

This study guide is intended for the use in personal or small group study of VELVET ELVIS: REPAINTING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH by Rob Bell. In no way has it been authorized by Mr. Bell or Zondervan books. Feel free to use it, but do not charge any funds for its use.

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1. Bell comments that 'Everybody has faith in something and somebody.' (020) What do you think he means by this?

2. Some people might take issue with the following statements 'I think that the way of Jesus is the best possible way to live,' (020) (with the implication that He is the only way to live); 'Perhaps a better question than who's right, is who's living rightly?' (021) Are Bell's comments out of line, or are they truthful?

3. In the metaphor of a trampoline, Bell makes the comment that the springs are 'doctrines of the Christian faith' and that the 'springs hold up the mat, but they are not God'. What does he mean? What is 'jumping' in this metaphor? How does that feel to you, and why?

4. How would you explain the metaphor of a trampoline as compared to a brick wall? What is the difference between a doctrine and scripture? Why is this distinction important?

5. Why do you think some Christians afraid of questions? What can questions do for us? Why would an absence of questions be a cause for concern? What kinds of questions would be wrong to ask?

6. What does Bell mean when he says 'if we do definitively put God into words, we have at that moment made God something God is not.'? Why is the mystery of God important?

7. Why is 'brickianity' associated with the thinking and talking, while the trampoline is about a person's walk and their heart? How is this the same or different than your experience with the Christian faith?

8. How do we find joy in God? How is joy different than happiness?