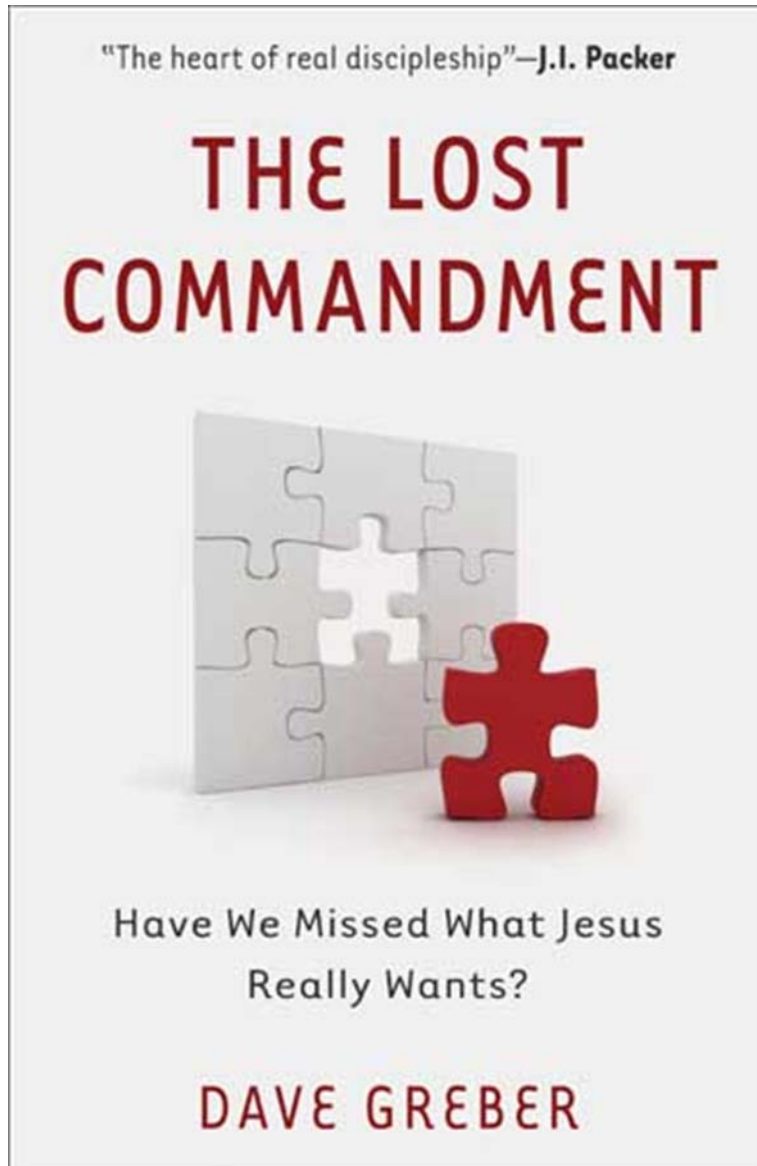


Small Group Study Questions



Chapter Questions for **The Lost Commandment**

by Dave Greber

Chapter 1

- Theme:** Complete Joy in Christ Alone
- Reading:** PART 1—Joy: The Surprise of Christ’s Love
Introduction, Chapter 1
- Purpose:** To understand and emotionally relate to what Jesus said would bring joy to him and to us
- Dilemma:** Neither the world, nor our human nature, leads us toward true joy

Key Verses

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”

—John 15:9–12

Chapter 1 Questions



Explain:

What does the word “remain” mean in these verses? How did Jesus say we remain in his love?

Why do you think it brings joy to Jesus and to us when we obey Jesus’ command to love others as he has loved us?



Illustrate:

Have you experienced a situation in which you did or had something that is commonly thought to bring joy, but you did not feel joy? Describe what happened and how you felt.

Can you give an example of when you or others have experienced joy after loving others as Jesus has loved us? Describe the situation and the emotions that you experienced.



Apply:

Name one way in which your love for others could be more like Jesus’ love for you, then describe at least one tangible step that you will take to begin to love others as Jesus loves you.

Name one activity that you will pursue differently—or not at all—because you now realize that the activity will not bring complete joy to Jesus, or to you.

Chapter 2

- Theme:** Nothing Less Than the Best
- Reading:** PART 1—Joy: The Surprise of Christ’s Love
Chapter 2: More Costly Than Gold
- Purpose:** To understand how the Lost Commandment differs from the Golden Rule, and why it matters
- Dilemma:** We tend to settle for what we are used to, even if it is second best

Key Verses

^{13:34}“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. . . . ^{14:21}Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” . . . ^{15:10}If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. . . . ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.”

—John 13:34; 14:21; 15:10–12, 17

Chapter 2 Questions



Explain:

Jesus called his command “new.” What are the different meanings that we attach to the word “new”? What evidence do we have that when Jesus used the word “new,” his intended meaning was “replacement”? What evidence do we have to the contrary?

If we obey the Lost Commandment, does that satisfy our obligations under the Golden Rule? Does it work the other way around?



Illustrate:

Describe something that you do out of habit, even though you know there is (or might be) a better way. What emotions might cause you and others to act this way?

Describe a situation that illustrates the phenomenon of “group think,” where a group of people adopt a belief or course of action without meaningfully confronting conflicting evidence. What are the emotional forces that drive us toward group think? What are the dangers of succumbing to those forces? Can these forces be present in discussing whether Jesus intended to replace the Golden Rule with the Lost Commandment?



Apply:

How would your *attitude* have to change in order to put you in a frame of mind to obey the Lost Commandment?

At this point, are you willing, as God gives you wisdom and strength, to obey the Lost Commandment? Explain the reasons for your answer.

Chapter 3

- Theme:** The Relationship that Requires Everything
- Reading:** PART 2—Relationship: The Invitation of Christ's Love
Chapter 3: RSVP
- Purpose:** To understand and respond to Jesus' invitation to have a personal relationship with him
- Dilemma:** We often don't recognize how much we need to have a personal relationship with Jesus, or what that relationship requires of us

Key Verses

²³Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it."

—Luke 9:23–24

Chapter 3 Questions



Explain:

According to Luke 9:23–24 and Romans 10:9–10, what must we do to accept Christ’s invitation to have a personal relationship with him? What does it mean to be “saved” in the meaning of these Scriptures? What does it mean to take up our cross daily and follow Jesus?

Jesus’ invitation turns bad news into good news. Describe the bad news in terms of your own life. Describe the good news in terms of your own life.

What must we do to RSVP to Jesus’ invitation?



Illustrate:

Describe a situation in which you invited someone you love to an event, but they would not respond or declined for reasons that seemed lame in light of how much the event meant to you. How did the other person’s response affect you? How do you imagine God might feel when we refuse to accept Jesus’ invitation to follow him?

Can you think of a circumstance in which you accepted an invitation to do something, but then backed out in the middle of the activity because you didn’t realize what was involved? How does your story illustrate the danger of accepting Jesus’ invitation without having a sense of what it means to take up your cross daily and follow him? Might your story have turned out differently if you had known what to expect in advance?



Apply:

Have you accepted Jesus’ invitation to a personal relationship with him by acknowledging that he died for your sins and pledging to follow him as your

Lord? If not, what is stopping you?

If you have not accepted Jesus' invitation, what steps do you plan to take to investigate or evaluate your concerns or questions? Who do you know who can help you with this effort?

Chapter 4

- Theme:** The Relationship that Changes Everything
- Reading:** PART 2—Relationship: The Invitation of Christ's Love
Chapter 4: Enjoy Your New Self
- Purpose:** To grasp who we are in Christ, in order to help us live as new creations
- Dilemma:** Our old sense of self runs contrary to our true identity in Christ

Key Verse

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

—2 Corinthians 5:17

Chapter 4 Questions



Explain:

In what sense are Christians new creations in Christ in the meaning of 2 Corinthians 5:17? Does that mean that we don't ever sin? As Christians, what are we supposed to do when we sin?

Which of these statements about your new identity in Christ brings you the most joy, and why?

- a. We are loved unconditionally.
- b. We are family.
- c. We are uniquely valuable.
- d. We are a work in progress.
- e. We have missions to accomplish.



Illustrate:

How has your life been affected by relationships that are based on performance? How do such relationships affect our sense of security and confidence?

Jesus loves us for who we are, knowing exactly who we are, and invites us to be in a relationship with him that will last forever. How does this invitation affect our sense of security and confidence? Can you tell a story that illustrates this effect?



Apply:

Which of the five identities in Christ (listed above) are most difficult for you to accept? How can the group pray for you concerning your acceptance of your new identity?

Chapter 5

- Theme:** See and Follow Jesus' Lead
- Reading:** PART 2—Relationship: The Invitation of Christ's Love
Chapter 5: Shadow the Real VIP
- Purpose:** To taste the kind of relationship that is possible when we shadow Jesus
- Dilemma:** We tend to go our own way because we don't see Jesus in our lives

Key Verse

Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."

—John 5:19

Chapter 5 Questions



Explain:

One meaning of the verb shadow is “to follow.” How can we follow Jesus by reading the Bible? How does following and imitating Jesus reflect a proper relationship with him? How does it help us obey the Lost Commandment?

A connotation of the verb *shadow* is “to imitate.” How can we imitate Jesus when he is physically invisible?

How does shadowing Jesus deepen our relationship with him?



Illustrate:

Can you think of a story from the Bible that illustrates the truth of the saying “out of sight, out of mind,” when it comes to our relationship with God? How does the Lost Commandment help cure this problem?



Apply:

Pray that the Lord show you how you can walk more closely to him, in a way that allows you to experience his love and joy more completely. What do you sense he is telling you to do or to change?

Chapter 6

- Theme:** His Lordship Compels Our Mission
- Reading:** PART 3—Mission: The Determination of Christ's Love
Chapter 6: No Mission Impossible
- Purpose:** To understand and accept our God-given mission
- Dilemma:** We tend to see our God-given mission as impossible or optional, and would really rather “stay home”

Key Verse

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

—John 14:12

Chapter 6 Questions



Explain:

What is a mission? How did the concept of mission affect Jesus' life? How does or should the concept of mission affect our lives?

How would you describe the mission or missions that all Christians have been given by Jesus? What Scriptures suggest these missions? Do all Christians have identical roles in accomplishing all of these missions?



Illustrate:

Tell a story that illustrates how efforts at personal change can be frustrating or discouraging. After reading chapter 6 of *The Lost Commandment* and John 14:12, what do you sense the Holy Spirit is saying to you about how this frustration can be transformed into positive attitudes and actions?

Tell a story that illustrates Jesus' love being "paid forward" from one person to another. What was the impact of this act of love on you and on the people involved in the story?



Apply:

Name two or three specific steps that you will now take, with God's help, to walk out your mission.

Are you willing to invite someone to encourage you to live a missional life, and to hold you accountable to your commitment to the mission(s) that you identified? Who will you invite? When will you invite them?

Do you have a reading plan? Will you commit to making one and, with God's help, following it?

Chapter 7

- Theme:** Our Mission Is Primarily a Rescue Mission
- Reading:** PART 3—Mission: The Determination of Christ's Love
Chapter 7: Leave No One Behind
- Purpose:** To prompt each of us to accept God's rescue mission
- Dilemma:** We would rather preserve our lives for ourselves than lay down our lives for the lost

Key Verse

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."
—John 20:21

Chapter 7 Questions



Explain:

How did Jesus love us *on* purpose and *with* purpose before we loved him?

What are four characteristics of Jesus' love for the lost? Which of these characteristics have you found most difficult to imitate, and why?



Illustrate:

How has unforgiveness affected you or people you love? Tell a story that illustrates the problem.

Name one person among your friends, family, or co-workers who has not accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior. Describe how you will love this person, with God's help, in such a way as to help them know Jesus.



Apply:

Prepare to be a witness to Christ's love in your life:

- a. Write a sentence (try about thirty words) that you can use to tell someone what Christ has done in your life. The sentence should arouse curiosity that would lead someone to ask for more information.
- b. Write a short testimony that describes how you came to realize that you need Jesus as your Savior, how you asked him into your life, and what differences you've seen in your life since then. Assume that you only have sixty seconds to deliver this testimony in your own words. Don't try to memorize what you've written as if it were a script. Use it as preparation, and plan to give it spontaneously without notes.

c. Write a short prayer that you can pray with someone who is prepared to give his or her life to Christ. Use the Scriptures of the “Romans Road” as guidelines for what should be included in this prayer. Generally, short prayers are best in this case.

Chapter 8

- Theme:** Above All, Love Is Humble
- Reading:** PART 4—Humility: The Heart of Christ's Love
Chapter 8: No One Died and Made Us King
- Purpose:** To grasp humility as the heart of our relationship with God
- Dilemma:** We would rather be our own God

Key Verses

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped . . . He humbled himself.

—Philippians 2:5–6, 8

Chapter 8 Questions



Explain:

Define humility. How did Jesus' life evidence his humble attitude toward God?

Why is humility so important to our relationships with God and others?

In what way does someone's response to adversity demonstrate their humility, or lack of humility, toward God?



Illustrate:

Tell a story that illustrates when you find it most difficult to be humble toward God. Why do you think it is difficult for you to be humble under these circumstances?

Describe an instance in which someone's humble reaction to adversity caused them to draw closer to God, or in which someone's less-than-humble reaction to adversity seemed to have the opposite effect. Particularly when talking about the less-than-humble reactions, if you are not talking about yourself, be careful to change names and generalize facts to prevent the person from being identified (unless you have permission to share the story).



Apply:

What area of your life do you confess you have been holding back from God?

How should the members of the group pray for you as you face your struggle with humility before God?

Chapter 9

- Theme:** Above All, Love Is Humble
- Reading:** PART 4—Humility: The Heart of Christ’s Love
Chapter 9: The Last Come First
- Purpose:** To become last among others because we are first for Christ
- Dilemma:** We want to be first

Key Verse

Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.”

—Mark 9:35

Chapter 9 Questions



Explain:

Why do we need humility to serve all others?

How does meditating on the Lost Commandment while serving others help us to maintain an attitude of humility?



Illustrate:

Describe one way in which you tend not to act with humility in your relationship with others. Tell a story that illustrates this tendency.

Do you know someone whose humility toward others demonstrates their love of Jesus? Describe in detail an instance in which this person demonstrated humility. How did this demonstration of humility affect you and others emotionally? How did it affect your perception of God?



Apply:

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one or two specific areas in which you need to be more humble. Share what you learn with the group, and ask them to pray for you.

Whose forgiveness do you need to ask for your prideful behavior? When will you do this?

Chapter 10

- Theme:** The Bible Is a Love Letter from God
- Reading:** PART 5—Obedience: The Power of Christ’s Love
Chapter 10: Love Letters from God
- Purpose:** To stir in us a passionate desire to know the Bible
- Dilemma:** We resist accepting the Bible for what it is

Key Verse

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

—John 15:10

Chapter 10 Questions



Explain:

How are obedience to Jesus' commands and love of Jesus related? What does this mean to you and your life?

What are some of the reasons why we resist accepting the Bible as a love letter from God? Which of these reasons most challenges your acceptance of the Bible as God's love letter to you?



Illustrate:

Describe a specific situation in which you have resisted accepting the Bible as a love letter from God. What did you think or feel that made it difficult to accept God's Word?

Describe a situation in which you sensed God speaking to you very personally and lovingly through the Bible. How did you feel about God in that moment?



Apply:

Name at least one concrete step that you intend to take, with God's help, to improve your capacity to treat the Bible as a love letter from God.

After reading appendix B, develop a reading plan that will guide your studies of the Bible and related writings for at least six months.

Chapter 11

- Theme:** It's Not Just Who You Ask—It's Also What You Ask
- Reading:** PART 5—Obedience: The Power of Christ's Love
Chapter 11: Ask and It's Yours
- Purpose:** To see how the Lost Commandment can guide our prayer requests
- Dilemma:** Our prayers tend to focus on our desires rather than God's desires

Key Verse

You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

—John 14:14

Chapter 11 Questions



Explain:

In John 14:14, what does “in my name” mean? Why is it difficult to pray in Jesus’ name?

How can the Lost Commandment be used to guide our prayers so that they are in Jesus’ name



Illustrate:

When have you asked God for something not in Jesus’ name, but in someone else’s name? How do you know that your prayer was not in Jesus’ name?

Have you asked God for something, thinking your request was in Jesus’ name, but did not receive it (as far as you can see)? How do you square this outcome with John 14:14?



Apply:

Write out a prayer using the Lost Commandment as a framework.

Chapter 12

- Theme:** A Living Example Is the Best Teacher
- Reading:** PART 5—Obedience: The Power of Christ’s Love
Chapter 12: Show Them How It’s Done
- Purpose:** To understand the importance of following and becoming good examples of Christ’s love
- Dilemma:** We don’t want to be accountable to others as either a follower or a leader

Key Verse

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

—1 Corinthians 11:1

Chapter 12 Questions



Explain:

Is it important to have role models of Christ's love? Why or why not?

Why is it tempting to avoid teaching hard truths? What are some of the truths that you find hardest to teach?

What holds us back from talking to strangers about Christ's love?



Illustrate:

Describe your role models of Christ's love. What are some of the lessons that you have learned from them?

How do you react when your role models fall short of perfection? Can they still be role models?



Apply:

To whom do you intend to be a role model of Christ's love? What are some of the challenges you face as a potential role model?

Chapter 13

- Theme:** We Forgive Because God First Forgave Us
- Reading:** PART 6—Forgiveness: The Strength of Christ’s Love
Chapter 13: Let It Go
- Purpose:** To release grudges that separate us from others
- Dilemma:** We would rather punish others than forgive them

Key Verse

Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

—Colossians 3:13

Chapter 13 Questions



Explain:

Must we forgive others? What Scriptures support your answer?

What are Jesus' six attitudes of forgiveness?

Is it possible to forgive someone without talking to them about how they offended us? Why or why not?



Illustrate:

How has unforgiveness affected you or people you love? Tell a story that illustrates the problem.



Apply:

Do you sense that God is telling you that you must forgive someone? Are you willing to forgive them, with God's help?

Identify one or more attitudes that you now ask God to help you change in order to help you forgive others. How would you compare and contrast these attitudes with Jesus' attitudes of forgiveness?

Chapter 14

- Theme:** Forgiveness Requires an Attempt to Reconcile
- Reading:** PART 6—Forgiveness: The Strength of Christ’s Love
Chapter 14: Get It Together
- Purpose:** To be compelled by the Holy Spirit to attempt reconciliation with others
- Dilemma:** Our emotions, attitudes, and fears hinder our reconciliation

Key Verse

First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.
—Matthew 5:24

Chapter 14 Questions



Explain:

In what way does Matthew 5:24 suggest that God finds it important for us to be reconciled to others?

Describe the five steps of the reconciliation process.

If someone has sinned against us, but refuses to admit it, what do we do?

If we have offended someone, but they refuse to admit it, what do we do?



Illustrate:

Without being too specific about the facts of the situation, describe a dispute in which you have not yet attempted reconciliation. What emotions, fears, or attitudes have held you back? What do you sense the Holy Spirit is saying to you about these obstacles to reconciliation?



Apply:

How can the group pray for you concerning your unreconciled disputes?

What one step will you take this week to be reconciled to someone with whom you have a dispute?

Chapter 15

- Theme:** God Uses Peacemakers to Save Relationships
- Reading:** PART 6—Forgiveness: The Strength of Christ’s Love
Chapter 15: Shuttle Diplomacy
- Purpose:** To value peacemaking and peacemakers
- Dilemma:** Peacemakers are often seen as unwanted intruders

Key Verse

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

—Matthew 5:9

Chapter 15 Questions



Explain:

Describe the four roles of a peacemaker. Which of these roles do you find to be the most challenging, and why?

Under what circumstances do you think God is most likely to call us to be peacemakers?



Illustrate:

Have you ever been involved in a dispute in which someone tried to intervene to attempt to make peace? How did you feel about the intervention? Were the efforts successful? Why or why not?

Have you ever attempted to intervene in a dispute as a peacemaker? How did you feel about the intervention? Were the efforts successful? Why or why not?



Apply:

Are you willing to act as a peacemaker, even if by doing so, you risk your relationship with the parties to the dispute?

Are you aware of any disputes in which you might administer peacemaking first aid? To what skilled peacemaker might you refer the parties?

Chapter 16

- Theme:** Service Is an Essential Expression of Love
- Reading:** PART 7—Service: The Soul of Christ’s Love
Chapter 16: Feet and Hands
- Purpose:** To see service as a required expression of love
- Dilemma:** We would rather be served than serve others

Key Verses

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

—John 13:14–15

Chapter 16 Questions



Explain:

What should our motivation be to serve others? What other less honorable motivations might we have to serve others? How does the Lost Commandment help us to keep our motivation straight?

How do we decide whom we should serve? What three groups should we especially consider in deciding whom to serve?

How do we know how we should serve?



Illustrate:

Describe a situation in which someone served you in a way that made you aware of how much God loves you.

Describe a situation in which you loved someone in a way that caused you to feel God's love.



Apply:

Do you think that you are serving others as Jesus has called you to serve? How might he be calling you to change your attitude or service?

Chapter 17

Theme: We Were Meant to Be a Conduit, Not a Cup

Reading: PART 7—Service: The Soul of Christ’s Love
Chapter 17: Dollars and Sense

Purpose: To motivate us to be as generous with others as Jesus is with us

Dilemma: The more we have, the more we want

Key Verse

Freely you have received, freely give.

—Matthew 10:8

Chapter 17 Questions



Explain:

Why does finding contentment in Christ make it easier to give generously?

What are some of the reasons that we give for not helping the poor? Which of these reasons are legitimate and which are not?

Does it matter why we give? Why or why not?



Illustrate:

Have you encountered someone who is of very modest means, yet is still very happy? Describe their circumstances and what makes you think they are happy.

Have you encountered someone who has great wealth, yet is still very unhappy? Describe their circumstances and what makes you think they are unhappy.

Describe a situation in which you were unhappy because you wanted something that you really didn't need.



Apply:

Do you have an amount that you budget to give away to charity each month? Are you willing to establish such a budget?

How do you determine how much you give to others in need?

Chapter 18

- Theme:** Boundaries and Priorities Are Part of Love
- Reading:** PART 7—Service: The Soul of Christ’s Love
Chapter 18: Who’s Next in Line?
- Purpose:** To explore the limits of love
- Dilemma:** We find it difficult to know our limits

Key Verse

Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

—Mark 6:31

Chapter 18 Questions



Explain:

What is the difference between a boundary and a priority?

Must we have good boundaries and priorities to obey the Lost Commandment? Explain your answer.

What are at least three of the eight reasons why we must love non-Christians as Jesus has loved us?



Illustrate:

How would you describe your current boundaries? Describe a situation that suggests that God wants you to improve your boundaries.

What do your calendar and your checkbook say are your priorities for service to others and giving to the poor?

How do you prioritize rest and exercise in your life?



Apply:

Do you think that God is telling you to realign your boundaries or priorities? In what way?