

# ALL IN *requires* TRANSFORMATION

...for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Philippians 2:13 NKJV



# INTRODUCTION

It's ALL IN time. This will be our last session together before we make our ALL IN commitment when we gather this Sunday. We will meet next week to celebrate and continue to grow, but what happens between now and then will mark a significant change in many people's lives. We trust this LIFE Group will be able to look back on these days as a time when God worked in unexpected ways to bring about far more than we asked or thought.

For many of us, the ALL IN Initiative has been a defining moment in which God worked on the

process of transformation in our lives. As we will see in this session, God never stops working on us. Even someone who was all in, like the apostle Paul was, could write, "For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day" (2 Timothy 1:12).

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# COME TOGETHER

LIFE Group Host Note: Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer, in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. You can pray for specific requests at the end of the meeting, or stop momentarily to pray if a particular situation comes up during your discussion.

Then, begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.

- 1 What has stood out to you the most over the past five weeks that we've been doing the ALL IN series?
- 2 Since we're going to talk a lot about transformation in this session, let's talk about what we mean when we use the word "transformed." What are the differences between an appearance or surface transformation (getting made up to play a part) and core transformation (what happens to a caterpillar on the way to becoming a butterfly)? Why would one be more desirable (or more difficult) than the other?





# WATCH THE VIDEO

You can watch the video online at [sdrock.com/ALLIN](http://sdrock.com/ALLIN) or on the ALL IN DVD. This fifth session video will set up our discussion and will lead us towards our commitment in the ALL IN Initiative. Pastor Miles is teaching on transformation and interacting with others from the Rock Church about the way God wants to transform us. Use the space to record any key thoughts, questions, and things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the Scripture passage and questions in the Read section and direct the discussion among the group. As you go through each of the subsequent sections, ask someone else to read the questions and direct the discussion.



# LEARN TOGETHER



God uses stories to guide us. In fact, the Bible is His story! When we read the true stories of Scripture, we learn what God is like and we see His plan unfolding. And we also learn principles for our own lives. How can we become a part of God's story? By aligning our stories with His; not just understanding what it means to follow Him, but actually doing it—changing our attitudes and actions to live as He would live.

Use the following questions to guide your discussion of the teaching and stories you just experienced, and the Bible passage on the next page. You may also want to refer to the study notes on page 76 to guide your reading and discussion.

## READ: GENESIS 17:1-8

*<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. <sup>2</sup>And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." <sup>3</sup>Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: <sup>4</sup>"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. <sup>5</sup>No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup>And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. <sup>8</sup>Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (NKJV)*

- 3 Why did God change Abram's name? Does acceptance of a name like "Christian" or "Christ-follower" make a difference in a person's life?
- 4 Using Abraham as an example, how would you describe God's transformation plan?
- 5 What was the most memorable thing Pastor Miles or one of the participants in the circle said during the video about change?
- 6 What areas of life does God want to transform in each of us?



# STUDY NOTES

**I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless** (v.1). Cause, action, result—God was pointing Abram to a transformed way of living. The order is significant. We often try to reverse it: once I'm blameless, maybe I can walk before Almighty God. Our approach is impossible; God's approach is possible because He makes it so.

**No longer shall your name be called Abram** (v.5). In Abram's case, God takes some beginning-of-life stuff (like getting a name and the act of circumcision) and makes it much-later-in-life stuff. God changed his name from Abram (exalted father) to Abraham (father of a multitude) and established a practice for each generation of sons of the covenant before the first of those sons was born.

As you read this passage about Abraham, notice how God's move in his life affected everything—name, property, offspring, and possessions. God was declaring His right to all of it.



## GROW TOGETHER

The idea of transformation (change under God's hands) sometimes seems rather intimidating – as if God needs to radically change who we currently are in order for us to be more like Him. The truth is that our experiences of transformation often come through multiple small transformations within us. The instant “radical” transformation is still possible, but does not happen as frequently as transformation by process. Since God designed you originally, it's His plan to complete your “formation” into the likeness of His Son.

- 7 Share a significant past experience where God shaped you more into the image of Jesus.
- 8 What is the next step in your transformation process? What is God asking you to do to make you more like Christ?



# DAILY DEVOTIONALS



There are six days of devotions. On the last day, read back over your responses and let that guide a final time of reflection.

Use these daily devotions to go deeper into this week's topic. Each day, read the verse given. Take your time. Ask God to speak to you through His Word. Notice which word or phrase stands out to you. Then take some time to journal your response back to him. You can write whatever is on your heart. Answer the "Reflect" question only if it's helpful. Feel free to go another direction, if you sense God leading you. On the first day, you may want to read over all the verses for the week to get the "big picture" of the passage. But then walk slowly, verse by verse. Listen to what God wants to say to you through His Word, and respond to Him as you meditate on the truths of Scripture.

After Day 3 of each week, you will have an opportunity to take what you have learned and put it into practice. These "Action Steps" will challenge you to respond to these truths in your daily life.

## DAY 1

Read 2 Timothy 1:12

*For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.*

### Reflect:

How is God going to be involved in the making and the keeping of your commitment next Sunday?

## DAY 2

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

### Reflect:

How does this verse describe the work of transformation Christ is currently carrying out in your life?

## DAY 3

Read John 14:27

*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

### Reflect:

As you prepare for next Sunday, are there any ways you are letting your heart be troubled or afraid? How might making the commitment before you take you into the peace Christ has for you?

### Action Steps:

This week practice being grateful to God for His transforming work in your life. Simply thank God each time you identify how your life has been transformed. Ideas may include: new passions, new memories, old habits, new friends, or health.

## DAY 4

Read Philippians 2:13

*...for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

### Reflect:

As the ALL IN study has unfolded, how have you experienced this verse to be true in your own life?

## DAY 5

Read Romans 8:31-32

*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

### Reflect:

How do these verses confirm your confidence as you prepare for the ALL IN commitment moment this Sunday?

## DAY 6

Use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your reflection time this week.

# APPENDICES





# HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Tools to Help You Have a Great LIFE Group Experience!



- 1 Notice in the Table of Contents there are three sections: (1) Front Matter; (2) Sessions; and (3) Appendices. Familiarize yourself with these sections. Some of the Appendices will be used in the sessions themselves.
- 2 This is much more than a LIFE Group workbook. It has been designed as a constant companion for the ALL IN Initiative. What we do in worship, the messages we hear, and every aspect of our life together as Rock Church family will be guided by this Study Guide during the coming weeks.
- 3 If you are Hosting or co-hosting a LIFE Group, check out [sdrockgroups.com](http://sdrockgroups.com) and you will find some encouragement and help so you can avoid common obstacles to effective group meetings.
- 4 Use this Study Guide as an advisor. If the group responds to the lesson in an unexpected but honest way, go with that. If you think of a better question than the next one in the lesson, ask it.
- 5 Enjoy your LIFE Group experience. Have fun.
- 6 Pray before each session—for your group members, for your time together, and for wisdom and insights.
- 7 Read the outline for each session on the next pages so that you understand how the sessions will flow.

# OUTLINE OF EACH SESSION

A typical group session for the ALL IN study will include the following sections:

**INTRODUCTION.** Each lesson opens with a brief thought that will help you prepare for the session and get you thinking about the particular subject you will explore with your group. Make it a practice to read these before the session.

**COME TOGETHER.** The foundation for spiritual growth is an intimate connection with God and God's family. You build that connection by sharing your experience with a few people who really know you and who earn your trust. This is helpful preparation for being able to share what Christ has done in your life with anyone you meet—which is what a disciple is ready to do. This section includes some simple questions to get you talking—letting you share as much or as little of your story as you feel comfortable doing. Each session typically offers you 2 options. You can get to know your whole group by using the icebreaker question(s), or you can check in with 1 or 2 group members for a deeper connection and encouragement in your spiritual journey.

**WATCH THE VIDEO.** When the study directs you to, you'll start the video and watch a short teaching segment. You can watch the videos online at [sdrock.com/allin](http://sdrock.com/allin) or with the ALL IN DVD available at each Rock campus. Each session's teaching will include biblical insights from Pastor Miles, interaction with brothers and sisters about aspects of the ALL IN life, and powerful worship music to lead us into God's presence. Space is provided in this study guide to take notes you can use in the discussion to follow.

**LEARN TOGETHER.** In this section, you'll have an opportunity to read a passage of Scripture and discuss both the teaching and the text. You won't focus on accumulating information but on how you should live in light of the Word of God. We want to help you apply the insights from Scripture practically and creatively, from your heart as well as your head. At the end of the day, allowing the timeless truths from God's Word to transform our lives in Christ should be your greatest aim.

**STUDY NOTES.** This brief section provides additional commentary, background, or insights on the passage you'll study in the Learn Together section.

**GROW TOGETHER.** God wants you to be a part of His Kingdom—to weave your story into His. That will mean change. It will require you to go His way rather than your own. This won't happen overnight, but it should happen steadily. By making small, simple choices, we can begin to change our direction. This is where the Bible's instructions to "be doers of the Word, not just hearers" (James 1:22) comes into play. Many people skip over this aspect of the Christian life because it's scary, relationally awkward, or simply too much work for their busy schedules. But Jesus wanted all of His disciples to know Him personally, carry out His commands, and help outsiders connect with Him. This doesn't necessarily mean preaching on street corners. It could mean welcoming newcomers, hosting a short-term group in your home, or walking through this study with a friend. In this study, you'll have an opportunity to go beyond Bible study to biblical living.

**SHARE AND WORSHIP TOGETHER.** This section will have a question or two that will challenge you to live out your faith by serving others, sharing your faith, and worshiping God.

**SERMON NOTES.** Bring your study guide with you each Sunday and take notes during the sermon in the provided blanks.

**DAILY DEVOTIONS.** Each week on the Daily Devotions pages we provide Scriptures to read and reflect on between sessions—a month's worth of reflections to keep God's Word near your heart. This provides you with a chance to slow down, read just a small portion of Scripture each day, and reflect and pray through it. You'll then have a chance to journal your response to what you've read. Use this section to seek God on your own throughout the week. This time at home should begin and end with prayer. Don't get in a hurry; take enough time to hear God's direction.

# FAQs

## About LIFE Groups

### What do we do on the first night of our group?

Like all fun things in life—have a party! A “get to know you” coffee, dinner, or dessert is a great way to launch a new study. You may want to review the Group Agreement (page 101) and share the names of a few friends you can invite to join you. But most importantly, have fun before your study time begins.

### Where do we find new members for our group?

The best way to grow your group is through personal invitation! Make a list of friends, coworkers, and family members, etc. that you can invite. And then make it a point to talk to at least five people every Sunday, asking if they’re in a LIFE Group, and then invite them to your group if they’re not already involved.

No matter how you find members, it’s vital that you stay on the lookout for new people to join your group. All groups tend to go through healthy attrition—the result of moves, releasing new hosts, ministry opportunities, and so forth—and if the group gets too small, it could be at risk of shutting down. If you and your group stay open, you’ll be amazed at the people God sends your way. The next person just might become a friend for life. You never know!

### How long will this group meet?

The ALL IN Study lasts for 6 weeks, but we’d encourage you to prayerfully consider continuing your group after ALL IN is complete! At the end of this study, each group member may decide if he or she wants to continue on; some groups launch relationships for years to come and others are stepping stones into another group experience. Either way, enjoy the journey.

### Can we do this study on our own?

Absolutely! This may sound crazy, but one of the best ways to do this study is not with a full house but with a few friends. You may choose to gather with another couple who would enjoy some relational time (perhaps going to the movies or having a quiet dinner) and then walking through this study. Jesus will be with you even if there are only two of you (Matthew 18:20).

### What if this group is not working for us?

You’re not alone! This could be the result of a personality conflict, life stage difference, geographical distance, level of spiritual maturity, or any number of things. Relax. Pray for God’s direction, and at the end of this 6-week study, decide whether to continue with this group or find another. You don’t typically buy the first car you look at or marry the first person you date, and the same goes with a group. However, don’t bail out before the 6 weeks are up—God might have something to teach you. Also, don’t run from conflict or prejudice people before you have given them a chance. God is still working in your life, too!

### Who is the host?

Most groups have an official host who facilitates the group. But ideally, the group will mature and members will rotate the leadership of meetings. We have discovered that healthy groups rotate hosts/leaders, on a regular basis. This model ensures that all members grow, give their unique contribution, and develop their gifts. This study guide and the Holy Spirit can keep things on track even when you rotate hosts. Christ has promised to be in your midst as you gather. Ultimately, God is your leader each step of the way.

### How do we handle the childcare needs in our group?

Very carefully. Seriously, this can be a sensitive issue. We suggest that you empower the group to openly brainstorm solutions. You may try one option that works for a while and then adjust over time. Our favorite approach is for adults to meet in the living room or dining room and to share the cost of a babysitter (or two) who can watch the kids in a different part of the house. This way, parents don’t have to be away from their children all evening when their children are too young to be left at home. A second option is to use one home for the kids and a second home (close by or a phone call away) for the adults. A third idea is to rotate the responsibility of providing a lesson or care for the children either in the same home or in another home nearby. This can be an incredible blessing for kids. Finally, the most common solution is to decide that you need to have a night to invest in your spiritual lives individually or as a couple and to make your own arrangements for childcare. No matter what decision the group makes, the best approach is to dialogue openly about both the problem and the solution.

# LIFE GROUP AGREEMENT

**Our purpose is to talk about what it means to live a God-first life with a few friends.**

## Group Attendance

To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent. (Completing the Group Calendar on page 102 will minimize this issue.)

## Safe Environment

To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved.

## Respect Differences

To be gentle and gracious toward people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or “imperfections.” We are all a work in progress.

## Confidentiality

To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

## Encouragement for Growth

Accept one another as we are while encouraging one another to grow.

## Shared Ownership

To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.



