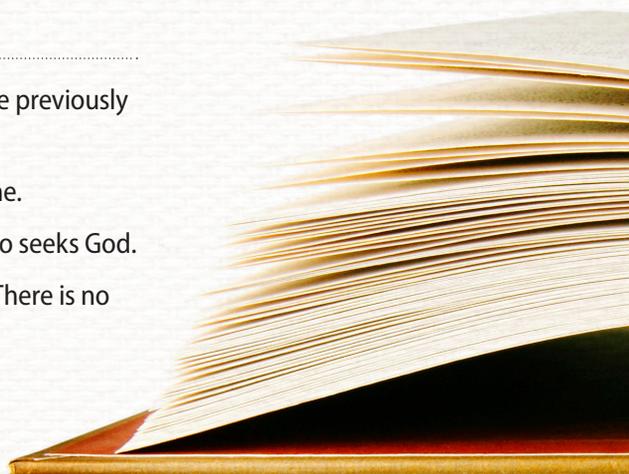
12 All have turned away; all alike have become useless. There is no one who does what is good, not even one.

Key Words

gospel (v. 16)—This word literally means “good news” and is a term for Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.

hardness (v. 5)—This term describes a person who rejects the truth of God and refuses to repent.

day of wrath (v. 5)—This phrase refers to a personal, final judgment of each individual before God.



Romans 1:16-17

Have you played the game Operation®? The way to heal “Cavity Sam” is to demonstrate flawless and fine motor skills. With any slight nudge the buzzer sounds, the nose blazes red, and your operation is over. My children love this game. I detest it. The moment I fail, I am disqualified.

In Romans 1:16-17, Paul reminded believers in Rome of the gospel's power. What makes the gospel powerful? It reveals God's righteousness and that Jesus makes that righteousness available to us.

- ▶ **Righteousness from God is available through Jesus.** Paul began Romans with a focus on the gospel of Jesus Christ (see Rom. 1:1-3). Jesus is the righteousness for which we have longed.
- ▶ **Righteousness from God cannot be earned.** Martin Luther, the 16th-century reformer, recognized Jesus lived a perfect life and all human beings are called to match His moral precision. Luther nearly drove himself mad attempting it. We can know, as Martin Luther ultimately discovered, that perfection has been achieved and Jesus Christ is the One who achieved it for us.
- ▶ **Righteousness is received by believing.** Most people on earth are lost, meandering through life without direction. Since their conscience condemns them, they enter into a contest to be known as the most pleasant person on the block. Random acts of kindness may minimize the pangs of guilt, but Scripture makes it clear: without faith, there is no pleasing God (see Heb. 11:6). The righteousness Christ gives us begins with faith and ends with faith.



Who would you describe as righteous? Why?

QUESTION #1

How do you react to the emphasis on God's wrath?

QUESTION #2

Romans 2:5-11

One of our human oddities is our tendency to point out flaws in others while we walk past our own. But we are infected with the fatal germ of sin. Jesus made no bones about His target audience:

- ▶ “Those who are well don’t need a doctor, but the sick do need one. I didn’t come to call the righteous, but sinners” (Mark 2:17).

People must see themselves as terminally ill if they hope to experience the grace of the Healer. Imagine you are a child again. You and three friends are competing in a long-jump contest, leaping off the end of a wooden dock on a sweltering summer day. With gusto and force, you run and jump. Two seconds later, you are swimming. You have outshined the other three, earning Olympian-like status.

Replay that scenario, but this time the goal is more ambitious. You must leap from the dock and land on one 100 yards away. Defeat swallows you. What’s the point of even trying? A belly full of protein bars couldn’t fuel a jump of that size. This mirrors our attempts to meet God’s standard of righteousness. Until a person accepts the Bible’s diagnosis of sin—that we have come up short—there’s no hope of rescue.

People have become hardened (see Rom. 2:5). We stubbornly suppress truth. We stuff our sins down deep hoping no one will notice. The “eyes of the LORD are everywhere, observing the wicked and the good” (Prov. 15:3). When people play the comparison game and refuse to confess their own sins, the reservoir of God’s wrath rises (see Rom. 1:18).

Why is it so tempting to compare our goodness with the goodness of others?

QUESTION #3

Romans 3:9-12



All of us wrestle with the notion of injustice.

In *The Count of Monte Cristo*, Alexandre Dumas tells the story of a man wrongly imprisoned for 14 years. With the help of a fellow inmate, he tunneled to freedom and plotted his sweet revenge. This book is listed among the classics because it resonates with our desire for wrong to be made right.

Something within us revolts when a person gets away with any form of injustice. Recall a ball game officiated by a passive referee: "Can't he see that foul?" "Why won't he reprimand that player?" An otherwise meek mother will angrily scream, "Call it!" The passive referee is unquestionably wrong.

In Romans 3:9-12, Paul communicated that God is altogether right to call our fouls and to penalize us for our sins. No one is innocent. Not a single person should be set free from his or her past. Far too many crimes remain on our record: envy, pride, greed, slander, lust, and much more.

These sins serve as evidence, stacked up against us. There is no way to tunnel out of this penitentiary.

The bottom line: humanity has no hope from within. This is a problem you and I cannot solve. Someone must break into this jail and show us the way out. Paul has backed us into a cold cell, the bars coldly locked into place. He has our attention. No one is righteous—not even you. Thankfully, there is a solution.

After studying this passage, how do we find hope?

QUESTION #4



I ADMIT IT

Areas where I admit I need help. Check any that apply.

- Auto repair
- Finances
- Raising children
- Work dynamics
- Family relationships

A time I knew I needed help with these issues:

Thinking about my relationship with Jesus, what got me to the point I knew I needed Him?

LIVE IT OUT

- ▶ **Quit rationalizing your behavior.** Pinpoint a time or place you turned a blind eye to your wrongdoing. Get honest with God about that.
- ▶ **Refuse to live by a false standard.** The next time you find yourself assuming you're better (or worse) than someone else, stop. No one is better or worse because we've all failed to meet God's standard.
- ▶ **Lead others to see their need.** Encourage others to see their need for Christ by lovingly showing them their sin and need for a do over.



The world and its standards are shattered. Rather than try to glue it back together, choose the righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ. That's a do over that can't be shattered.

3 Truths from a Lie



For 365 days I attempted to live without telling a lie.

Did I succeed? No.

Thankfully, the gospel has good news for guys like me.



To continue reading "3 Truths from a Lie" from *HomeLife* magazine, visit BibleStudiesforLife.com/articles.



My group's prayer requests

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My thoughts

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

In order to make the most of this study and to ensure a richer group experience, it's recommended that all group participants read through the teaching and discussion content in full before each group meeting. As a leader, it is also a good idea for you to be familiar with this content and prepared to summarize it for your group members as you move through the material each week.

Each session of the Bible study is made up of three sections:

1. THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE.

An introduction to the theme of the session and its connection to everyday life, along with a brief overview of the primary Scripture text. This section also includes an icebreaker question or activity.

2. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

This comprises the bulk of each session and includes the primary Scripture text along with explanations for key words and ideas within that text. This section also includes most of the content designed to produce and maintain discussion within the group.

3. LIVE IT OUT.

The final section focuses on application, using bulleted summary statements to answer the question, *So what?* As the leader, be prepared to challenge the group to apply what they learned during the discussion by transforming it into action throughout the week.

For group leaders, the *Do Over* Leader Guide contains several features and tools designed to help you lead participants through the material provided.

ICEBREAKER

These opening questions and/or activities are designed to help participants transition into the study and begin engaging the primary themes to be discussed. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak, but maintain a low-pressure environment.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Each "What Does the Bible Say?" section features at least three questions designed to spark discussion and interaction within your group. These questions encourage critical thinking, so be sure to allow a period of silence for participants to process the question and form an answer.

The *Do Over* Leader Guide also contains follow-up questions and optional activities that may be helpful to your group, if time permits.

DVD CONTENT

Each video features teaching from Ben Mandrell on the primary themes found in the session. We recommend that you show this video in one of three places: (1) At the beginning of group time, (2) After the icebreaker, or (3) After a quick review and/or summary of "What Does the Bible Say?" A video summary is included as well. You may choose to use this summary as background preparation to help you guide the group.

The Leader Guide contains additional questions to help unpack the video and transition into the discussion. For a digital Leader Guide with commentary, see the "Leader Tools" folder on the DVD-ROM in your Leader Kit.

SESSION ONE: A PROBLEM YOU CAN'T SOLVE

The Point: You can't meet God's standard on your own.

The Passage: Romans 1:16-17; 2:5-11; 3:9-12

The Setting: Paul wrote the Book of Romans to a group of believers he hoped to meet in the near future. As a way of introducing himself, Paul laid out the focus and passion of his ministry: the gospel of Christ. The Book of Romans could be described as a treatise on the doctrine of salvation, and Paul began by showing that all of us are in need of this salvation.

Icebreaker: When have you recently wanted a do over?

Optional activity: Using a laptop or tablet, play video clips from Olympic events that are graded by judges—gymnastics, high dive, figure skating, and so on. If possible, stop each video after the athlete performs and allow group participants to grade each performance before the official score is revealed.

Video Summary: Ben explains that Paul starts the Book of Romans by painting a pretty dismal picture—a picture of a world in desperate need of healing. Paul wants us to understand and feel the brokenness of this world. In Romans 1:22, he explains that we have exchanged worship of God for worship of smaller things. This is the root of the problem. The message of Romans is this: do not harden your heart to the gospel but understand that it is the very power of God. Through Jesus Christ we can have as many do overs as we need. He is the Master of putting our lives back together. He can overcome our greatest problem—He already has.

WATCH THE DVD SEGMENT FOR SESSION 1, THEN USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS TO TRANSITION INTO THE STUDY.

- Ben talks about people who are on a constant journey for perfection—every relationship, every decision, etc. In what areas of life do you require perfection of yourself?
- Ben also talks about why the gospel is so powerful—it makes us perfect again. In what ways might this truth affect how you chase after perfection?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ASK FOR SEVERAL VOLUNTEERS TO READ ALOUD ROMANS 1:16-17; 2:5-11; AND 3:9-12.

Response: What's your initial reaction to these verses?

- What do you like about the text?
- What questions do you have about these verses?

TURN THE GROUP'S ATTENTION TO ROMANS 1:16-17.

QUESTION 1: Who would you describe as righteous? Why?

This application question will give group members an opportunity to think through how they personally define righteousness and what that looks like. It may also provide an opportunity for them to broaden their definition as they listen to others share. You may want to spend some time talking about what is required for one to be righteous.

Optional follow-up: What are the standards for righteousness commonly used in our culture?

Optional follow-up: What are the standards for righteousness commonly used in the church?

MOVE TO ROMANS 2:5-11.

QUESTION 2: How do you react to the emphasis on God’s wrath?

We don’t usually like to think about this side of God. We would rather talk about how much He loves, accepts, protects, and provides for us. But the reality is that He gets angry as well. This question will give your group an opportunity to examine the fact that the wrath of God is a reminder of the holiness of God and a measure of His hatred of sin. And He wants us to hate sin as well. He loves us enough to get angry because He wants us free from the bondage of sin and free to live our lives in the fullness He intended.

QUESTION 3: Why is it so tempting to compare our goodness with the goodness of others?

This question gives group members the opportunity to talk about what it is that drives us to want to come out on top when we compare ourselves to others. Examine also why we often feel better about ourselves when we believe we are better than others.

Optional follow-up: What steps can we take as a group to fight against this temptation?

CONTINUE WITH ROMANS 3:9-12.

QUESTION 4: After studying this passage, how do we find hope?

This interpretation question allows group members to dig deeper than the words on the page. These verses do not directly speak of hope, but we can find hope through the message they deliver regarding human nature and behavior. This passage is here to remind us of our sinfulness and our need for God. We find hope in knowing who we are, Whose we are, and accepting that, “There is no one righteous, not even one” (3:10). At least, not without Him.

Optional activity: Direct group members to the activity labeled “I Admit It” on p. 11. Ask for volunteers to share their responses to the final statement: Thinking about my relationship with Jesus, what got me to the point I knew I needed Him?

Note: The following question does not appear in the group member book. Use it in your group discussion as time allows.

QUESTION 5: How do you respond when you face your own sin?

Optional follow-up: Based on what you have studied today, how *should* you respond?

LIVE IT OUT

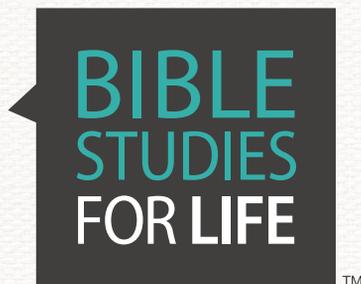
Invite group members to consider these three actions they can take based on this week’s study of Romans 1:16-17; 2:5-11; and 3:9-12.

- **Quit rationalizing your behavior.** Pinpoint a time or place you turned a blind eye to your wrongdoing. Get honest with God about that.
- **Refuse to live by a false standard.** The next time you find yourself assuming you’re better (or worse) than someone else, stop. No one is better or worse because we’ve all failed to meet God’s standard.
- **Lead others to see their need.** Encourage others to see their need for Christ by lovingly showing them their sin and need for a do over.

Challenge: As you go about your daily routine this week, keep an eye open for times you encounter an assessment or evaluation. This could include grading a paper, having your work graded by someone else, reading

a movie review, rating a product, and so on. Use these encounters as an immediate reminder to acknowledge your inability to meet God's standard and to thank Him for the righteousness you've gained through Christ.

Pray: Ask for prayer requests and ask group members to pray for the different requests as intercessors. As the leader, close this time by committing the members of your group to the Lord and asking Him to help each of you remember that it is not your responsibility to glue the pieces of what's been broken and shattered back together, but instead to seek the righteousness that comes through Him.



WHERE THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Bible Studies for Life™ will help you know Christ, live in community, and impact the world around you. If you enjoyed this session, be sure and check out these forthcoming releases.* Six sessions each.

TITLE

Do Over: Experience New Life in Christ *by Ben Mandrell*

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Beyond Belief *by Freddy Cardoza*

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September 2013

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December 2013

March 2014

March 2014

June 2014

June 2014

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