



Seven Letters to Seven Churches (LBS)

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“One of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship’s most important contributions to the evangelical church at large has been the popularization of, motivation for, and training for inductive Bible study.”

— **Andy Le Peau**, former associate publisher, editorial, InterVarsity Press

Creating a Legacy of Inductive Bible Study

Since the publication of the first LifeGuide® Bible study (LBS), *Genesis*, in 1985, InterVarsity Press has strived to create accessible Bible studies for individuals and groups.

In 1982, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship staff member Jack Kuhatchek and IVP editors Andy Le Peau and Jim Hoover conceptualized what became LifeBuilder Bible Studies (soon renamed LifeGuide® Bible Studies). The idea was to produce a quality series of Bible study guides that would be relevant and inductive, and also appeal to both Christian students and laypeople in churches. The first seven studies were published in 1985, with a plan to have an LBS for almost every book of the Bible as well as numerous topical studies.

“Over ten million LifeGuide® Bible Studies have been distributed around the world since InterVarsity Press first started publishing them in 1985,” says Cindy Bunch, associate publisher, editorial, and LBS series editor. “They are designed to create conversation around Scripture passages. The discussion format is easy to lead, and the focus on a single chapter of Scripture allows everyone to enter the conversation, even those with little prior knowledge about the Bible. LifeGuide® Bible Studies create a context for God’s Word to speak into our lives today.”

Editors and authors include the late John Stott, J. I. Packer, Dale and Sandy Larsen, Rebecca Pippert, Patty Pell, James Sire, Paul Borthwick, and many others. With over one hundred titles currently in print, InterVarsity Press has accomplished its original goal to cover the Old and New Testaments, Bible characters, and major Christian themes.

In this most recent LifeGuide, *Seven Letters to Seven Churches*, Douglas Connelly engages with the words of Jesus in the seven letters to the seven churches in Revelation, asking what if Jesus wrote a letter to your church? Studying this Scripture with a group or individually allows us to ask some hard questions – of ourselves, of our leaders, and of the Lord.

“There’s a way to tell how you would respond to a letter from Jesus – look how you respond to the letters he has already written to seven first-century churches,” writes Connelly. “What’s so intriguing about these churches is that you can find examples of every one of them in the community where you live. These churches exist in every city, in every rural township. They have different names and align with different denominations, but they are around, and Jesus is speaking to them. The church you attend or help to lead, or the church that sponsors your small group, is one of these seven churches!”

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