

WRECKED ACTION GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This is a ten-part study for individuals and groups, intended to be completed over the course of ten weeks, however, you can go through it as quickly or as slowly as you'd like.

This is not just another study guide. The point of Wrecked is to get you to move, to think differently, and to respond to the world's needs in your own way. That's why I'm calling this an "action guide"—I don't want you to just read; I want you to act.

Each lesson corresponds to its respective book chapter (e.g. Lesson 2 corresponds with Chapter 2) which serves as the week's reading material. After reading a chapter, you should then use the action guide to reflect on and discuss the material. At the end of each lesson is a challenge that you'll need to complete before moving on to the next lesson. Typically, you do the "Act" section by yourself, in-between lessons and then share your experience with the group the following week or the next time you get together.

If you're going through this study individually, feel free to journal or blog the answers to the discussion questions. If you want to join the community online, you can tweet using the hash tag #wreckedbook or connect with others on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/wreckedbook>.

This needs to work for you wherever you are in your journey of getting wrecked. So feel free to tweak any of the materials, make changes, etc. It should be relevant for you and your group or community.



Jeff Goins



LESSON 1: GET WRECKED

READ

Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 of Wrecked.

REVIEW

“Something’s missing,” John Mayer sings, “and I don’t know what it is.” He proceeds to list everything he thinks he needs—girls, guitars, money—and how none of it satisfies.

Turns out, John was right. Something is missing, but it’s not what you think. What we need in most of our lives is compassion. Living more courageously for others—that’s what’s missing. Not more stuff or more activities, but more opportunities to serve those who need it.

REFLECT

Spend some time thinking about the stuff you own: money, books, clothes, electronics, and so on. Make a list. Then ask yourself: “How many of these things really satisfy me?” Be honest.

It’s fine to enjoy your laptop or car—there’s nothing wrong with possession, yet after a while we may start seeing our stuff as obligations and burdens. Before too long, it feels like what we own actually owns us.

Think long and hard about your list. Which of these things could you do without?

DISCUSS

- What’s missing in your life? Is it joy? Purpose? Fulfillment? Something else? Answer honestly. No pat answers.

- Is there really a purpose to pain? What is it? Was there a time when you saw a reason for a difficult time in your life? What did you learn?

- Was there a time when you met a need you couldn’t fill? How did it make you feel? Could you relate to Talia’s feelings of inadequacy in helping the Nameless Woman?

ACT

Find someone who embodies a life of radical compassion. Ask this person out to coffee or lunch. Learn everything you can and share it with the group next time you get together.



LESSON 2: FIND YOURSELF

READ

Read Chapter 2 of *Wrecked*.

Optional: Google “Thomas Merton false self” and read a few of the top pages.

REVIEW

Thomas Merton said we have two selves: the one we show everyone else and our true self.

We’re all broken and incomplete in some way. This makes us scared to be vulnerable and so we assert our strengths and talents in ways that make us look better. In the process, we end up forgetting who we really are.

The way back to our true selves is a path of submission and sacrifice—not to please others, but to be honest with our selfishness and find a better life than we could create on our own in the process.

REFLECT

Think of all the ways you assert your false self. How do you try to convince others you’re a better person than you actually are? Who would you be if you weren’t afraid of rejection?

DISCUSS

- How have you tried to find yourself without succeeding?
- What are some ways in which you perform—fulfilling a role that isn’t really you—instead of truly living?
- What opportunities for finding our true roles do we have? Was there a time in your life when you felt like you really found yourself? What were you doing?

ACT

*Rent *The Bourne Identity* and watch it—the whole thing, if you can. Otherwise, just watch the diner scene. As you watch, take notes of all the ways in which Jason is searching for significance. Can you relate?*

In what ways are you living out of your false self? Be brave and share them. If this intimidates you, start with your journal. Then, make a decision to start acting more like yourself and less like the person you think people want you to be. And start sharing this person with those closest to you.



LESSON 3: COME & DIE

READ

Read Chapter 3 of *Wrecked*.

REVIEW

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a pastor during World War II who was executed for trying to assassinate Hitler. Before he died, he wrote a number of spiritual classics, including *The Cost of Discipleship*. He is known for talking about discipline in terms of death.*

Many of us are familiar with the language of “bearing our cross”—that we each have unique roles and burdens to bear. But few of us say what this really means. A cross is an instrument of death. If we are going to be wrecked, all our dreams and ambitions—at least for a season—must die.

REFLECT

Consider a time when pain actually brought you closer to another person, when it helped you better understand God and your purpose in life.

Then consider this: If moments of discomfort are our greatest times of growth, why do we still do everything in our power to avoid them?

DISCUSS

- How have you found purpose in the midst of pain or suffering?

- Do you believe we find our identities amidst activity? If not, where does it come from?

- Name a time when you pursued a dream only to find it wasn't ultimately what you were searching for? What did you do then?

ACT

Do something that “hurts,” that disrupts your comfort. Find a support group to attend (even if you don't need it). Volunteer at a homeless shelter, join an afternoon mentoring program, bring some food to a neighbor. Go where there is pain or grief, and just be there. See what happens to your heart.



LESSON 4: WRECKING TIME

READ

Read Chapter 4 of *Wrecked*.

REVIEW

When I was studying abroad in Spain, I met a homeless man who told me if I didn't give him some money for food that he would be dead the next day. He was probably playing the "guilt card" a little, but I still walked away.

Then something made me turn around. I ran back to him and shared a meal with him and he said something that shocked me. He told me that I was the only one who had ever stopped to help him.

We all think "someone else" will do the right thing, but sometimes there's nobody but us.

REFLECT

Think of a time when you turned around, when you responded to that inner voice telling you to do the right thing. How did you feel afterwards?

DISCUSS

- Have you ever been wrecked? How?
- What have you done since being wrecked? Have you become jaded in any way?
- Mother Teresa used to say Calcutta was everywhere. You just needed eyes to see it. Where is your "Calcutta"—the place where you can serve right now?

ACT

This week, pay attention. There will come a moment when a need arises. Maybe you'll pass a hitchhiker and think, "Someone else will stop." Or you'll see a person in the checkout line of the grocery store who's just a little short on cash.

For a moment, there will be a voice telling you to turn around, to reach out, and to help that person. You may have heard it a thousand times before and ignored it, but this time, obey the voice.

Do the thing that you usually don't do: be courageously generous. Afterwards, write down what happened. How do you feel? Relieved? Invigorated? More alive than ever before? Whatever you feel, be okay with it.



LESSON 5: COMMIT TO SOMETHING

READ

Read Chapter 5 of Wrecked.

REVIEW

We are all afraid of commitment because it costs us something. It requires us to give of ourselves in ways that are rarely comfortable. Some of us are better at this than others, but we all have certain things that are hard to commit to.

Maybe it's cleaning the house, or staying in a relationship, or giving to charity—we all struggle with doing the daily work that we're called to do. The hard thing is that the discomfort associated with doing these things never goes away. Not until we act.

REFLECT

Consider something you can't commit to. Maybe it's as simple as mowing the lawn or settling down with a job. Or it could be something more dramatic. Whatever it is, it needs to get done and you just don't want to do it.

DISCUSS

- Are you good at commitment? Spend a few minutes listing some commitments you've recently broken. The bigger, the better.
- Have you ever had a “grass is greener” mentality towards life—which is to say, you were always waiting for the next best thing? Why is this?
- The three levels of commitment are Adventure, Season, and Marriage. Give an example of each one in your life right now.

ACT

Watch Lord of the Rings – at least the last minutes of Return of the King. Ask yourself: Who is the real hero? Frodo... or Sam? Why?



LESSON 6: BEAR FRUIT

READ

Read Chapter 6 of Wrecked.

REVIEW

Being wrecked is just the beginning of living a radical life. The experience of having your world turned upside down is how we begin living a life less ordinary. Commitment, however, is where the growth takes place..

The challenge of commitment is intimidating to a lot of people, uncomfortable even, and that's exactly why you need to choose into it. Because committing to something or someone is another way we get wrecked.

REFLECT

Think of a tough choice you made that ended up turning out for good. How did you feel before versus after making the decision? What caused you to do it?

DISCUSS

- Have you ever left a job too soon?

- What are some examples of “extended adolescence” in our culture, our community, and our lives?

- Do you think there's such a thing as a perfect job? How do balance the tension of pursuing our passions while being obedient to a calling?

ACT

On a piece of paper, list out some of the opportunities you could take to commit to something for a season. Maybe it's an exercise plan, maybe a book club. Maybe it's a volunteer opportunity or an internship.

Here are the rules: It has to be at least one month long. Two weeks won't cut it. This is more than a service project; it's a season. Commit already.



LESSON 7: WALK AWAY

READ

Read Chapter 7 of *Wrecked*.

REVIEW

The hardest part of helping someone is when you can't. Sometimes the people who need us the most are taken out of our lives. Why is this? Sometimes, it's to teach them a lesson. Other times, it's to teach us one. And sometimes, it remains a mystery.

Most of us live over-committed lives because we can't say no. We're addicted to activity, and this prevents us from committing to a few core causes that are worth our time.

At some point, we all need to walk away from something good for something better. And sometimes the point of that lesson is simply to remind us that we aren't in control.

REFLECT

Consider a time when you quit something—a job, a cause, a commitment. What did you learn? How did you grow? Was walking away the right choice? Why? Don't try to justify yourself; just think about the experience and what you learned from it.

DISCUSS

- When did you have to walk away from something that was good? Why did you do it? Was it the right thing to do?
- Have you ever needed to be needed? Share a time in which you helped someone not for them but for you.
- Was there ever a time when you wanted to quit something you were doing and you knew you shouldn't? Did you stick with it or skip town?

ACT

List at least ten good things you should consider quitting. These may be great opportunities, but they're getting in the way of what you should really be doing. Write them down and consider if there are more important priorities that are suffering because of these obligations. Resolve to quit at least one this week. No excuses; cross it off your list and commit to following through.



LESSON 8: GET A JOB

READ

Read Chapter 8 of *Wrecked*.

Optional: Read *5 Steps to a Better Career* by David Kinnaman in *RELEVANT Magazine* (visit online at <http://bit.ly/wreckedjob>).

In our culture of instant gratification, we are prone to short-term commitments. But the real work of making a difference is always a long one. Sure, it may begin with an initial wrecking, but where we invest our time is where we ultimately leave a legacy — especially when it comes to reaching out and helping those in need.

REFLECT

Consider your first real job. Did you like or hate it? Reflect on what you learned, where you struggled and what the experience taught you.

DISCUSS

- What was your first real job? What was good or bad about it? What did you learn?
- Have you ever stayed at a job longer than you wanted? Was it the right or wrong thing to do? Feel free to share examples of both.
- How do we overcome our proclivity towards short-term commitments — as a community and culture?

ACT

Brainstorm solutions to this short-term/long-term problem. Pick one and create a plan to do it. Ask a friend or person in your study group to help you follow through, but don't make a vague promise. Choose something specific that you can do for someone else for a season, and start doing it.



LESSON 9: GO WHERE YOU DON'T WANT TO GO

READ

Read Chapter 9 from Wrecked.

REVIEW

Life is not only about us and what we want. We discover our purpose when we're pouring out our gifts as an offering for others. We come alive when we stop worrying so much about ourselves.

But the path to this purpose is a hard one. It means doing things that are uncomfortable and, essentially, going where you don't want to go.

REFLECT

Think about the house where you grew up. Close your eyes and imagine you're there right now. Can you remember what the walls looked like and how big the back yard was? What feelings does this bring up? Spend some time being present to them.

DISCUSS

- Have you ever visited the house where you grew up? An old vacation spot? High school? What did it look like? How did it feel? Share some memories.

- How do we try to hold onto the past instead of living in the present? List a few current examples in your life.

- Have you ever been led where you don't want to go, figuratively or literally? What happened and how did you grow?

ACT

Find something you don't want to do, or let it find you, and do it. Try not to think or complain too much about it. Just do it. Retrain your reflex that keeps you from doing the right thing.



LESSON 10: WRECK OTHERS

READ

Read Chapter 10 of *Wrecked*.

Optional: Read Chapter 6 of Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis. (You can find the whole book online for free at: <http://bit.ly/wreckedlewis>).

REVIEW

The point of your life is to not merely get wrecked. It's also to wreck others. Not to just pursue thrills, but to help other people find their own callings.

You are called to lead, which means sacrifice and submission to a larger story than the one you want to live. At times, this will be hard; but mostly, it will feel like another adventure. And it is.

REFLECT

Think of a relationship in your life that changed you and the way you see the world. This could be a mentor, a teacher, a parent, or someone else that reshaped your paradigm in some way. Make some notes of what this person taught you and how.

DISCUSS

- Who is someone who helped you get wrecked?

- Have you had the opportunity to introduce someone to something uncomfortable that caused them to grow? Did they thank or resent you for it?

- What does getting wrecked look like for you these days?

ACT

Write a letter to that person who wrecked you. And then find someone you can get into relationship with — it doesn't have to be anything formal — and set aside some time to meet over coffee or lunch and see where it goes. Don't try to fix the person; just listen. This is what being wrecked is all about: entering the mess of life and just abiding.

