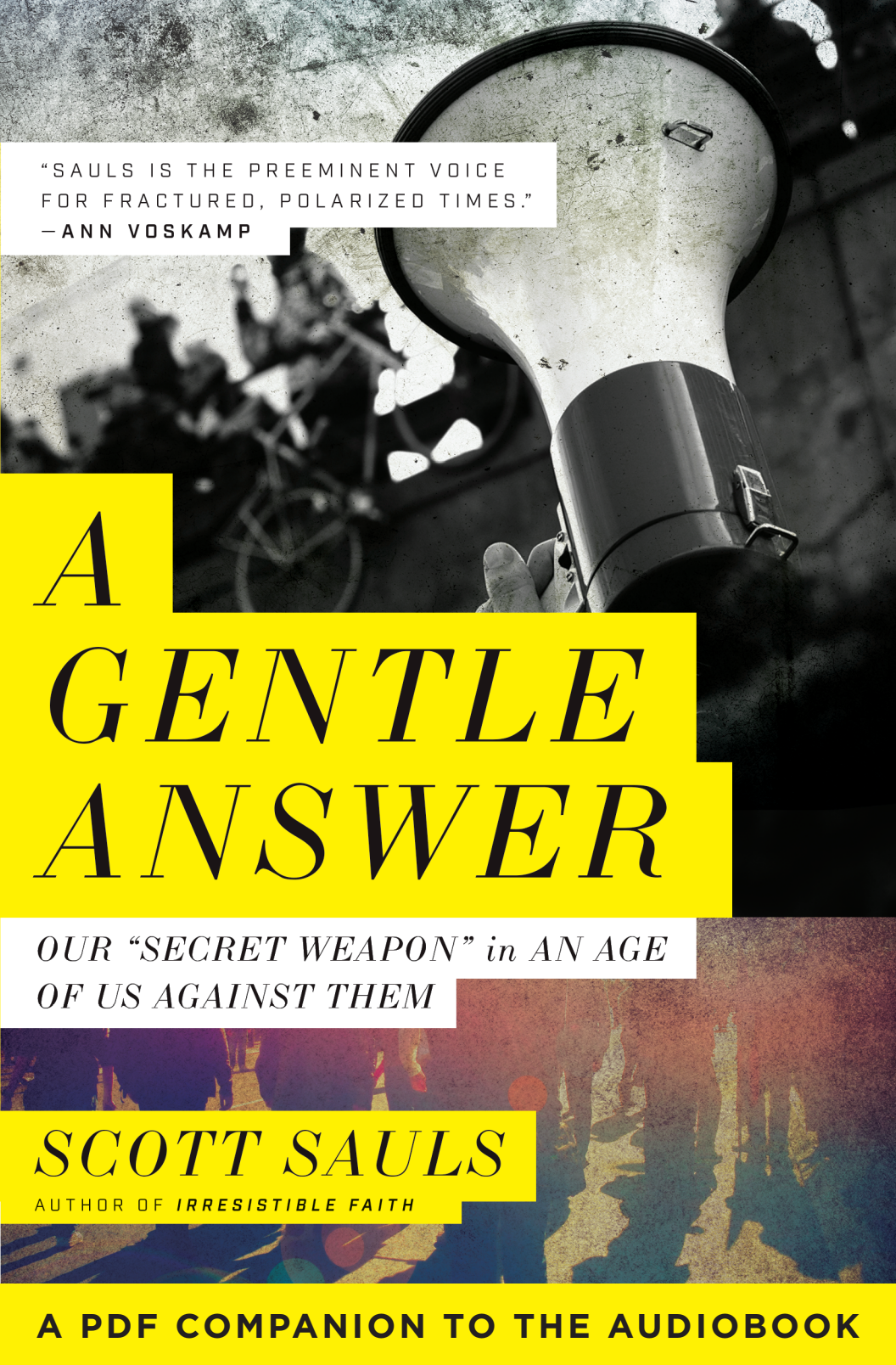




"SAULS IS THE PREEMINENT VOICE
FOR FRACTURED, POLARIZED TIMES."

—ANN VOSKAMP

A GENTLE ANSWER

OUR "SECRET WEAPON" in AN AGE
OF US AGAINST THEM

SCOTT SAULS

AUTHOR OF *IRRESISTIBLE FAITH*

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

He Befriends the Sinner in Us

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. In today's society, who are the Zacchaeus types that everybody seems to despise? What qualities would turn another person into a Zacchaeus type in *your* eyes? How do you feel, and what do you think, about the idea of Jesus reaching out to that person with the same degree of love and acceptance that he gives to you? Does the thought warm you, offend you, or both? Why do you answer in the way that you do?
3. In what ways do you relate to Zacchaeus as the man in the tree? In what ways do you relate to him as the man who became a friend of Jesus? As the man whose life was radically transformed? Why do you think that God put the story of Zacchaeus in the Bible—as opposed to the story of a morally upright citizen?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?

TWO

He Reforms the Pharisee in Us

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. Between William and Church Guy, who do you identify with most easily? Why do you think Church Guys are so put off by people like William? Which of the two is most likely to have a deep affection for Jesus, and why?
3. How can political conservatism damage the witness of the gospel? How can political liberalism damage the witness of the gospel? How should we be addressing this reality in our faith communities and in our own lives? In what ways are we most susceptible to conflating politics with faith? Why is doing so unwise?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?

THREE

He Disarms the Cynic in Us

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. Nathanael distanced himself from Jesus for social, political, and personal reasons. Which of these three reasons—social, political, and personal—is the most prominent reason why people distance themselves from Jesus today? Which of the three tempts you the most to keep your own distance, and why?
3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ “sees” you in the same way that he saw Nathanael under the tree? If so, how does this awareness impact your affections and receptivity toward him? How does it impact your response to those who seem to want to distance themselves from you?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?

FOUR

We Grow Thicker Skin

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. Have you ever experienced persecution? If so, describe the experience. How did it impact your relationship with Christ? With other people?
3. In what ways has the American Dream shaped your expectations of how Christians are treated by society? In what ways have American politics shaped your expectations?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?

FIVE

We Do Anger Well

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. Is the idea of anger as a virtue and gift from God new to you? How would you describe the difference between unrighteous anger and righteous anger? Can you give an example of each, from either observation or experience?
3. We've discussed how our smaller pet peeves can become a training ground to prepare us for dealing faithfully with greater injuries and offenses. What are your pet peeves? How is your response to them preparing you for future conflicts, whether for good or for ill?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?

We Receive Criticism Graciously

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. When you are criticized, what is your typical response? In what ways has the experience of being criticized revealed in you a need for growth? In what ways has the experience shown that the Lord is actively at work in you? How is your usual response to criticism similar to David's response to Shim-Than? How is it different?
3. What are your thoughts regarding Tim Keller's perspective on receiving criticism? What, if anything, makes his response difficult for you?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?

SEVEN

We Forgive All the Way

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. What is your initial response to the biblical and modern-day examples of forgiveness that are featured in this chapter? When you have experienced injury, how has your response resembled these examples? How has your response been different?
3. In one situation, Rachael Denhollander forgave her offender but did not release him from responsibility for the things he had done to her. In another situation, Bishop Myriel forgave his offender and did release him from responsibility. When we are the injured party, how do we determine which of these is the best, most appropriate response?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?

EIGHT

We Bless Our Own Betrayers

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Name one thing from this chapter that troubled you, inspired you, or both. Why were you impacted in this way?
2. Which response from Jesus to his two fallen disciples is more compelling to you? Is it when he calls Judas “friend,” or is it when he says “and Peter” to the women? Why do you answer in the way that you do?
3. As I’ve pointed out, every Christian has inside him an “inner Jesus” as well as an “inner Judas.” Do you think it is important to be aware of an “inner Jesus”? Of an “inner Judas”? Why or why not?
4. Based on this chapter, identify one way that the Lord might be nudging you toward growth or change. What steps should you take to pursue the change?