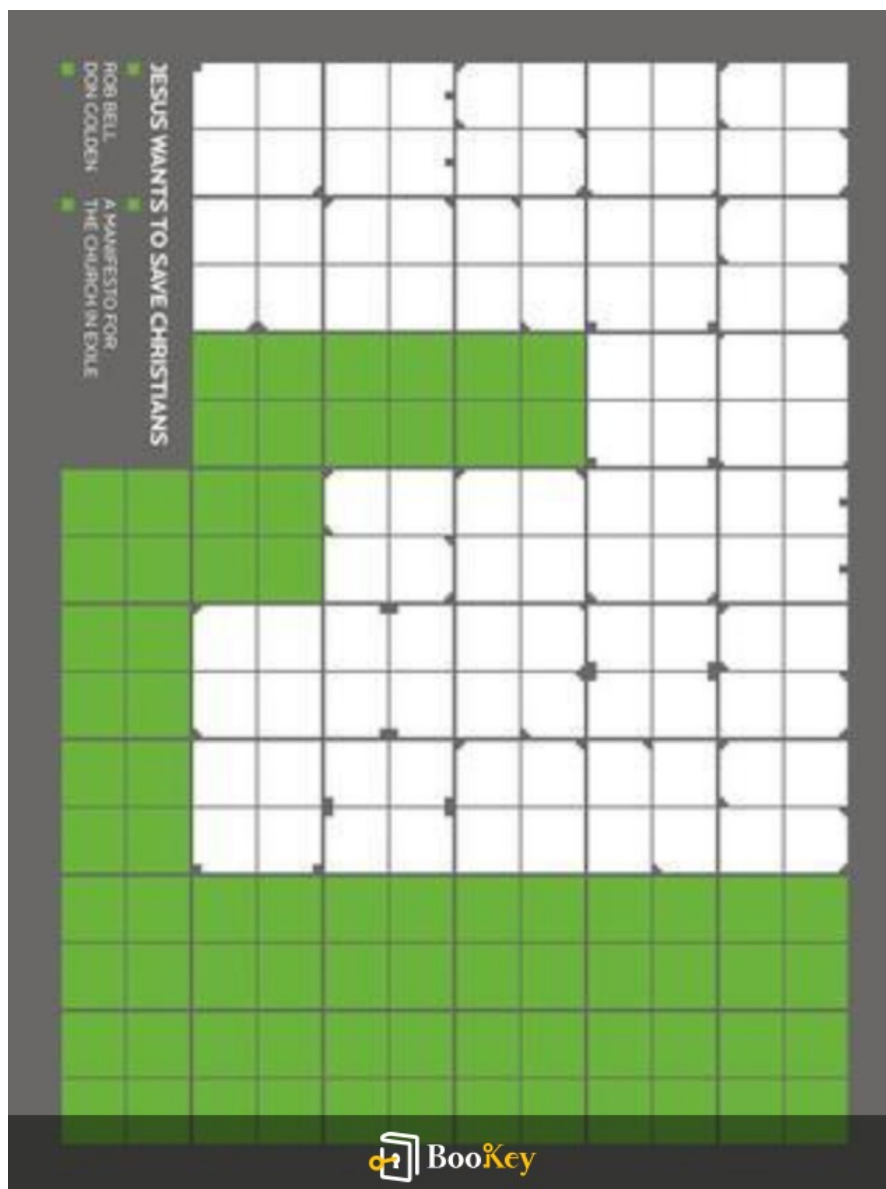


# Jesus Wants To Save Christians PDF

Don Golden Rob Bell



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# About the book

Book Summary: "Jesus Wants to Save Christians" by Rob Bell and Don Golden

Rob Bell and Don Golden present a thought-provoking examination of faith in their book "Jesus Wants to Save Christians." In this work, they challenge traditional views of contemporary Christianity through a narrative that highlights the radical themes of liberation, justice, and compassion that Jesus represents, especially for the marginalized.

The authors engage in a fresh interpretation of biblical scriptures, showing how the true messages of Jesus have often been obscured by rigid institutional frameworks and prevailing cultural biases. This text serves as an invitation for readers to rediscover the revolutionary core of the gospel. It encourages believers to move beyond mere ritualistic observances toward a more meaningful practice of love and service that has the potential to transform lives.

Readers can expect to be moved, confronted, and inspired as they explore this dialogue which redefines the essence of truly following Christ.

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# About the author

### Profile: Rob Bell

Name: Rob Bell

Birthdate: August 23, 1970

Background:

Rob Bell is a well-known American author, speaker, and former pastor, recognized for his groundbreaking and sometimes contentious interpretations of Christianity. He co-authored the influential book *\*Jesus Wants to Save Christians\** with Don Golden.

Career Highlights:

- **Founding Pastor:** Bell was the founding pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, Michigan. Under his guidance, the church became one of the fastest-growing congregations in the United States.
- **Authorship:** He has written several bestselling titles, including *\*Love Wins\** and *\*Velvet Elvis\**. These works challenge traditional evangelical viewpoints and delve into progressive Christian thought.

Philosophy and Impact:

Bell's teachings center on themes of love, inclusivity, and social justice. His ability to provoke discussion and challenge the status quo has made him a polarizing figure within the faith community. His dynamic and engaging

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teaching style continues to inspire and shape contemporary Christian perspectives, appealing to both fans and critics.

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# Jesus Wants To Save Christians Summary

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# Jesus Wants To Save Christians Summary

## Chapter List

1. Chapter 1: Understanding the Context of Jesus' Life and the Original Mission of Christianity
2. Chapter 2: The Intersection of Faith and Justice in a Broken World
3. Chapter 3: Reinterpreting Salvation: Beyond Personal Redemption to Societal Transformation
4. Chapter 4: The Call to Action: Living Out a Faith that Addresses Global Issues
5. Chapter 5: Embracing the Future: A Vision for Christians in a Changing World

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# 1. Chapter 1: Understanding the Context of Jesus' Life and the Original Mission of Christianity

In order to fully grasp the essence of Jesus' teachings and the original mission of Christianity, it's critical to understand the historical and cultural context in which Jesus lived. Set in first-century Judea, a region under Roman occupation, this period was marked by political strife, social upheaval, and religious fragmentation. The Jewish people were longing for a messianic figure who would liberate them from oppression and restore their nation. Understanding this backdrop illuminates the radical nature of Jesus' life and message, as he embodied a new vision of what it meant to be a follower of God and a member of the community.

Jesus emerged not as a military leader but as a teacher and healer, offering a message of love, compassion, and justice that directly challenged the prevailing norms of his time. The Jewish society that Jesus inhabited was rife with tensions between various sects: the Pharisees, known for their strict adherence to the law; the Sadducees, who were aligned with the Temple aristocracy; and the Zealots, who advocated violent rebellion against Rome. Each of these groups had a different understanding of what the Messiah would do and how they should engage with the occupying forces.

Jesus' message was revolutionary in that it transcended these sectarian

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divides. He preached about the Kingdom of God—not a nationalistic uprising but a radical reconfiguration of society based on love and grace. For example, when Jesus called Matthew, a tax collector who collaborated with the Romans, to follow him, it symbolized not only acceptance of all people but the dismantling of barriers that separated societal outcasts from the community of faith. The act of dining with sinners and tax collectors, as recounted in the Gospels, was more than just social inclusion; it was a radical statement against the religious elitism of the day.

Furthermore, the parables that Jesus taught often reflected this context of inclusivity and support for the marginalized. Take the Parable of the Good Samaritan, which not only advocates for love and compassion towards all, irrespective of cultural and religious differences, but also critiques the hierarchical and exclusionary attitudes of his contemporaries. In a society that placed great value on ethnic purity and religious conformity, Jesus demonstrated through his actions that compassion is central to the faith he represented.

The socio-economic backdrop of Jesus' time also plays a crucial role in understanding his mission. Many Jews lived in poverty, oppressed by heavy taxes imposed by the Romans and a complicated taxation system that benefited the ruling class. The Beatitudes, teachings found in the Sermon on the Mount, resonate strongly with the struggles of the poor and

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marginalized. Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, and the merciful—these pronouncements offered hope and affirmed the dignity of those who found themselves on the margins of society.

In essence, understanding the context of Jesus' life reveals how he redefined the purpose of spiritual mission. His approach was not merely about individual salvation but about the creation of a community where justice, mercy, and love reign supreme. This perspective shifts Christianity from a focus on personal salvation alone to a broader mission that has implications for societal transformation. Thus, Jesus' life and teachings were foretokens of a radical shift towards a faith that behaves as a vehicle for social justice and communal compassion, setting a precedent for the kind of world believers are called to create today.

To comprehend the original mission of Christianity through this lens is to acknowledge that it was imbued with the hope of societal reform and systemic justice, transcending simplistic interpretations that confine faith to personal belief. From the moment of his birth, as narrated in the Nativity stories, to his poignant sermons on mountainsides and within temples, Jesus embodied a movement aimed not just at individual souls but at the very fabric of society itself.

In conclusion, the first chapter of

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"Jesus Wants To Save Christians" encourages readers to reevaluate the legacy of Jesus not only as the figure of personal salvation but as a profound agent of societal change. It invites a deeper reflection on how the teachings of Jesus can inform contemporary issues and inspire a faith that actively pursues justice and inclusivity in a world still marked by division and disparity.

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## 2. Chapter 2: The Intersection of Faith and Justice in a Broken World

In Chapter 2 of "Jesus Wants to Save Christians," the discussion shifts towards the essential relationship between faith and justice, emphasizing how they intersect to address the problems of a broken world. Rob Bell, alongside Don Golden, navigates through the complexities of a world steeped in injustice and explores how true Christian faith calls for an active response to these societal issues.

The chapter begins by laying the groundwork for understanding that faith is not merely an inward, personal experience but is deeply connected to how we engage with the world around us. The authors argue that the original teachings of Jesus were not just about spiritual salvation but also centered around justice, compassion, and the betterment of society. In this context, faith becomes a catalyst for action, propelling believers to confront the injustices that permeate societies globally.

Bell and Golden reference scriptural examples that highlight this intersection between faith and justice. For instance, the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) serves as a powerful illustration. Here, Jesus challenges societal norms by presenting a Samaritan—an outcast in Jewish society—as the true neighbor, showcasing that love and compassion should transcend ethnic and religious boundaries. This parable critiques a faith that is

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comfortable and isolated, urging believers to extend their love and mercy to those who are marginalized and oppressed.

As the chapter progresses, the authors address contemporary issues such as poverty, inequality, and systemic injustice, arguing that a faithful response requires Christians to actively engage with these challenges. They highlight that these issues are not merely political or social but have spiritual implications, as they challenge the inherent dignity of all individuals created in the image of God. The authors emphasize that to ignore justice in the name of faith is to neglect a core tenet of Jesus' message.

To emphasize the call to action, Bell and Golden invoke the historical context of the civil rights movement in the United States. Figures like Martin Luther King Jr. exemplified how faith can drive a relentless pursuit for justice. King's activism was rooted in his understanding of the Gospel, which compels believers to fight against racial injustice and for the rights of the marginalized. His famous declaration that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" encapsulates the idea that faith and justice are indivisible, urging Christians to take a stand against oppression in all forms.

Furthermore, the authors illustrate current global perspectives, touching on issues like human trafficking and environmental degradation. They argue that as followers of Jesus, Christians must become advocates for those





affected by such injustices. Engaging in these struggles is presented not as an optional duty but as an intrinsic part of the Christian identity, where faith without action becomes meaningless.

The chapter closes with a clarion call for Christians to examine their faith through the lens of justice. Bell and Golden propose that an authentic faith must produce a profound sense of empathy and responsibility towards our neighbors—particularly towards those who suffer at the hands of a broken system. They challenge readers to ponder how their beliefs manifest in tangible actions that contribute to healing a fractured world. In essence, this chapter sets the stage for a redefined understanding of salvation that encompasses not just individual redemption but collective responsibility for societal healing, urging believers to let their faith lead them to act justly in a world that desperately needs it.

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### 3. Chapter 3: Reinterpreting Salvation: Beyond Personal Redemption to Societal Transformation

In "Jesus Wants To Save Christians," Chapter 3 delves into the profound implications of reinterpreting the concept of salvation, shifting the focus from individualistic redemption towards a transformative societal impact. This reimagining calls for a deep understanding of how Jesus' teachings can influence and change the structures of society.

Historically, salvation has been perceived predominantly as a personal affair—one's individual relationship with God, marked by the acceptance of Jesus Christ as one's savior. While this understanding holds value, it is often imbued with a misunderstanding of what salvation entails, especially in light of Jesus' own mission. In this chapter, Rob Bell emphasizes that true salvation encompasses not just individual transformation but also the transformation of society as a whole.

The narrative of salvation must expand to address systemic injustices, poverty, and oppression, which means that Christians are called to participate actively in the restoration and healing of the world. The Bible presents numerous instances where Jesus engaged with societal issues, whether in healing the sick, advocating for the marginalized, or challenging the status quo. Bell highlights that these actions are not merely incidental but



central to understanding Jesus' message of salvation.

For example, consider the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), where Jesus illustrates the call to care for those in need regardless of societal norms or prejudice. The Good Samaritan goes beyond personal concern for his own salvation; instead, he embodies a transformative love that cares for his neighbor—radically altering the narrative of who is considered a neighbor in the process. This parable stresses that salvation is interwoven with social responsibility and that acts of kindness and justice are necessary components of living out one's faith.

Furthermore, Bell compels readers to recognize that salvation's redefinition is not just about overcoming sin individually, but acknowledging and confronting the structural sins present in society. This involves examining systems of power and privilege that perpetuate inequality, as well as reflecting on how one's faith informs a response to such issues. The way Christians engage with societal ills—through activism, community service, or social justice—is an indication of their understanding of salvation.

An impactful case study that embodies this shift is the work of organizations like Invisible Children, which emerged from the heart-wrenching plight of child soldiers in Uganda. Founded by a group of filmmakers and activists who sought to raise awareness and prompt action against child abduction,

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their mission highlights the belief that salvation can manifest when individuals rally together to address global crises. It aligns with Bell's assertion that personal faith must drive collective action in pursuit of justice and healing, demonstrating that the gospel is not just good news for individuals but also for entire communities.

Ultimately, the chapter encourages readers to grapple with the reality that personal salvation is intimately linked with societal transformation. It urges a faith that actively seeks to embody love and justice, understanding that the call of Jesus compels believers to envision a radically transformed world—a world free from the chains of injustice and inequality, embodying the Kingdom of God.

By redefining salvation in this way, Bell argues that Christians are invited into a bigger story that not only focuses on individual souls but also prioritizes the care, equity, and justice of the collective whole. This reinterpretation is essential not only for the faithful but for the world at large, as it aims for a future where faith and action intersect to create a more just society.

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## 4. Chapter 4: The Call to Action: Living Out a Faith that Addresses Global Issues

In "Jesus Wants to Save Christians," Don Golden and Rob Bell passionately articulate the urgency for Christians to engage actively in global issues, moving beyond theoretical beliefs to a robust, actionable faith that influences both individual lives and socio-political landscapes. Chapter 4 serves as a clarion call, reminding us that faith must not remain confined within the walls of the church but should permeate every aspect of society, addressing issues such as poverty, injustice, and ecological degradation.

The chapter begins with a profound acknowledgment of the suffering and inequity present in the world today. Golden and Bell challenge readers to confront uncomfortable truths about systemic injustices that plague societies around the globe. They reinforce the idea that Jesus' teachings were centered not just on spiritual salvation but on tangible actions that uplift the marginalized and challenge the status quo. Through Jesus' parables and encounters, we see a model of radical compassion and social responsibility, presenting a faith that compels one to act.

A pivotal aspect of this chapter is the exploration of how Christians can embody a faith that resonates with real-world challenges. The authors emphasize the importance of community involvement, advocating for a Christianity that shapes a collective identity—a church that is a movement



rather than an institution. For instance, they share cases of congregations that have mobilized to address local food insecurity issues. By partnering with food banks and community gardens, these churches not only provide immediate assistance but work towards systemic dietary reforms, understanding that hunger is often a symptom of deeper social inequalities.

Moreover, Golden and Bell urge readers to recognize the importance of advocacy, encouraging Christians to engage politically and socially in the fight against injustice. They provide examples of faith-based organizations that have successfully lobbied for policy changes, such as those advocating for criminal justice reform or environmental stewardship. These actions reflect a commitment to ensuring that laws and practices align with the ideals of love, justice, and mercy taught by Jesus.

The chapter also draws attention to the necessity of educating oneself and others about global issues. Golden and Bell highlight the importance of understanding the complex factors that contribute to global crises such as climate change, human trafficking, and armed conflict. They recommend that Christians arm themselves with knowledge, participate in dialogues, and create awareness campaigns that engage their communities in these pressing issues. An example highlighted is the work of churches in Haiti, where congregational support has led to sustainable development initiatives that empower local communities.

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Living out a faith that addresses global issues also means recognizing the interconnectedness of humanity. The authors emphasize that compassion must stretch across borders, driving Christians to partake in international missions and partnerships that foster global kinship. They remind readers of the parable of the Good Samaritan, illustrating that one's neighbor is not just those who share the same zip code or beliefs but includes all humankind, thus calling for a radical reexamination of who we choose to help and how far we extend our compassion.

Finally, the chapter concludes with a hopeful yet challenging vision for the future. Golden and Bell instill a sense of responsibility in their readers, urging them to see themselves as agents of change in a broken world. They remind us that while our actions may feel insignificant in the face of global calamities, collective small acts often lead to monumental shifts. By committing to love, serve, and uplift others, individuals and congregations can foster a revolution of justice that influences the world for the better.

In essence, Chapter 4 serves as a rousing reminder that faith without action is fruitless. It calls Christians to engage fully in the mess of the world, armed with the love of Christ and a conviction to enact justice, thereby becoming conduits of hope and transformation in their communities and beyond.

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## 5. Chapter 5: Embracing the Future: A Vision for Christians in a Changing World

In a rapidly evolving society marked by technological advancements, cultural shifts, and increasing global interconnectivity, Christians are faced with the challenge of embracing their faith in a way that resonates with contemporary realities. Chapter 5 of "Jesus Wants To Save Christians" emphasizes the necessity for Christians to envision a future that reflects the teachings of Jesus within the context of modern life while remaining steadfast in their mission of love, justice, and mercy.

Fundamentally, this vision begins with recognizing the ongoing relevance of Jesus' message in today's world. Rob Bell urges Christians to engage deeply with their faith and to reformulate their understanding of religious practice as not merely a series of rituals or beliefs, but as an active engagement with the world around them. He illustrates this perspective by urging believers to look beyond personal salvation and instead focus on how their actions can impact societal conditions. This shift in focus allows Christians to embody the essence of the Gospel in practical, transformative ways.

Bell posits that in order to embrace the future effectively, Christians must be willing to confront the realities of injustice and inequality that plague society. Instead of retreating into a bubble of comfort and assurance, he advocates for a bold and courageous approach that challenges systems of

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oppression and advocates for those on the margins. This is reflected in the teachings of Jesus, who consistently reached out to the marginalized and oppressed individuals of His time. For instance, Christian communities today can look towards the stories of activists like Martin Luther King Jr., whose faith-driven commitment to justice reshaped societal norms. His integration of faith and activism serves as a powerful testament to how Christians can navigate a complex world and effect change.

Moreover, Bell emphasizes the importance of community in this vision for the future. The Christian faith, at its core, is inherently communal—rooted in the idea of shared humanity and collective responsibility. As Christians seek to navigate a changing landscape, they must forge deep connections with one another and with the broader community. This connectedness fuels collective action and creates a platform for advocacy against social issues such as poverty, racism, and environmental degradation. The modern church must evolve from a static institution into a dynamic movement that not only welcomes dialogue but actively seeks to engage with societal issues.

A poignant example of this is the rise of interfaith initiatives in which diverse religious groups come together to address shared concerns such as climate change, social justice, and peacebuilding. When Christians join forces with individuals from different faith backgrounds, they embody the message of unity and collaboration that Jesus espoused. This kind of

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engagement illustrates that the future for Christians is not one of isolation but of active participation in the broader societal dialogue, fostering an environment in which love, respect, and understanding can flourish.

In navigating this path, Bell also highlights the necessity of adaptability and innovation within the church. As cultural norms shift and new challenges emerge, Christians must be willing to reassess traditional practices and explore creative solutions that honor their faith. This might mean rethinking how church activities engage with technology, outreach initiatives, and even social media. For instance, the use of social media as a platform for ministry can facilitate outreach to younger generations who may feel disconnected from traditional church settings.

Ultimately, Chapter 5 challenges Christians to not only envision a better future but to actively participate in its creation. This involves harnessing a hopeful spirit that believes in the possibility of change and the power of love to transcend barriers. Bell encourages readers to be conduits of transformation, advocating for a faith that breathes life into the future, rather than clinging to the past. As they embark on this journey, Christians can seek to embody the Kingdom of God—marked by peace, justice, and reconciliation.

In conclusion, embracing the future as detailed in Bell's narrative is about

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more than just navigating change; it's a call to action that demands a re-engagement with Christ's mission. By focusing on love, justice, and community within a changing world, Christians are invited to participate in the unfolding of a hopeful and transformative vision—a vision where faith not only survives but thrives in the face of adversity.

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