

(chapter 17, pages 195–196)? What other “justice blind spots” might the church have today that future generations will see clearly?

In the “faith vs. works” debate (chapter 17, pages 198–202), where have you and your church traditionally stood? What were your reasons? Does Rich’s perspective on this make sense to you? Why or why not? If you are in a church that associates social action with liberal theology, how would you now define social action in a way that is consistent with your theology?

2. If “money is power, and power competes with God for supremacy in our lives” (chapter 19, page 212), which or who is winning that competition in your life? In what kinds of situations do you feel that power struggle most keenly, and how have you handled it?

3. Read Malachi 3:8–12 again (chapter 19, page 214). Have you experienced God pouring out blessings on you as a result of your giving your money to Him and His Church? In what ways? What dangers lie in leaning too heavily on this passage as a motivation to give?

4. Read Rich’s “Letter to the Church in America” (chapter 20, pages 213–225) and underline the sentences that you think you and your church especially need to heed.

5. List some things your church is known to be *against* (chapter 21, pages 228–229). In another column list the things your church is known to be *for*. Which list is longer?

6. Read Mark 1:40–45 (chapter 22, page 239). Since the Church is the living body of Christ, re-read the passage, replacing all references to Jesus with “my church.” What insight did this reading bring to you?

Take action: If it’s true that “it’s not our money—it all comes from God; we are not entitled to it but entrusted with it; and God expects us to use it in the interest of His kingdom,” then what can you do to move from your current attitude toward your money to this scriptural view (chapter 18, page 207)? Make a list of three or four steps you could take toward that goal and implement them.

Pray: In your prayer time, ask God to show you what “great omissions” He has in your life (chapter 16). Make a note of His answers in your journal.

PART 5

REPAIRING THE HOLE

1. To repair the hole in our own gospel requires an “intentional decision. It doesn’t just happen” (chapter 23, page 244). What changes could you decide to make in your life in order to become a change agent for Christ?
2. “This gospel we embrace and this Jesus we follow are dangerous” (chapter 23, page 246). What is dangerous about Jesus and the gospel? What frightens you about this danger? What exhilarates you?
3. Do you agree that God’s image and identity are defaced by the continued existence of poverty and injustice in the world (chapter 24, page 255)? Why or why not?
4. Identify one or several “impossible dreams” you or your church could accomplish for the poor in your community and the world—one stone at a time (chapter 24, page 256). Are you a leader with Nehemiah’s organizational skills? If so, begin now to write out action plans that could lead to the dream—one step at a time.
5. “We are God’s Plan A . . . and He doesn’t have a Plan B” (chapter 25, page 277). What does this mean in relation to what you, your small group, or your church might commit to do as a result of this study? If you don’t do it, who will?

Take action: In your journal or on a whiteboard, summarize what you and/or your small group or church have decided to do to bring the whole gospel to your community and world as a result of this book and study. Then go to www.theholeinourgospel.com and share your ideas, actions and results as an encouragement to others who are on the journey with you.

Pray: Ask God to bless and use your gifts of time, talents, and treasures to bring hope and justice to a world in need.