



# Darkwood Brew.org

*Wherever You Are, We'll Meet You There*

**New to the role of facilitator?** Here are a few tips to help you get started.

- First of all, a facilitator's job is to coordinate the flow of each session. View the video segment ahead of time and make your own notes and observations.
- Prepare the meeting place so that it is comfortable. Arrive early; help organize any refreshments and test your video player/computer.
- Getting to know one another helps the discussions flow. Welcome all, catch up and reflect a bit on last week's session in the first few minutes.
- You don't have to be the expert. You are not expected to provide answers to questions provided. So let the questions ignite the conversation and see where it takes the group.
- It's everyone's responsibility to make sure everyone else gets an equal amount of time to talk.
- Listen first; evaluate later. Make sure you understand a comment, then ask questions or pose other options.
- Encourage participants to bring a Bible or other resources.
- If you feel so moved, start, and/or end your session in prayer.

## Leaders Guide

### "If Love Wins, What Now?"

Rob Bell's book 'Love Wins' rocked American Christianity with a message of God's grace for all people. This four-part series lead by Rev. Eric Elnes Ph.D. explores how it works in our life and what it means to people in our communities and around the world. Whether you're considering God's universal grace for the first time, or wanting to delve more deeply into a faith that embraces all people, this series presents a fascinating line-up of guests to help you answer "What now?" in unique and personal ways.

### Welcome to the Darkwood Brew journey!

We are glad you can join us. Our primary resources for small group study are condensed versions of Darkwood Brew's weekly one-hour episodes. These are called GUIDED EPISODES. Each Guided Episode is 25-30 minutes in length. There are pause points with questions provided for each Episode, intended for group discussion or individual reflection.

On the following page, you will find information on the Series Topic, Skype Guests, Scripture passage, and Questions posed during the episode.



**Questions:**

1. What are your beliefs about salvation? Would it be possible that they might change?
2. How do these Bible texts, and many others with similar content, inform your thought about salvation?
3. Brian refers to human evil as the enemy? How does that fit into a universal view of salvation?
4. If not a buffer against hell, what roles can the church play?
5. In what ways does Jesus continue to be important and relevant in your life?
6. What does it mean if the focus of faith is shifted away from reward or punishment in an afterlife?
7. What does it mean if divine justice is restorative rather than retributive?
8. What does it mean to trust that love wins?

**EPISODE TITLE: "Episode 1"**

If Love Wins, What Now? Episode 1

**Featured Guest: Brian McLaren**

Brian D. McLaren is an author, speaker, activist, and networker among innovative Christian leaders. His dozen-plus books include *A New Kind of Christianity*, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, *Naked Spirituality*, and *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?* He and his wife, Grace, live in Florida and have four adult children and four grandchildren. He's an avid wildlife and outdoors enthusiast. His newest book, *We Make the Road by Walking*, is available now.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: Psalm 22:27-31**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him. Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord, and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: Psalm 139: 7-12**

Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night', even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: Luke 23: 33-34**

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[ Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing. And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: John 1:29**

The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: John 3:17**

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: Romans 8:38-39**

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15: 21-22**

For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ

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**Questions:**

1. In what ways do we become invested in our own belief systems?
2. How might references Jesus makes to Gehenna work as metaphors for renewal as opposed to eternal torture?
3. What are some alternatives to the understanding of a physical rapture sometime in the future?
4. In what ways can Christianity sometimes continue to be a religion of fear?
5. How is it possible to manifest the Kingdom of God in our world today?
6. Do you agree with Martin Luther that good works proceed from a good heart rather than from fear of punishment?
7. How does that patient and eternal force of love operate in your life?

**EPISODE TITLE: "Episode 2"**

If Love Wins, What Now? Episode 2

**Featured Guest: Diana Butler Bass**

Diana Butler Bass is an author, speaker, and independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture. She holds a Ph.D. in religious studies from Duke University and is the author of eight books, including *Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening* and *A People's History of Christianity: the Other Side of the Story* (HarperOne, 2009). Publishers Weekly named her best-selling *Christianity for the Rest of Us* as one of the best religion books of 2006. She is a contributing editor for *Sojourners Magazine*.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 23: 12-15**

All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted. 'But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: Mark 9: 43-48**

If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell.' And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

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### Questions:

1. What are some of your God experiences?
2. If love wins, how does that inform your interactions, even with people who don't see things the same way you do?
3. What meaning do you find in Eric's experiences? Do you believe we are recipients of God's pure love?

### EPISODE TITLE: "Episode 3"

If Love Wins, What Now? Episode 3

### Featured Guest: Rachel Held Evans

Rachel Held Evans is a popular blogger, author and speaker. She is the author of *Evolving in Monkey Town* and *A Year of Biblical Womanhood*. In addition to her writing, Rachel keeps a busy speaking schedule across the country for retreats, conferences, universities and churches. Some of her most recent events have included Mars Hill Church (Grand Rapids), Fuller Seminary, Baylor University, Abilene Christian University, The Wild Goose Festival, and STORY Chicago. She has been featured on NPR, Slate, The BBC, The Washington Post, The Guardian (UK), The Times London, The Huffington Post, and Oprah.com, and was recently named one of Christianity Today's "50 Women to Watch."

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12: 1-10

It is necessary to boast; nothing is to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows— was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

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## Questions:

1. Has the church sometimes used fear as a motivator? What has been the result?
2. Do you believe that divine love is the basis for judgement or for freedom?
3. How do you think God relates to and heals our imperfections?
4. Do you agree with Gregg that God's love is big enough to restore even the greatest of sins?
5. How can the church help foster that non-diluted or digital grace Eric and Chuck referred to?
6. How might we apply Augustine's rule of love in our churches and our world today?

## EPISODE TITLE: "Episode 4"

If Love Wins, What Now? Episode 4

### Featured Guest: Gregg Brekke

Gregg Brekke owns and operates SixView Studios, a communications company dedicated to the art of visual storytelling and interpretation. Brekke's portfolio is broad and includes significant attention given to global health and economics, justice issues, immigration, and religious topics. Recent work has been published by the World YWCA, Sojourners Magazine, Religion News Service, US Catholic, Presbyterian News Service and is found in syndication at major news outlets including the Washington Post. Video projects have focused on commercial production, PSA feature films, curriculum development, awareness campaigns and non-profit mission promotion. An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, Brekke previously served as news director for the United Church of Christ and editor of United Church News and StillSpeaking Magazine.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Acts 2: 38-47

Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.' And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Acts 2: 39

For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.

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