

The Power of a Worldview

I am currently absorbed in my reading and research on China

Two key concepts shape the current worldview of China:

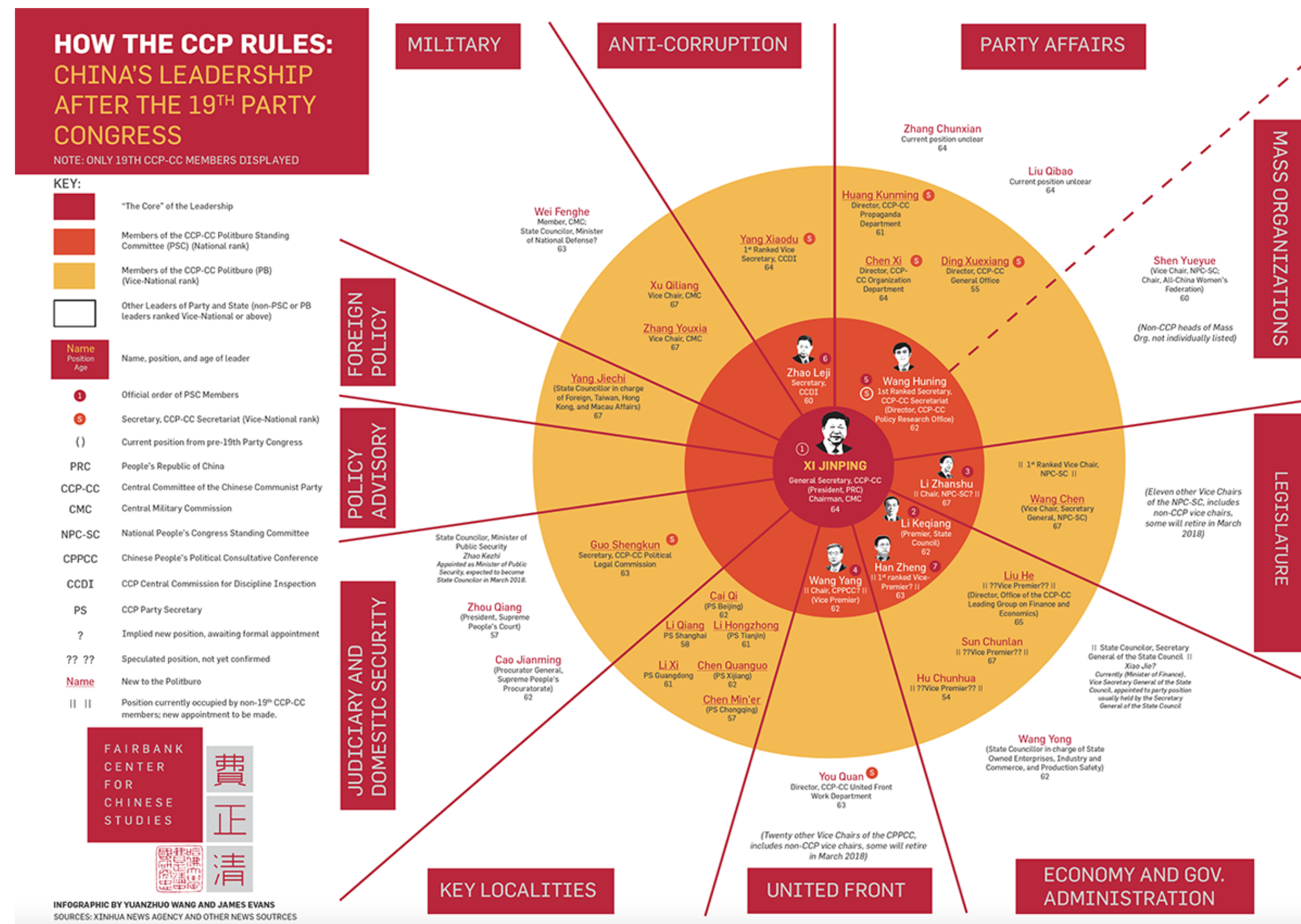
- socialism with Chinese characteristics (new little red book)
- one belt one road

The Power of a Worldview

Three new developments in last few weeks:

- Christians in some rural areas (house church movements) are being forced to take down their pictures of Jesus in their homes and replace them with Chairman Xi.
- Chairman Xi will soon be voted in as lifetime president—the new Mao.
- China is using “predictive policing” to put thousands in “Communist Education” camps (CCTV cameras, facial recognition, wi-fi sniffers, license plate numbers, citizen ID cards, and “visitors management systems”; 160,00 from one province were recently put in camps.)

The Power of a Worldview



Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, Harvard

The Power of a Worldview

The globalists—Davos globalists, European Union, USA establishment

- Setting up a one world government
- *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, by Samuel Huntington
- Worldview of the globalists:
 - China—open doors, democracy will win
 - Accept Islam, it will moderate and join the world community

The Power of a Worldview

How should we think as Christians? What is our worldview according to Christ?

This morning we are going to address that.

In Romans 6–8, Paul is reshaping our worldview according to the gospel. That reshaping is not the Roman worldview of the day, and it is different from the Greek worldview—the two dominant worldviews of the day.

Again, I'm deeply indebted to N.T. Wright, who builds his whole massive work on Paul around Christ's worldview in contrast to Rome and Greece, and stands as corrective to Israel, who twisted the unfolding worldview (i.e. The Story—God's metanarrative).

Uniqueness and Significance of Paul's Early Letters Series

Paul and the Faithfulness of God, by N. T. Wright

His table of contents sets Paul's argument in the worldview debate of the day

Book 1:

Part I: Paul and His World

Part II: The Mindset of Paul

Book 2:

Part III: Paul's Theology

Part IV: Paul in History

The Essence of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

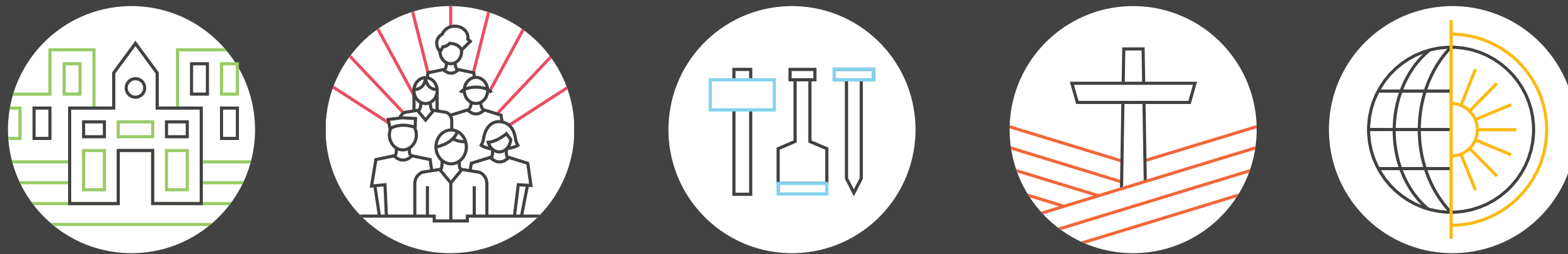
Issue: The essence of Paul's argument in 5:1–8:39

Questions:

1. What is the essence of Paul's argument in 5:1–8:39? How does he reshape the storyline?
2. What are some of the corollary points of Paul's argument?
3. What is Paul's mindset—his worldview—as shaped by the gospel? How does he expect Roman Christians to live now that they are part of God's family and part of His covenant purposes?
4. How should they think about the “groaning” of this life? How should they think about their lives in light of the coming kingdom?

The Early Pauline Epistles Series: 4-year project

- Leadership Series—Pauline Epistles: 1988–2004
- Mastering the Scriptures Series—Early Pauline Epistles: 2014–2018
- From Jesus to the Gospels: Kerygma 1
- Paul's Early Letters: Kerygma 2
- Great indebtedness to N. T. Wright
- Essential insights into how to establish churches in the gospel
- Designed to follow The First Principles Series

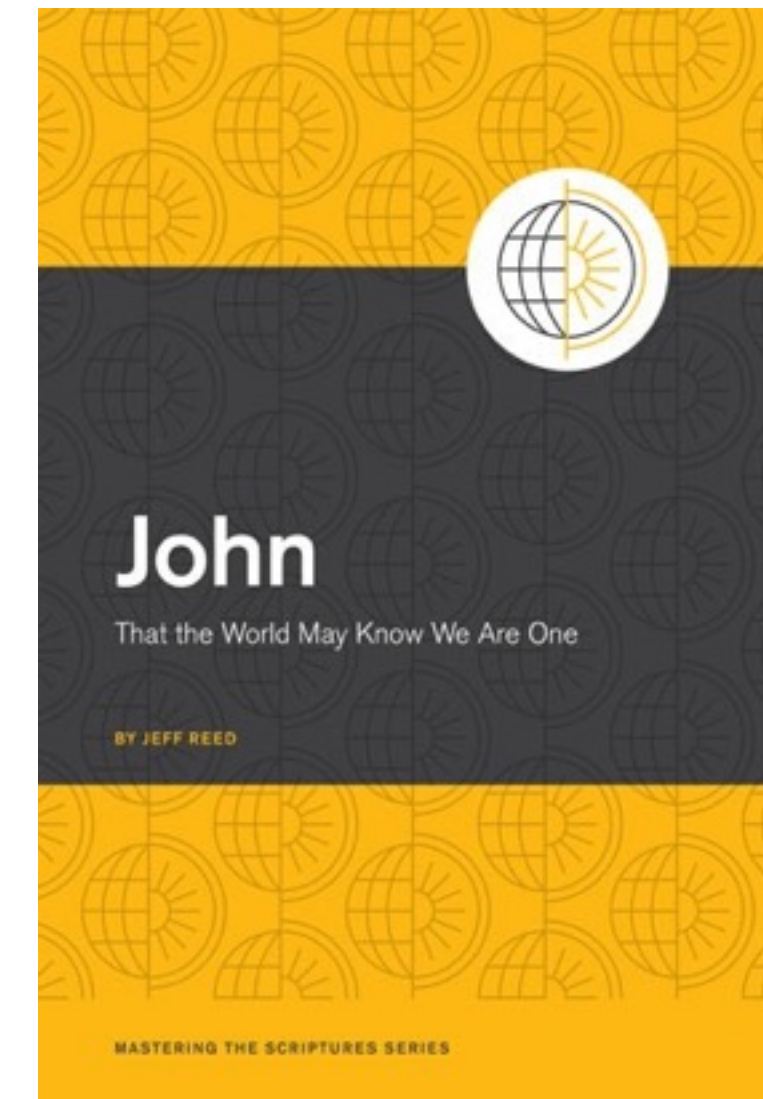
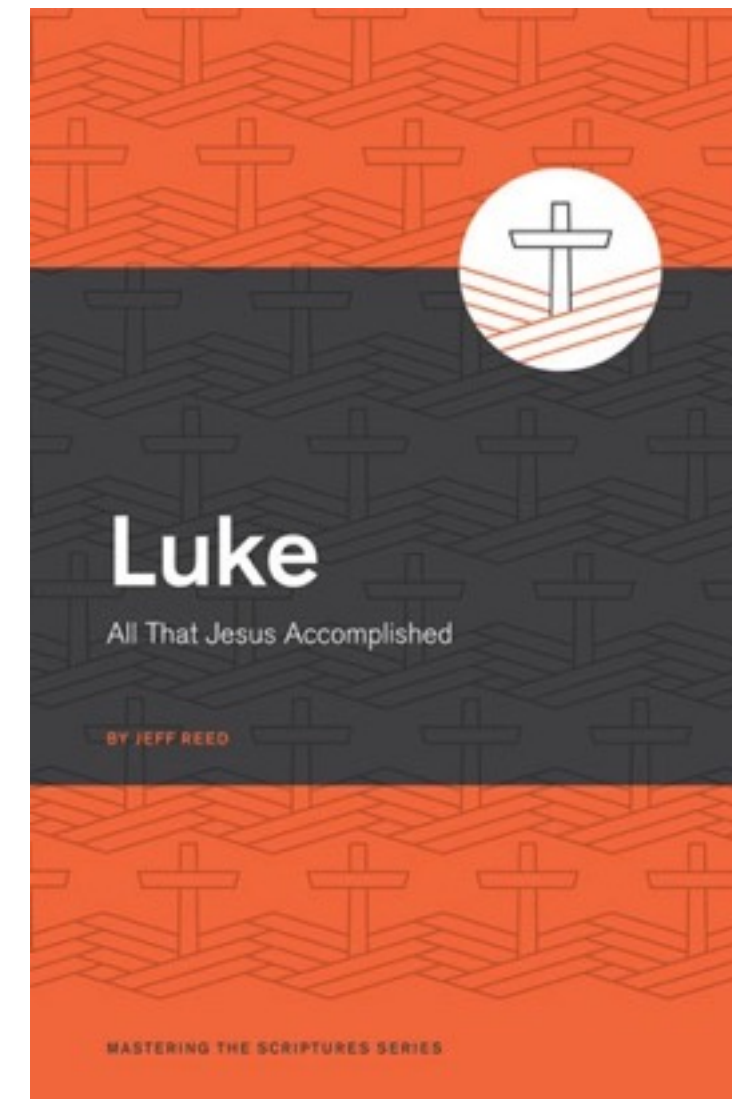
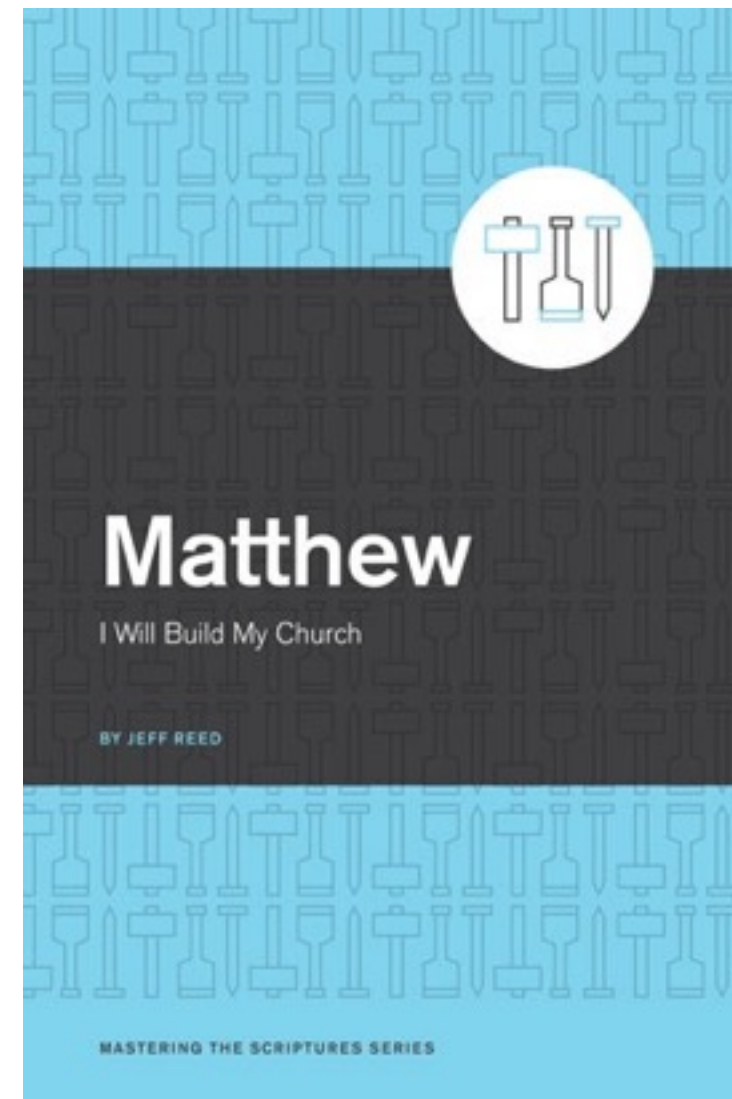
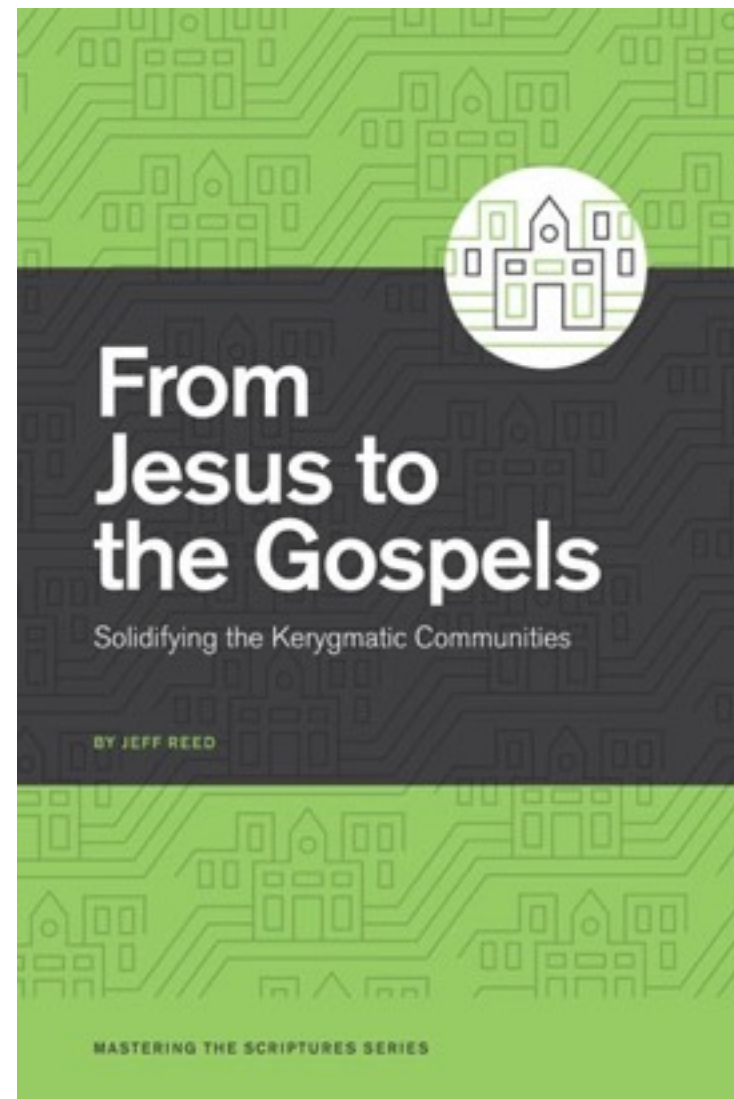


The Gospels Series

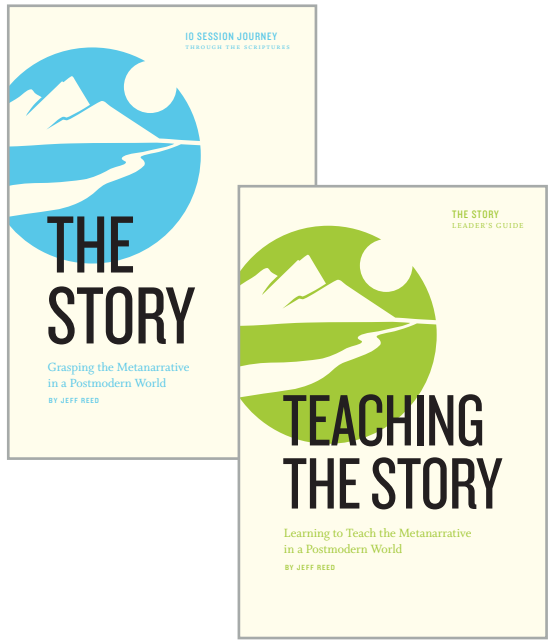
Examining the Intention of Jesus' Life and Ministry
as Witnessed by the Writers of the Four Gospels

MASTERING THE SCRIPTURES SERIES

The Gospels Series



Establishing Process—3 Years



Kerygma
Early Acts
Apostles' Teaching
6 months
Paul: 3 years “night and day”

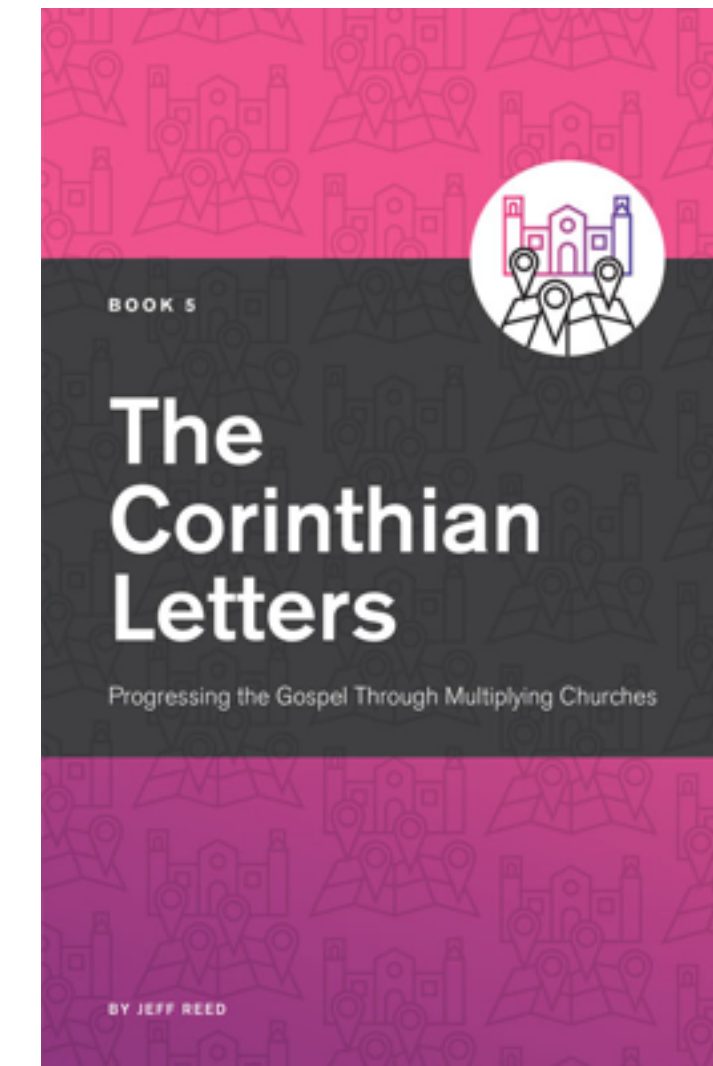
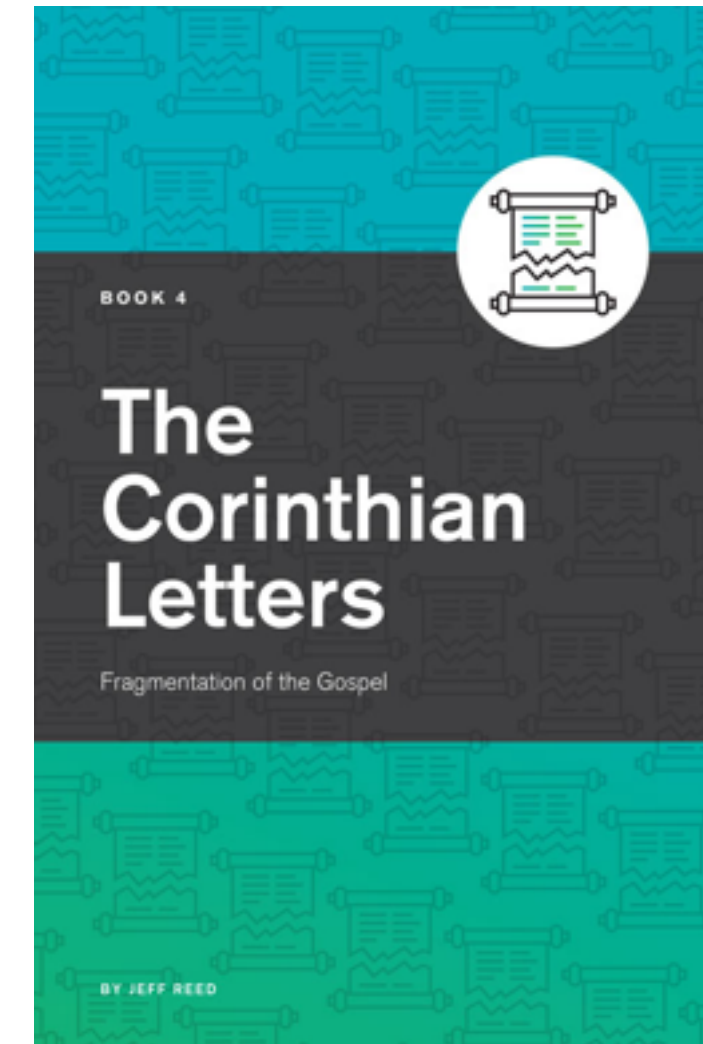
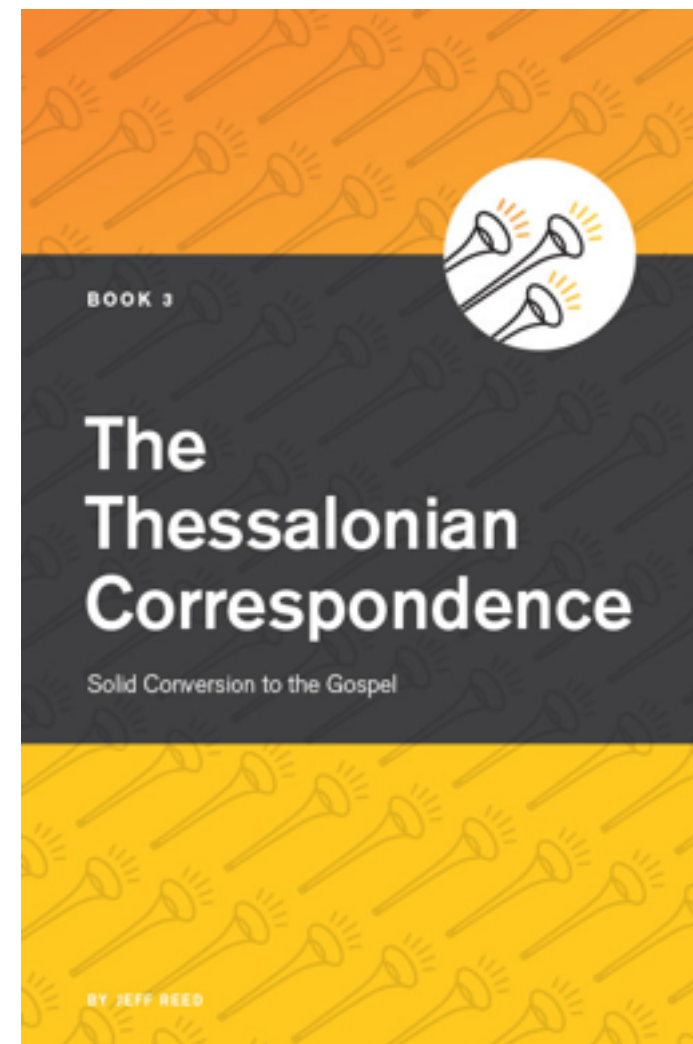
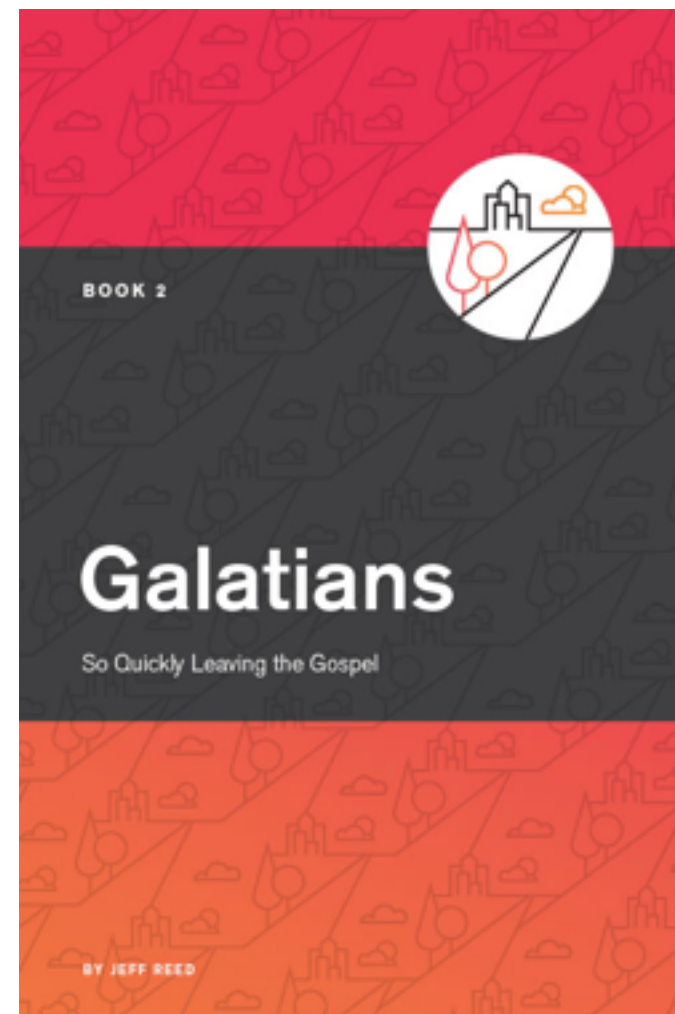
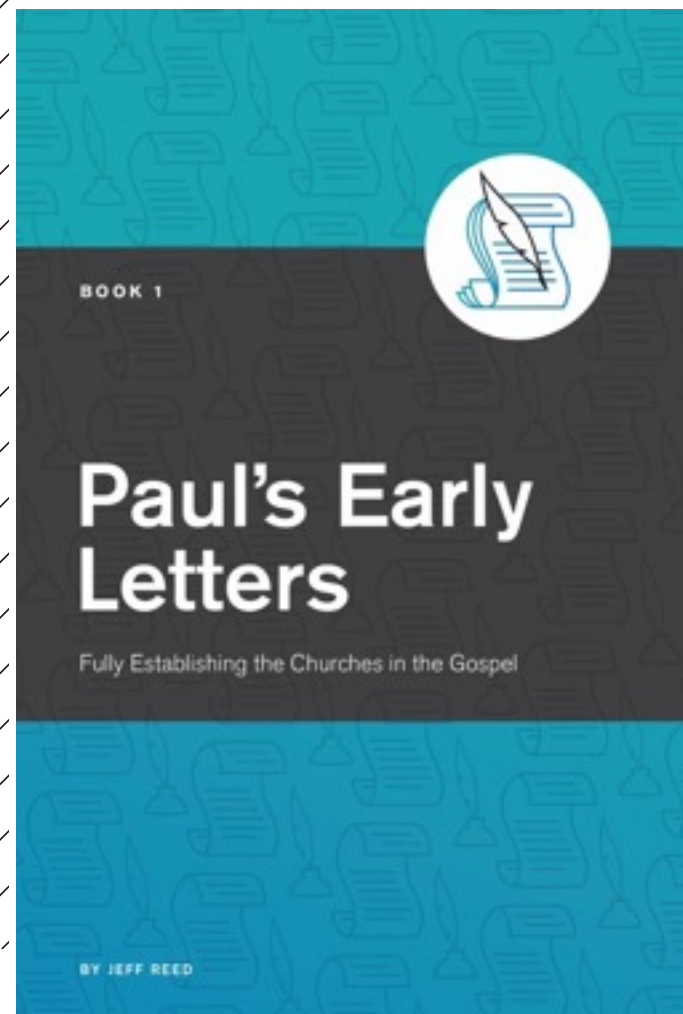


Didache
Body of Acts
Theology of Paul
1½ years



Full Kerygma
After Acts
Apostles' Gospels
1 year

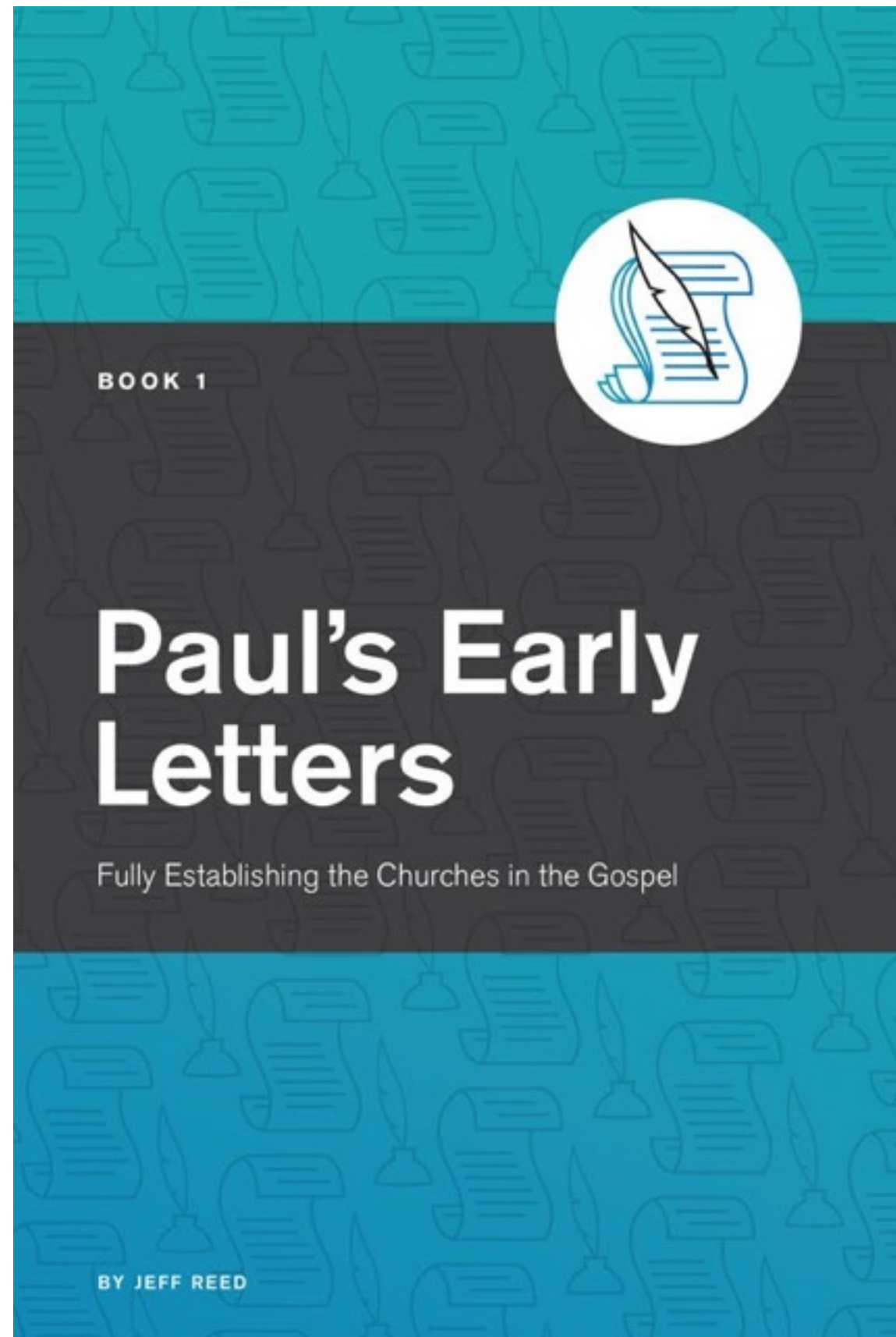
Paul's Early Letters



Uniqueness and Significance of Paul's Early Letters Series

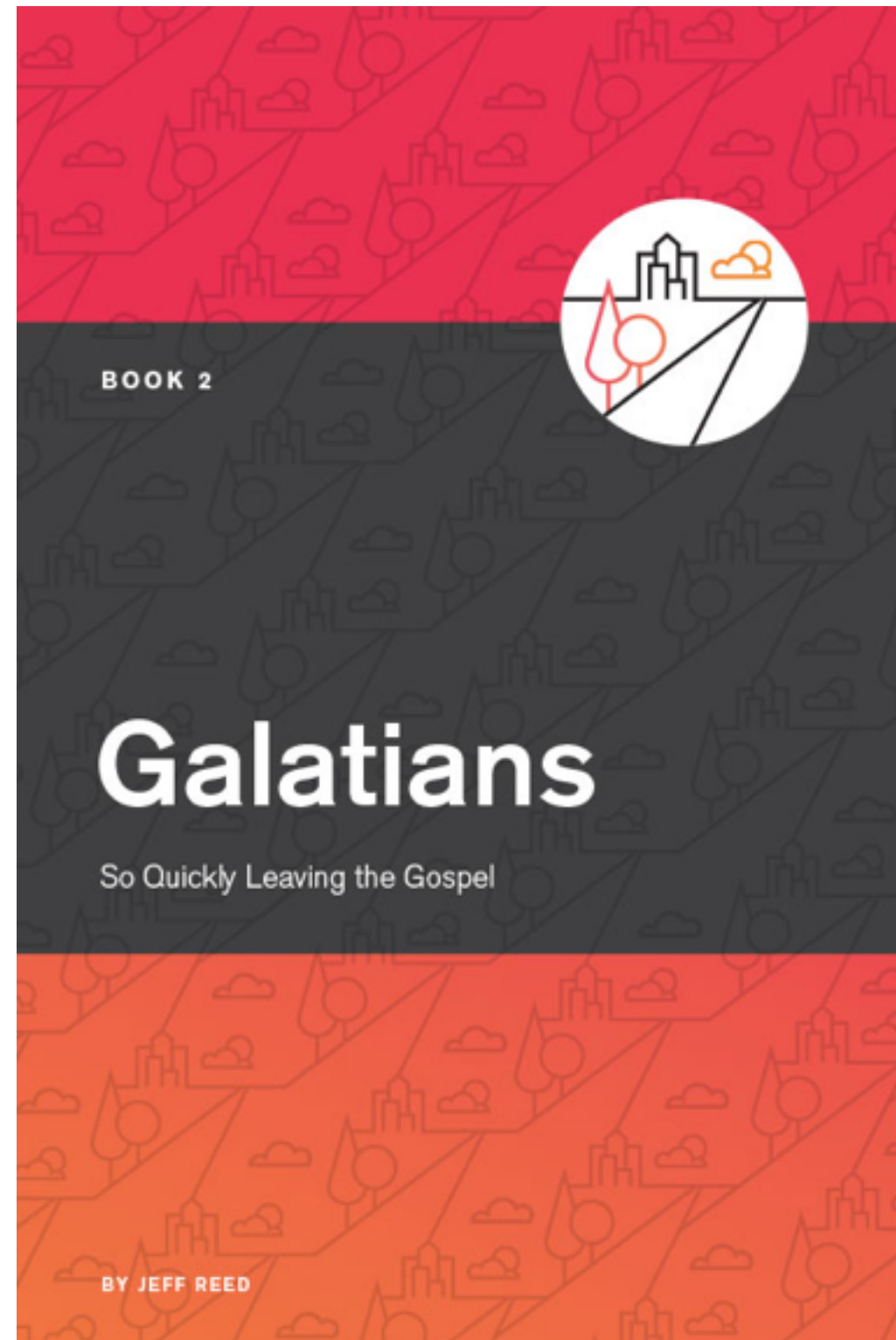
The Early Letters of Paul Series is taking 4 years to produce, but is founded on over 2 decades of Pauline leadership series courses—from 1988–2008.

- It is based on all the major writings of the massive Greco–Roman early church research of the last 50 years.
- It owes a great deal of “research debt” to the lifetime work of N. T. Wright.
- It gives a comprehensive “theology” of how Paul established churches in the gospel. It is essential to the growth of the Church of the Global South. And the understanding of Romans is almost completely absent in the Reformation “gospel” recovery.



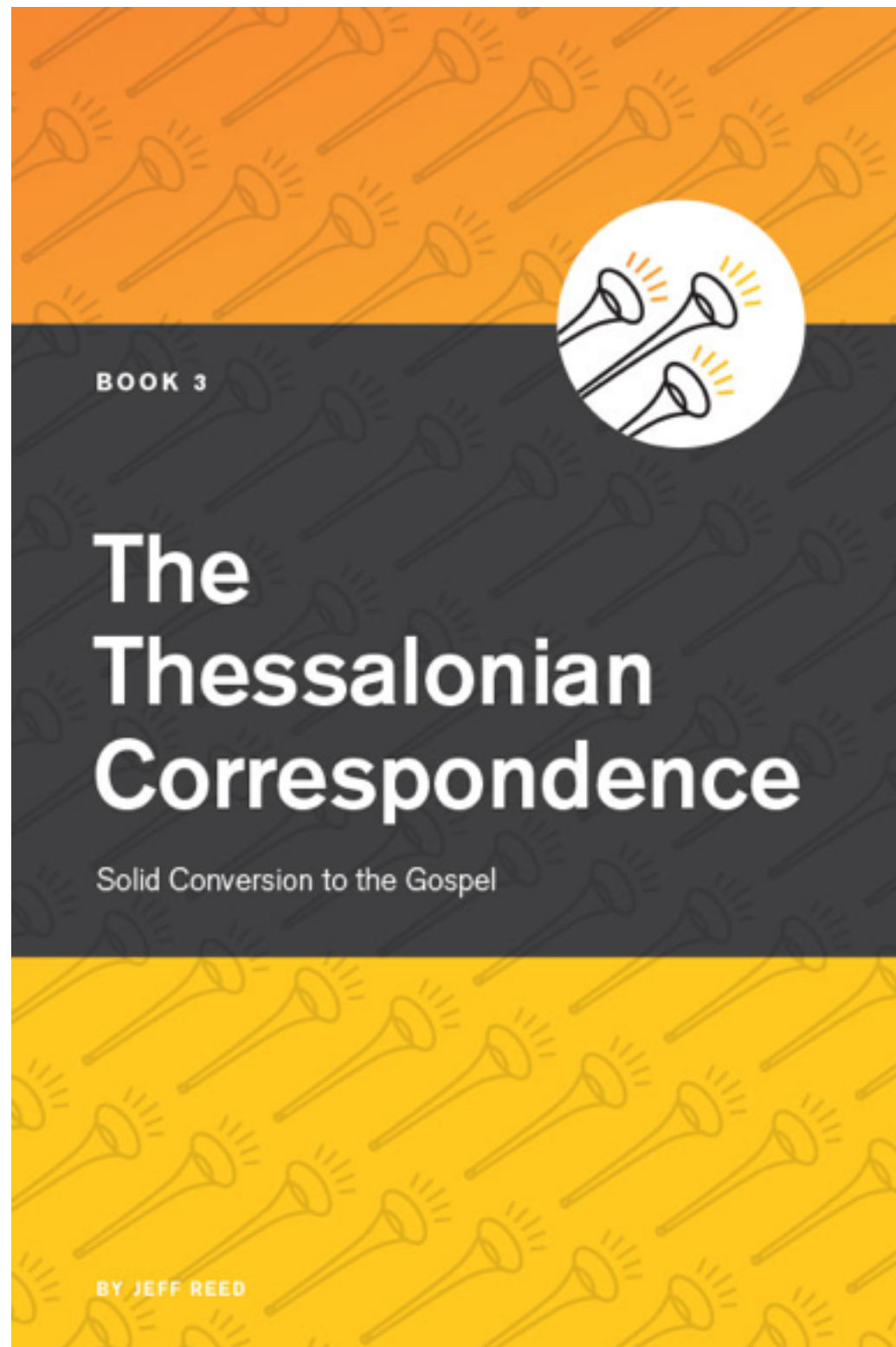
Paul's Early Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches in the Gospel

Paul's Early Letters were written to fully establish his churches in the gospel, in light of the ongoing debate with Peter and the Jewish churches about the full implications of the gospel. Paul's unique calling to preach the gospel to the Gentiles would unfold the full implications of the gospel for both the Jews and the Gentiles as the Church emerged as the replacement for Israel as the center of Christ's grand strategy for unfolding the kingdom of God in this age.



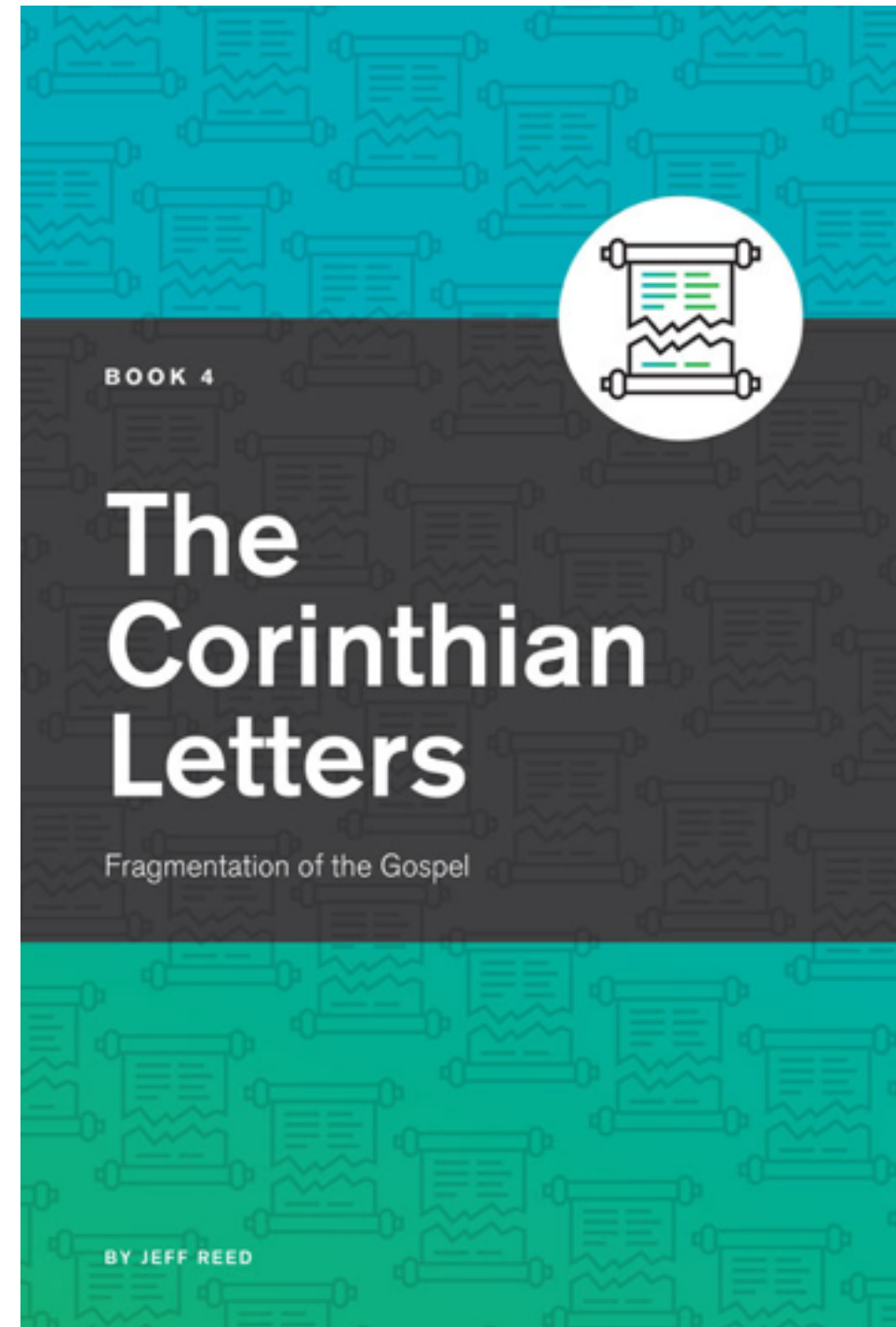
Galatians: So Quickly Leaving the Gospel

Galatians was written to correct the emerging alteration of the gospel making its way through the network of the Galatian churches—instructing and challenging them to not let one single part of the old system of the law alter the purity and power of the gospel and helping them understand it is a new system of living, which will be ruined if they mix it with any previous law elements of the old system.



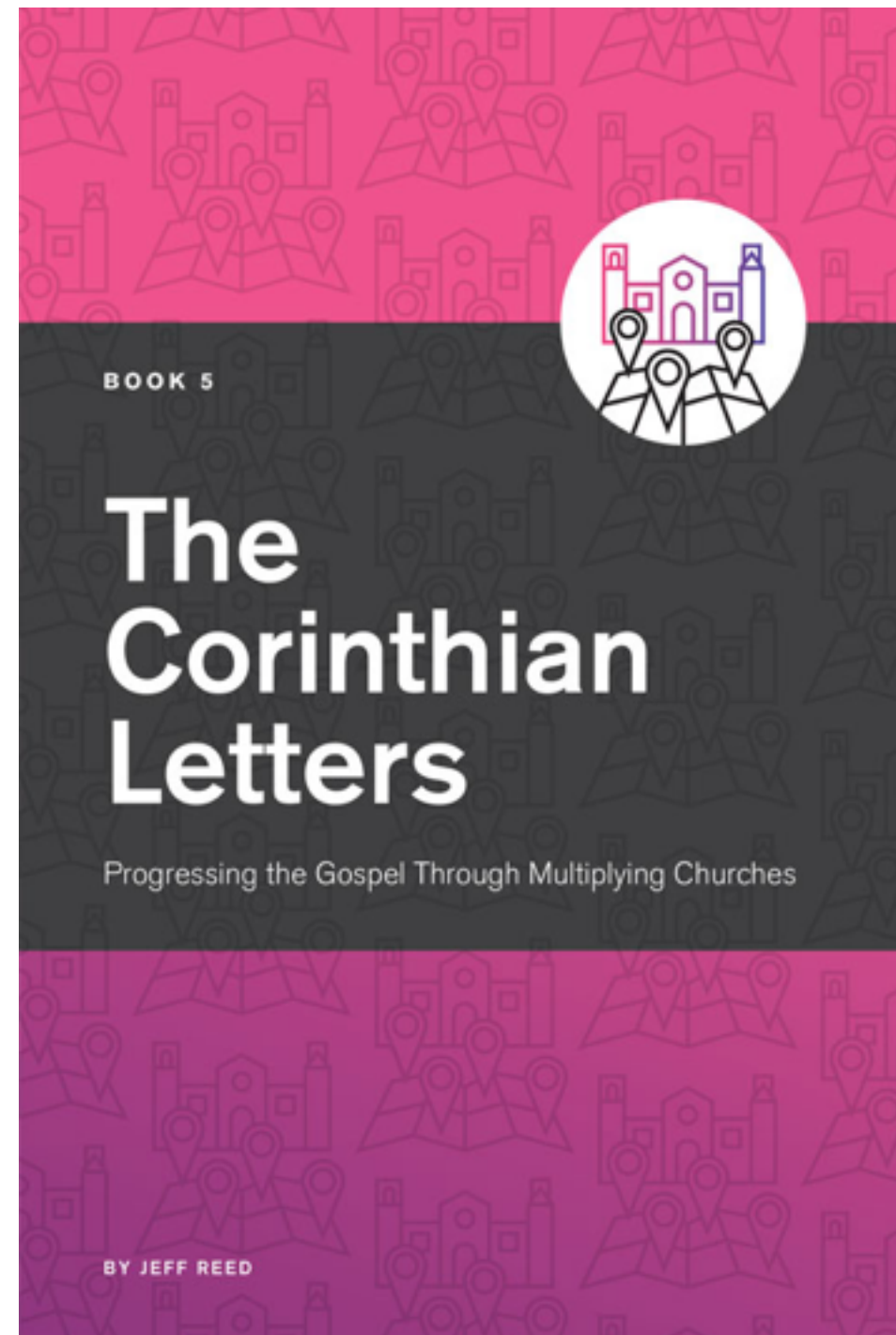
The Thessalonians Correspondence: Solid Conversion to the Gospel

The Thessalonians letters were written to solidify the conversion of the Thessalonians in the gospel they so dramatically embraced—rooting the emerging problems in the churches to a fuller understanding of the gospel and lining up with the emerging apostolic traditions—in order that they might not be destabilized but remain strong amidst suffering and wrong teaching.



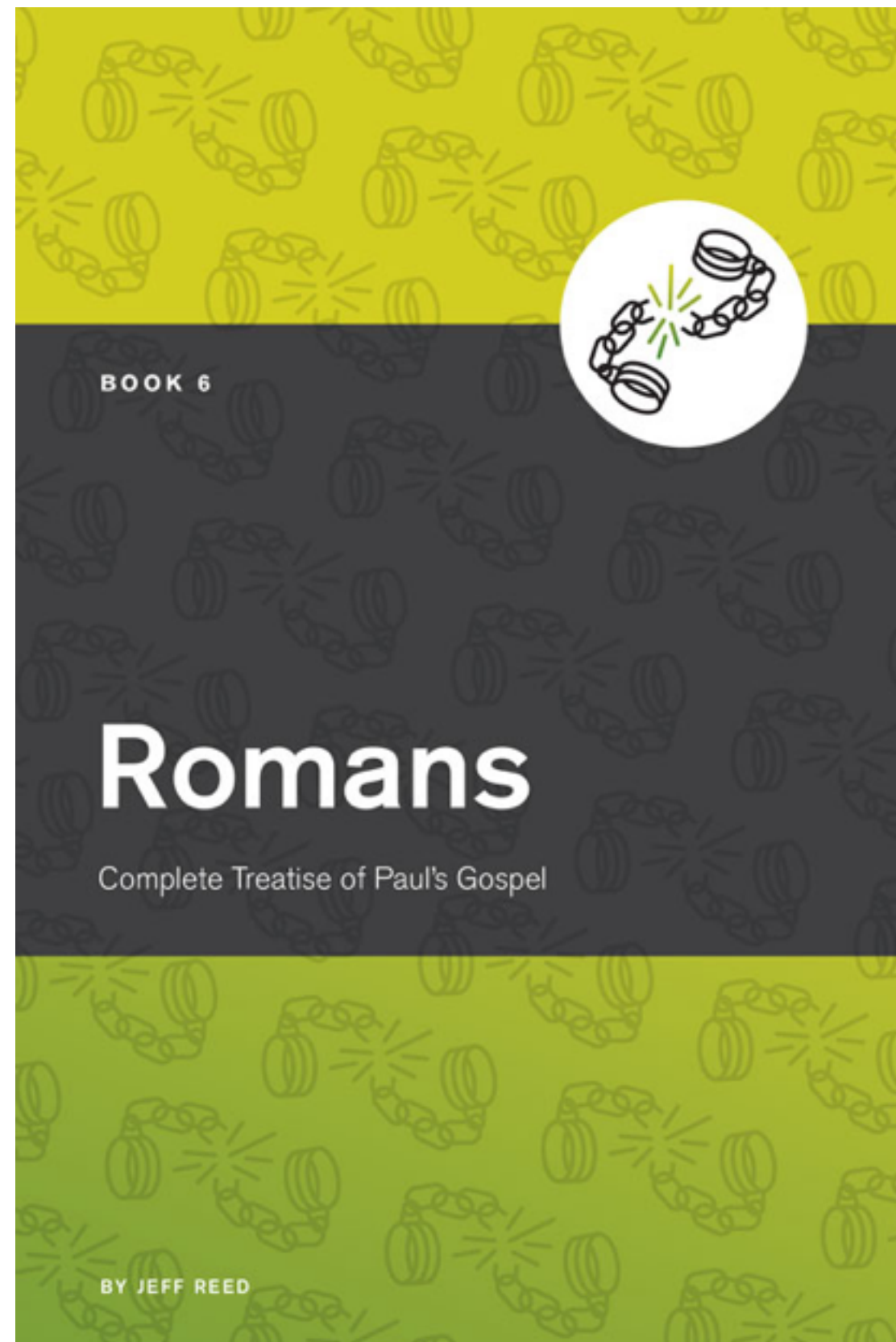
The Corinthian Letters: Fragmentation of the Gospel

First Corinthians was written to deal with internal divisions in community life and community gatherings—rooted in differing social statuses fragmenting the Corinthian churches—with the view of the Corinthian churches fully participating with him in the progress of the gospel.



The Corinthian Letters: Progressing the Gospel Through Multiplying Churches

Second Corinthians was written to defend Paul's apostleship in the Corinthian churches—defining the ministry as conflicts without and fears within—that they might remain in his sphere of authority and therefore participate fully in the progress amongst the Gentiles, for which he was uniquely commissioned.

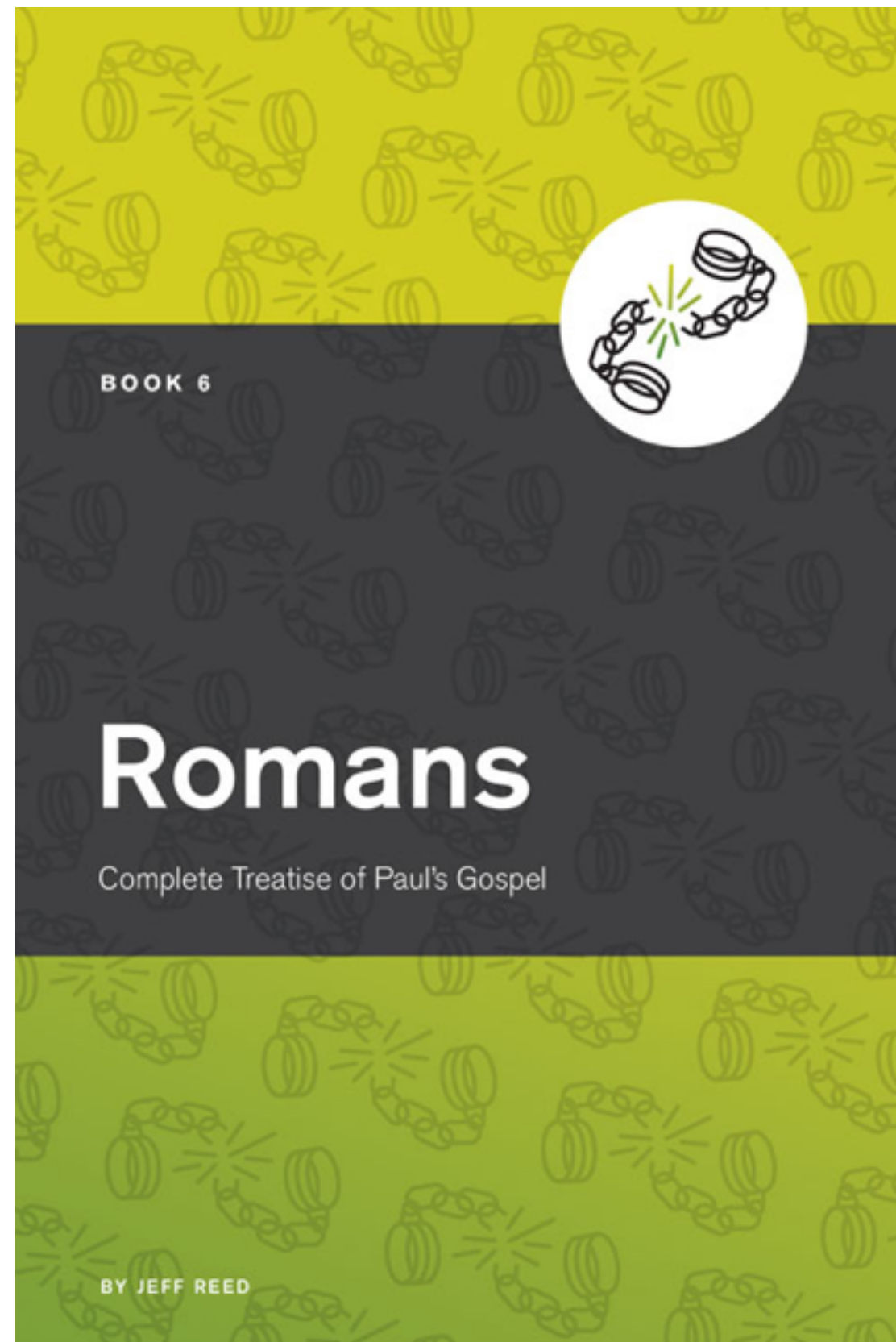


Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

Romans was written to fully establish the Romans in “his gospel,” which is the gospel of Jesus Christ, that they might fully participate with him in the progress of that gospel, as the key city in the Roman empire

arguing that in light of all that God has done, we need to fully dedicate ourselves to serve Him, shaping our lives and worldview around the gospel (1:16–11:36)

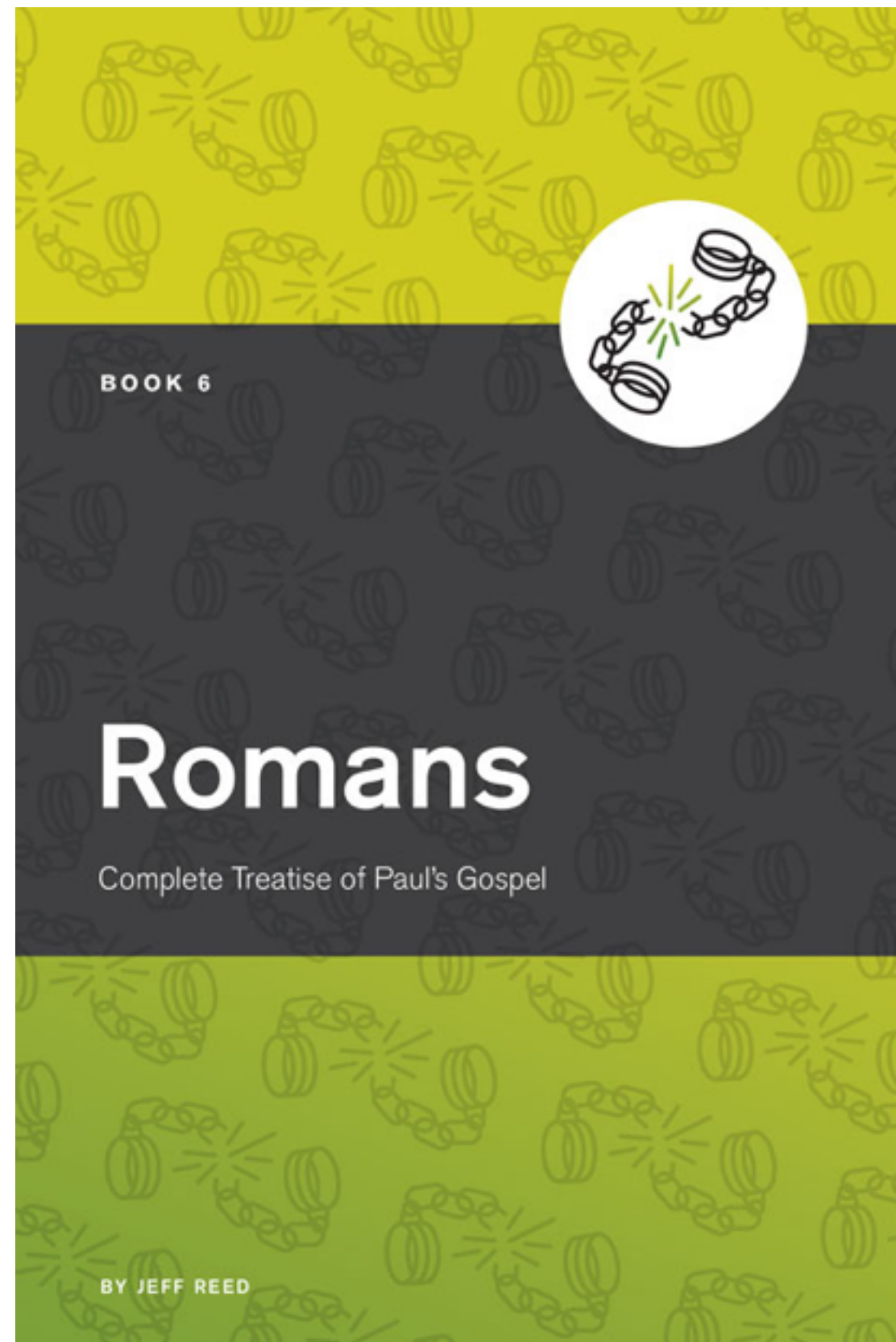
and the “pattern of teaching” (12:1–15:13), which allows the Holy Spirit to transform us and fully participate in the plan and purposes of God, both locally and with the progress of the gospel as led by apostolic leaders in our generation



Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

Romans is key to understanding the entire collection of Paul's early letters to his network of churches. Several preliminary comments on the context of Romans in Paul's early letters is needed:

- It is the final and largest letter.
- It is less occasional than the others—more of a manifesto.
- It is book-ended by sections that tell you it is a more complete treatment of the gospel than the others.
- Its context is establishing the churches in the gospel, which was the frontline of the battle.



Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul

Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

Session 1: The Intention of Romans

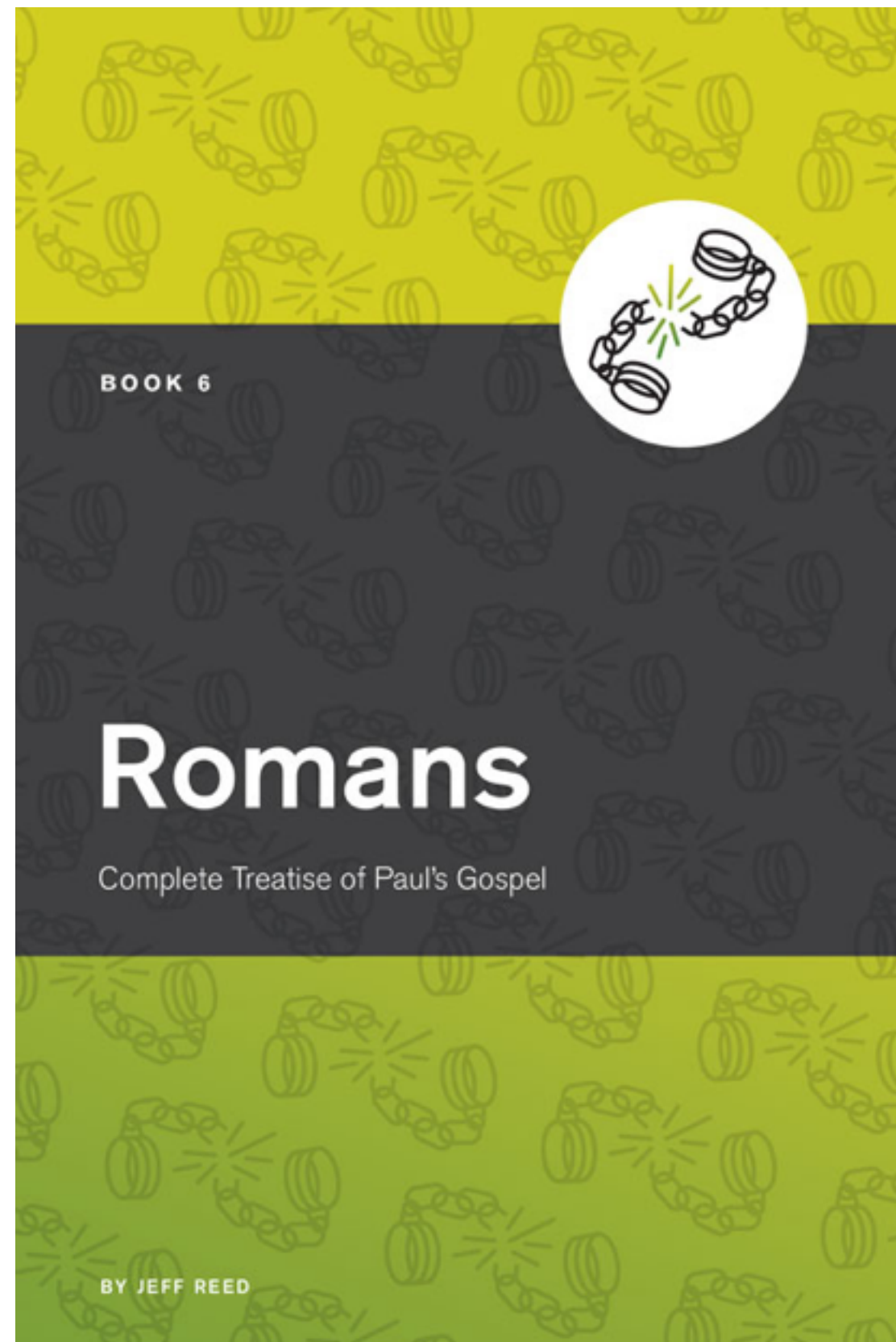
Session 2: The Gospel and The Story

Session 3: The New Gospel Worldview

Session 4: Reframing the Jewish Story

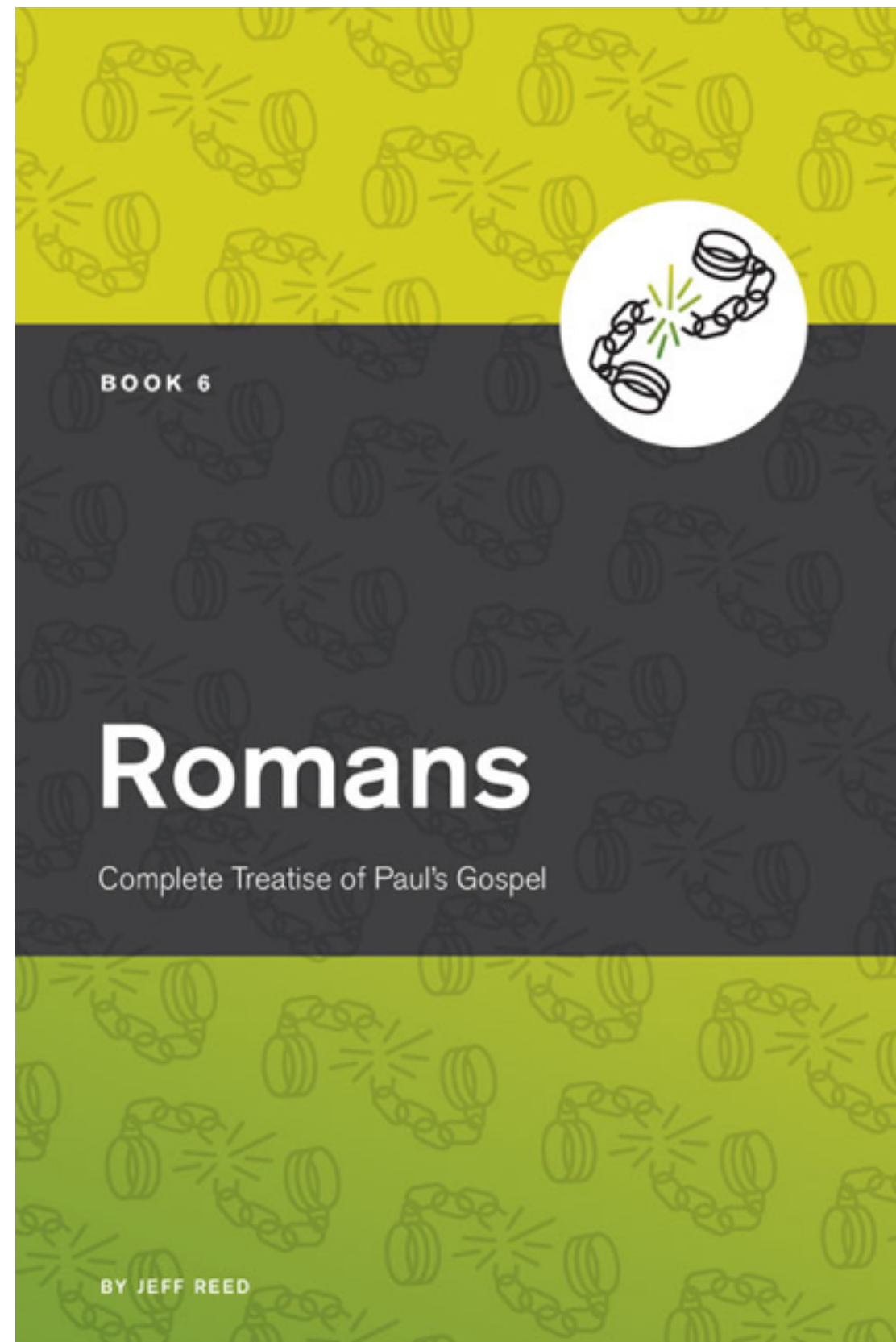
Session 5: The Gospel in Transformed Community

Session 6: Now Back to the Mission



Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

Paul wrote Romans to establish the Roman churches in his gospel—the gospel of Jesus Christ (1:1–15; 16:25–27). His goal was that they become strong and fully participate with him in the progress of that gospel throughout the Roman Empire (Romans 15:14–16:23).

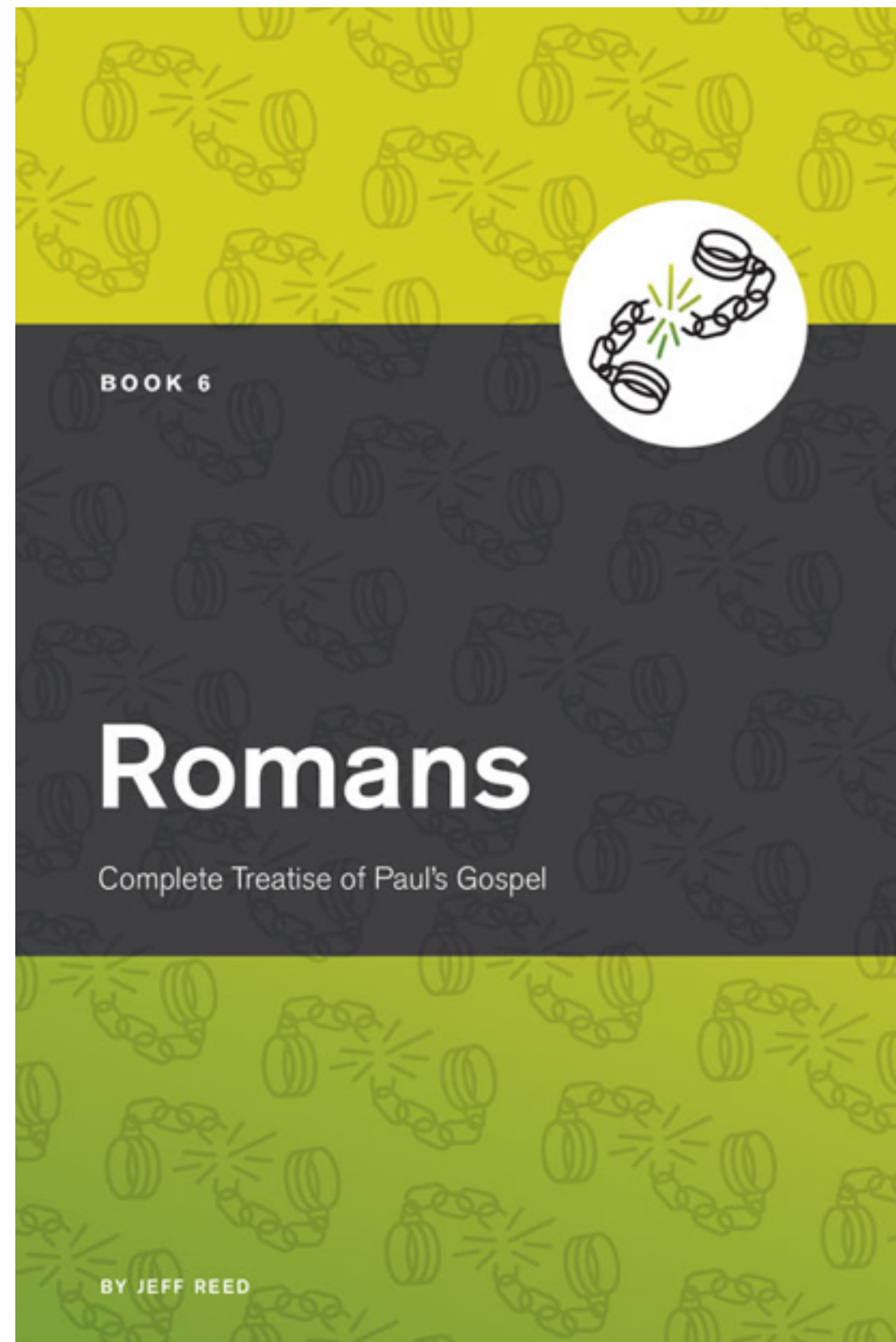


Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

What does Paul mean when he says to the Romans “I have proclaimed to you my gospel, according to Jesus Christ.”

God unveiled the whole picture to him through Jesus Christ those 3 years in Arabia.

Peter and those in Jerusalem could not rethink the whole story.

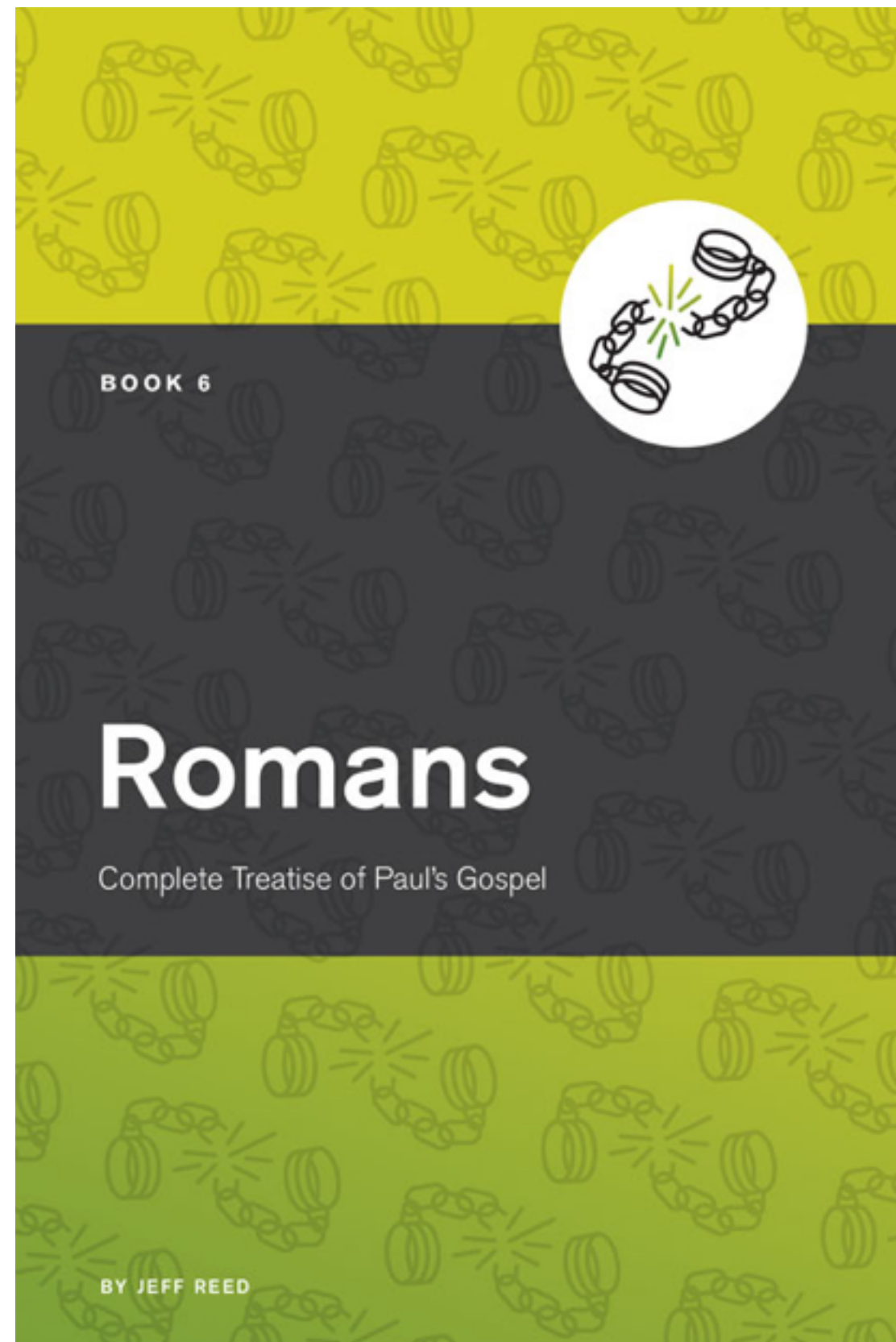


Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

What did he rethink?

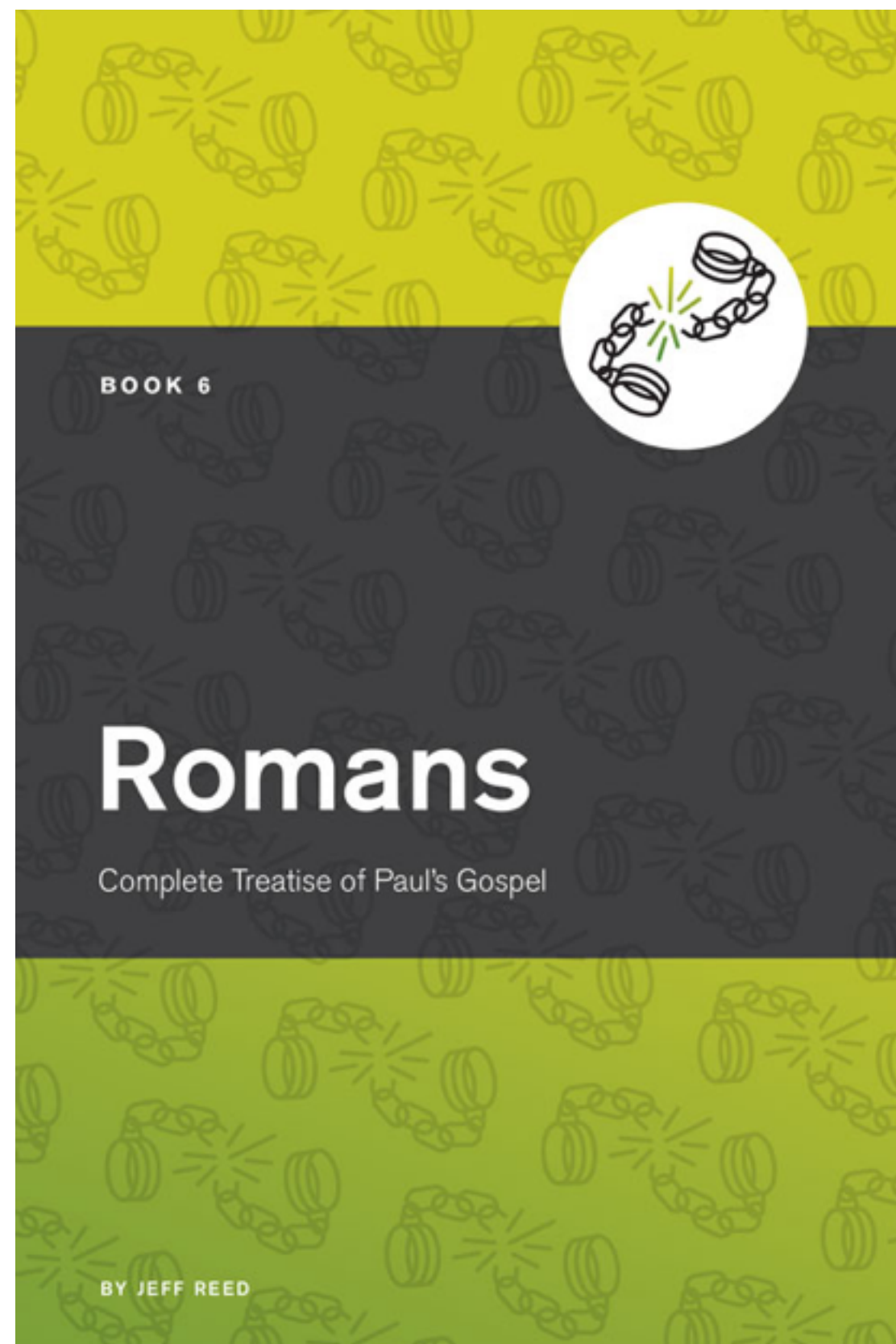
1. The Law
2. Israel
3. God's hidden plan
4. The current times
5. The future of Israel

He rethought the whole story. And he reframed the entire Law, the Prophets, and the Writings in light of the gospel—the good news.



Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

The following is an attempt to identify the structure of Paul's argument in Romans 1:16–15:33. Paul's argument in 1:16–15:33 seems to have 4 phases to it: 1:16–4:25; 5:1–8:39 ; 9:1–11:36; and 12:1–15:33. In each phase we will identify 3–4 main points, followed by the essence of the section.



Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

What was his gospel?

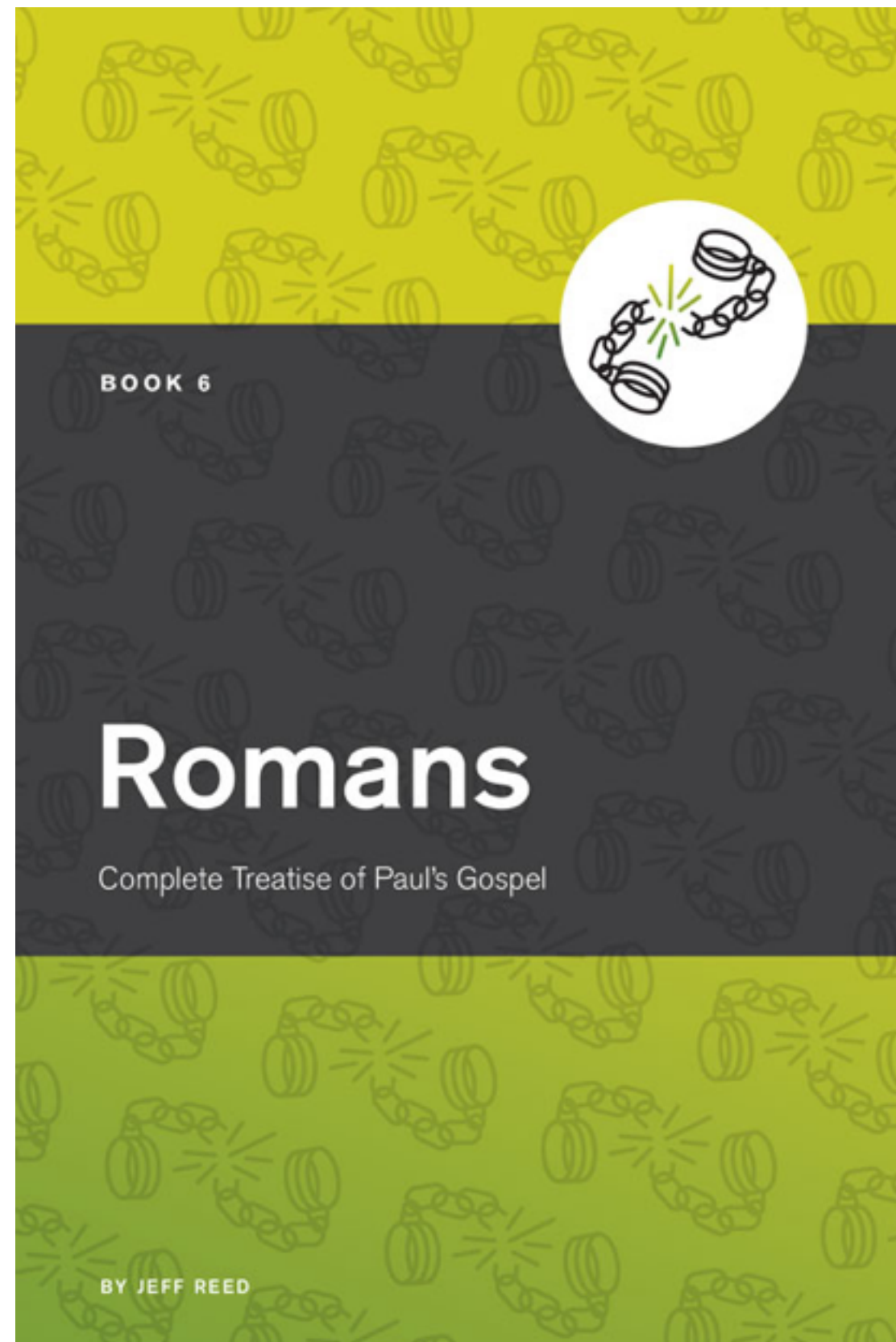
The complete picture of what was unveiled to him the 3 years in Arabia is in Romans.

Let's follow the argument through in Romans 5:1–8:39

What does Paul mean when he says to the Romans “I have proclaimed to you my gospel, according to Jesus Christ”?

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Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

Paul's argument seems to have 4 phases to it in 1:16–15:33:

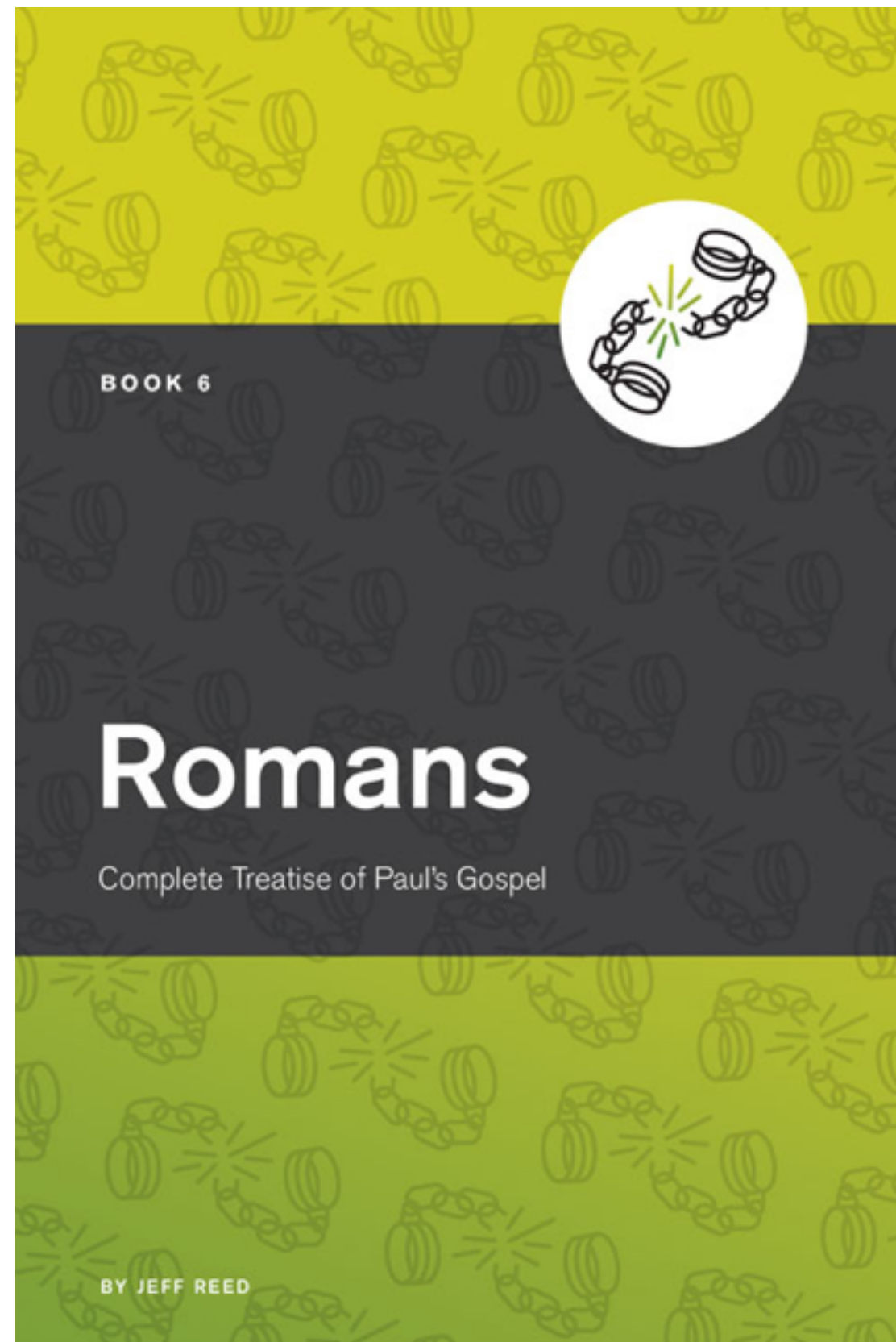
1:16–4:25

5:1–8:39

9:1–11:36

12:1–15:33

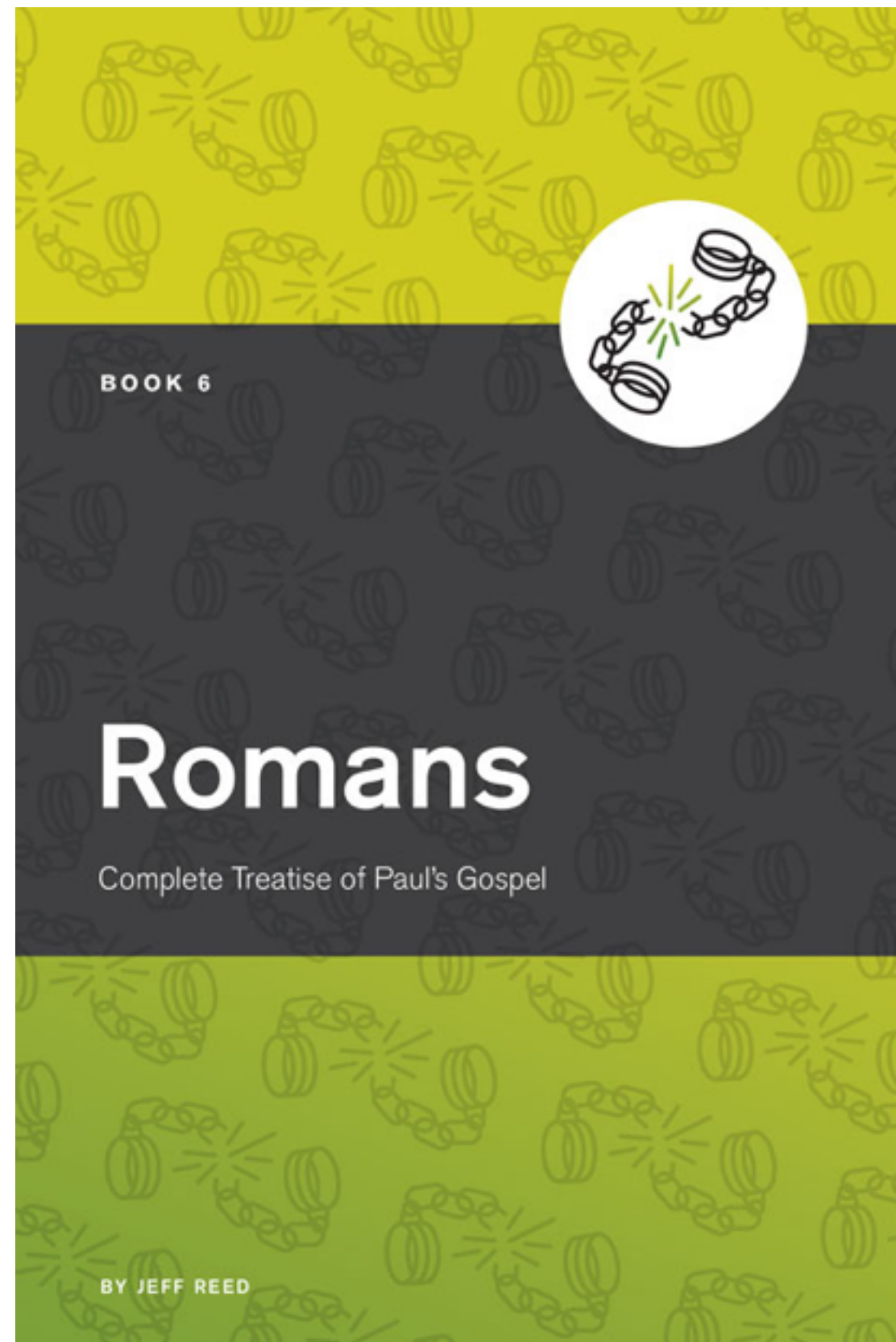
I am going to string verses together in a way you can think it through and condense it into one paragraph.



Romans 1:16–4:25

The essence of Paul's argument (7 main points)

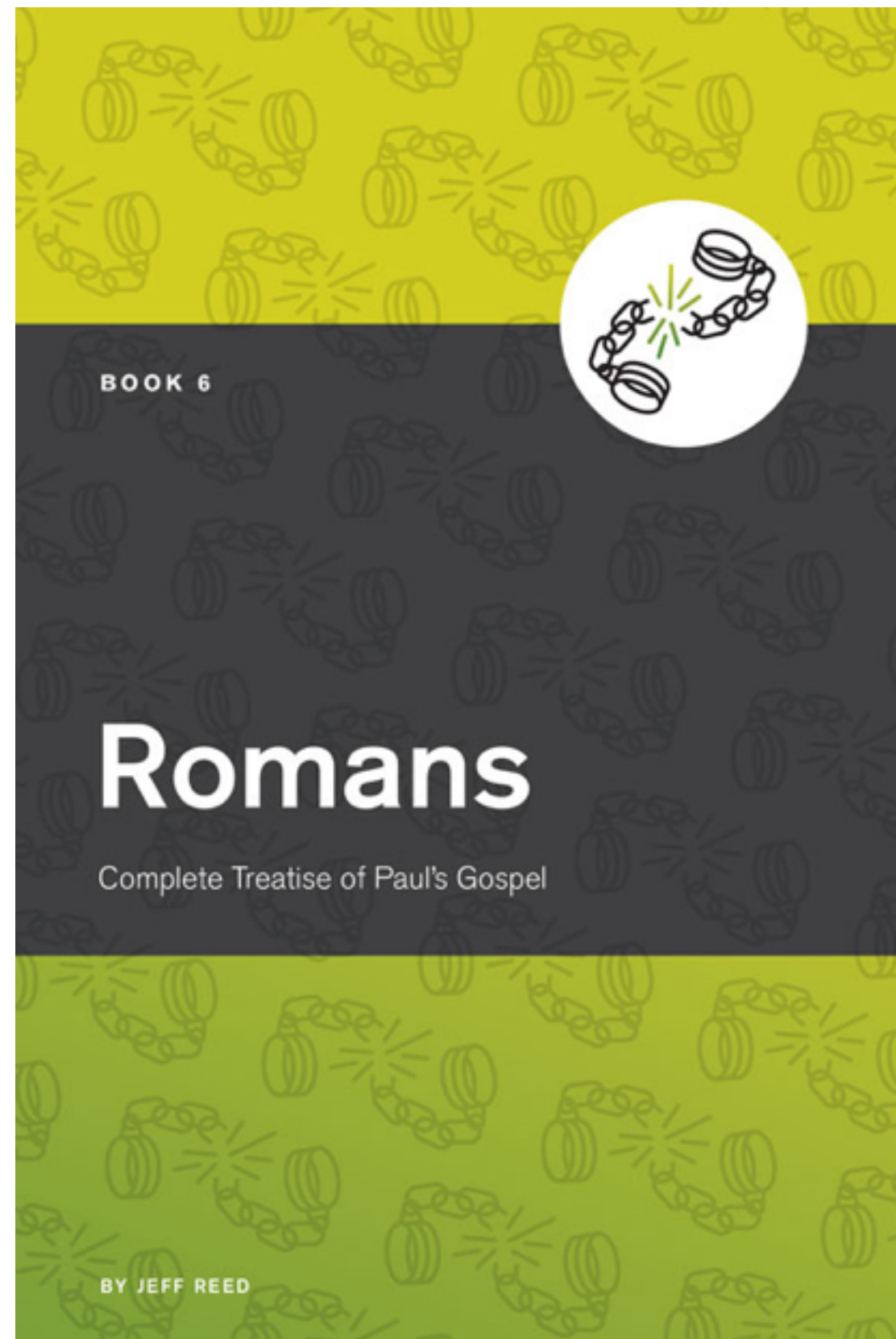
1. God has been faithful to His covenant promise to Abraham to “bless all the families of the earth” through the Lord Jesus the Messiah, that all nations might be part of His family—receiving the “status of covenant membership.”
2. Everyone is under the judgment of sin—beginning with the Gentiles: everyone has an internal compass by which they judge others and themselves (alternately defending and accusing), which will be the standard God uses to judge their own sin.



Romans 1:16–4:25

Additional points to Paul's argument:

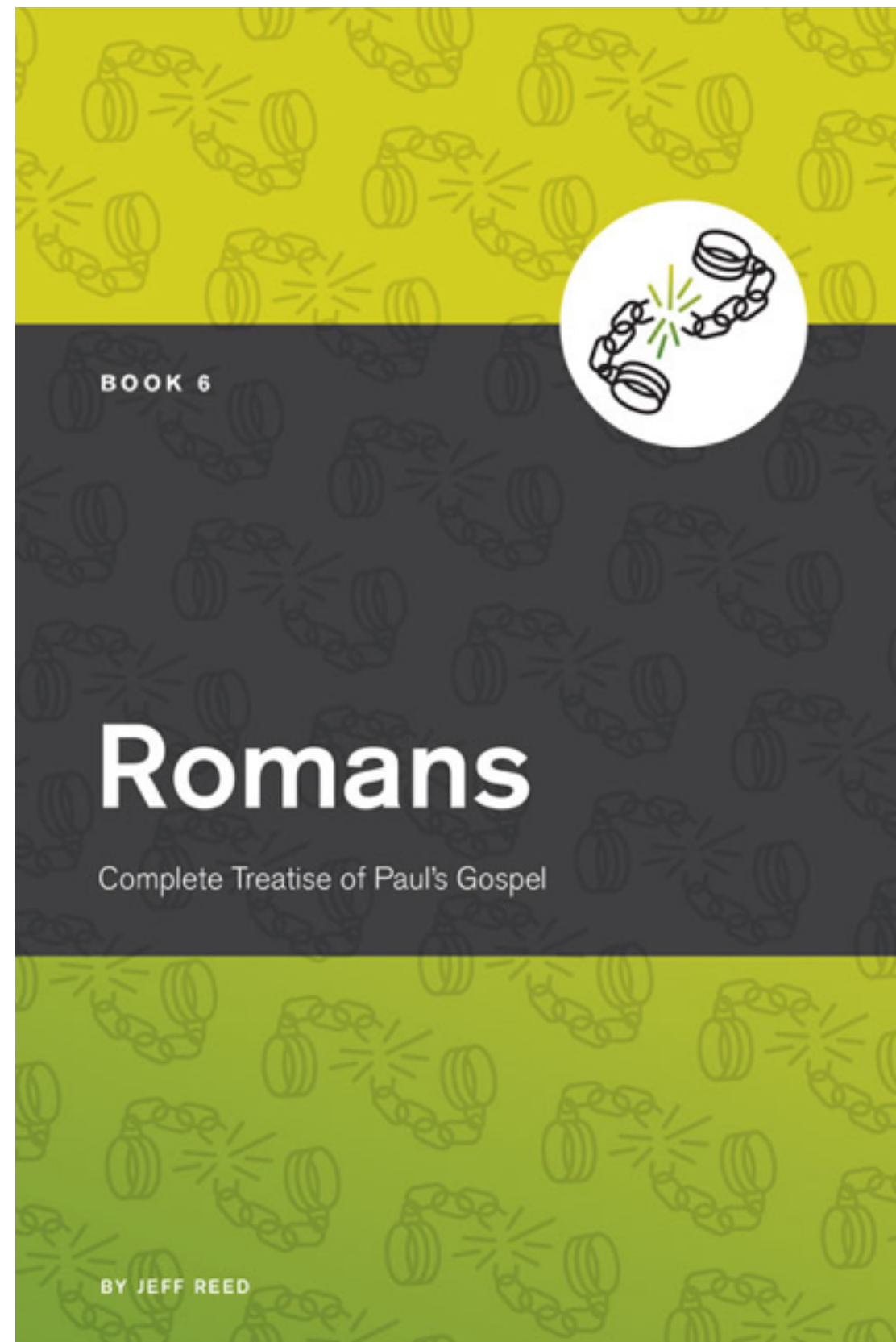
3. The Jews are also guilty of sin. But they fail to see it through the false belief that just because they are God's chosen people, are circumcised (thus in the community), and possess the "outline of God's knowledge," they are okay, even though they do not obey it and make a mockery of God. Both will be judged by God and are under sin.
4. Abraham was forgiven of his sin (God did not calculate it to his account) because of his faith, not because he kept the law. In the same way, it is true for Gentiles who believe, since God belongs to the nations as well.



Romans 1:16–4:25

The essence of Paul's argument (7 main points)

5. At one level, the nation of Israel is the same as everyone else, needing forgiveness of sins, which can only come through faith in the Messiah.
6. At another level, though Israel was chosen by God to be the stewards of the very oracles of God, the Law itself actually brought forward the knowledge of sin. And without faith, they are not actually “true Jews” since membership into God's covenant with them is founded on faith, not the Law.
7. Even though Israel was unfaithful to the covenant promise, failing to take God's promises to the nations, God is faithful to His covenant to the nations through the Messiah — “faithfulness to faithfulness” — the covenant to the Messiah.

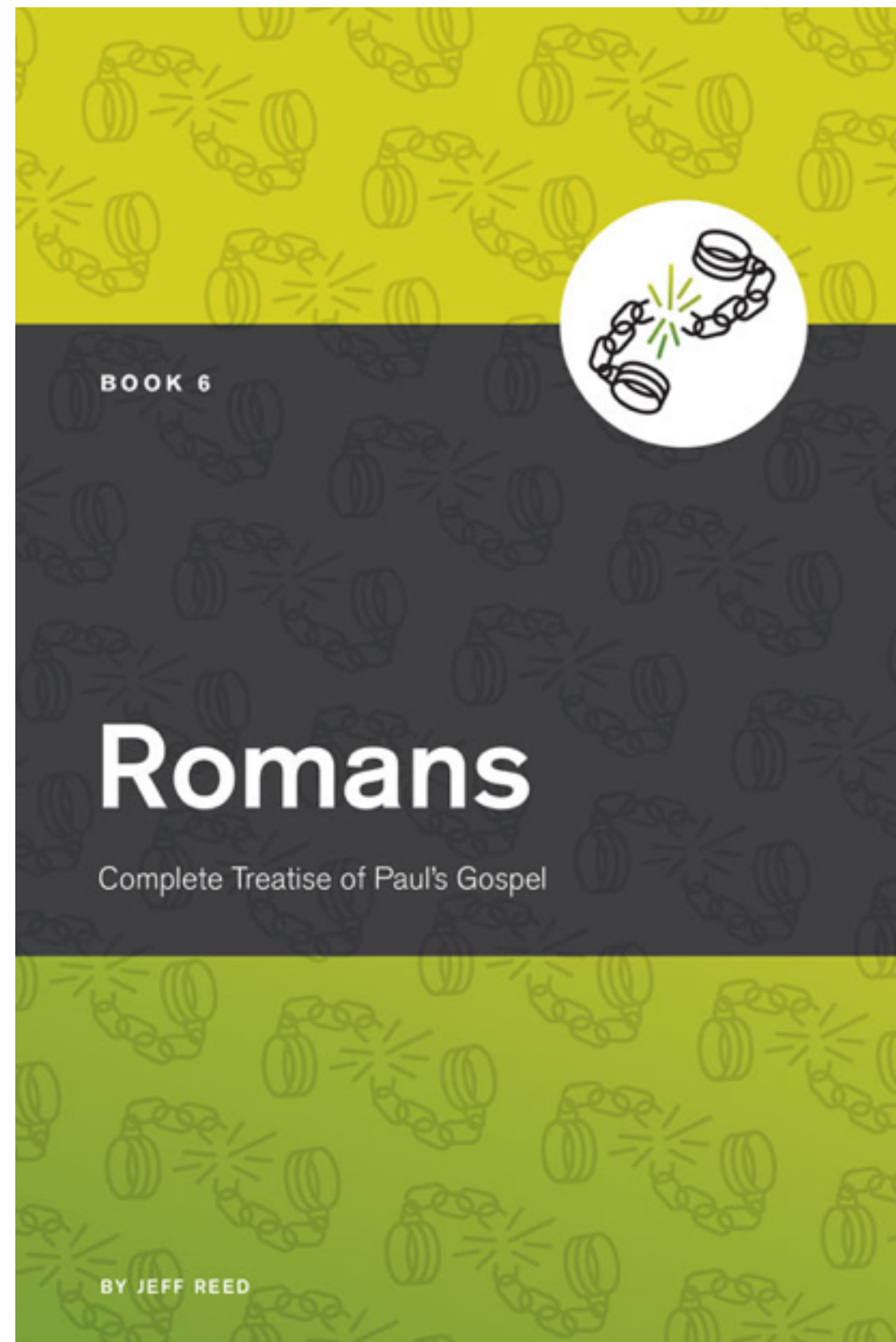


Romans 1:16–4:25

The essence of Paul's argument (one paragraph) in 1:16–4:25

The gospel is rooted in the promise of the covenant relationship of God to Abraham, received by faith, and now, through the Messiah, made available to everyone

thus validating God's faithfulness to His covenant through the faithfulness of the Messiah, that through Abraham and his family (nation) all the families (nations) of the earth would be blessed in His kingdom.



Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

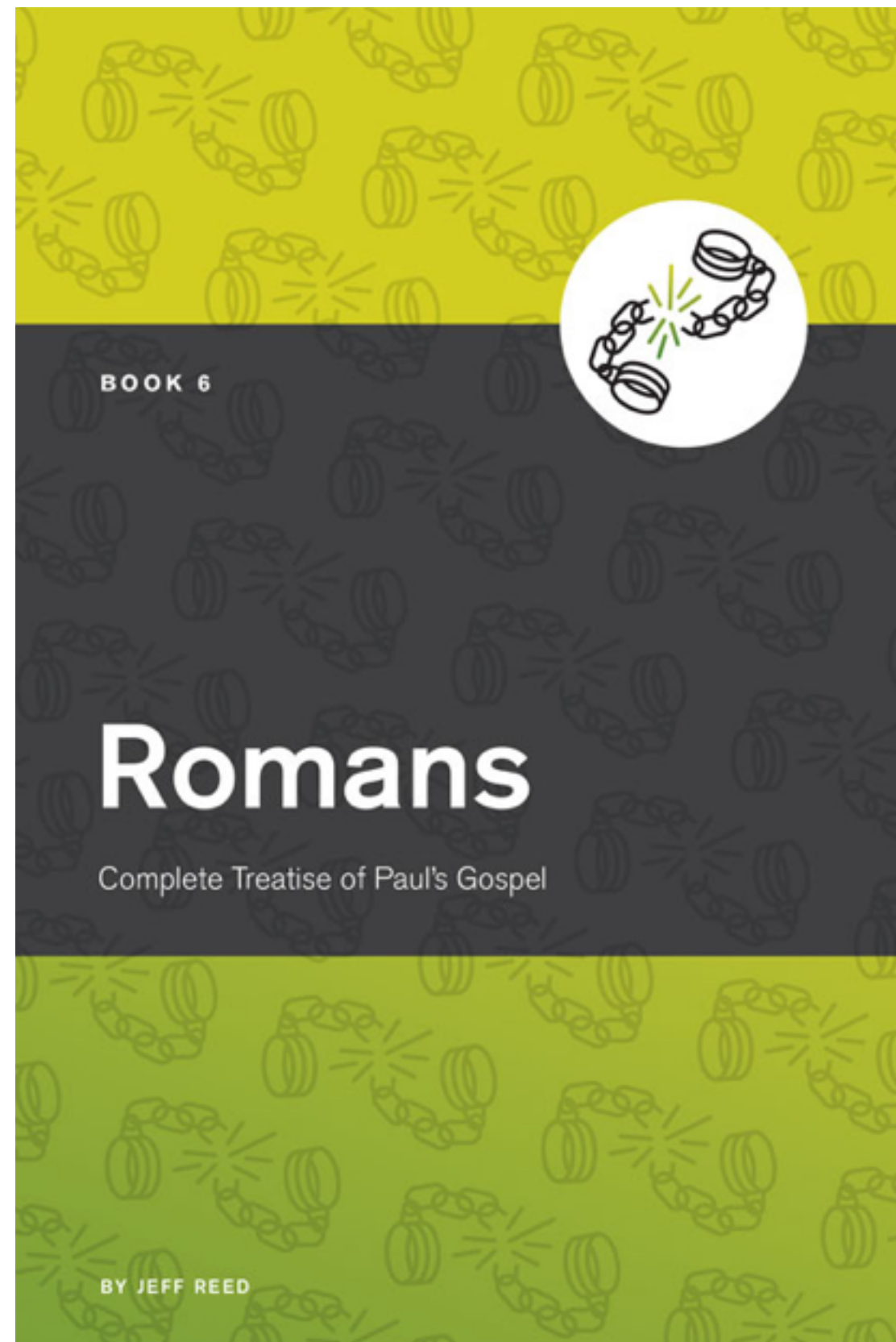
Paul's argument seems to have 4 phases to it in 1:16–15:27:

1:16–4:25 (chs. 1–4)

5:1–8:39 (chs. 5–8)

9:1–11:36 (chs. 9–11)

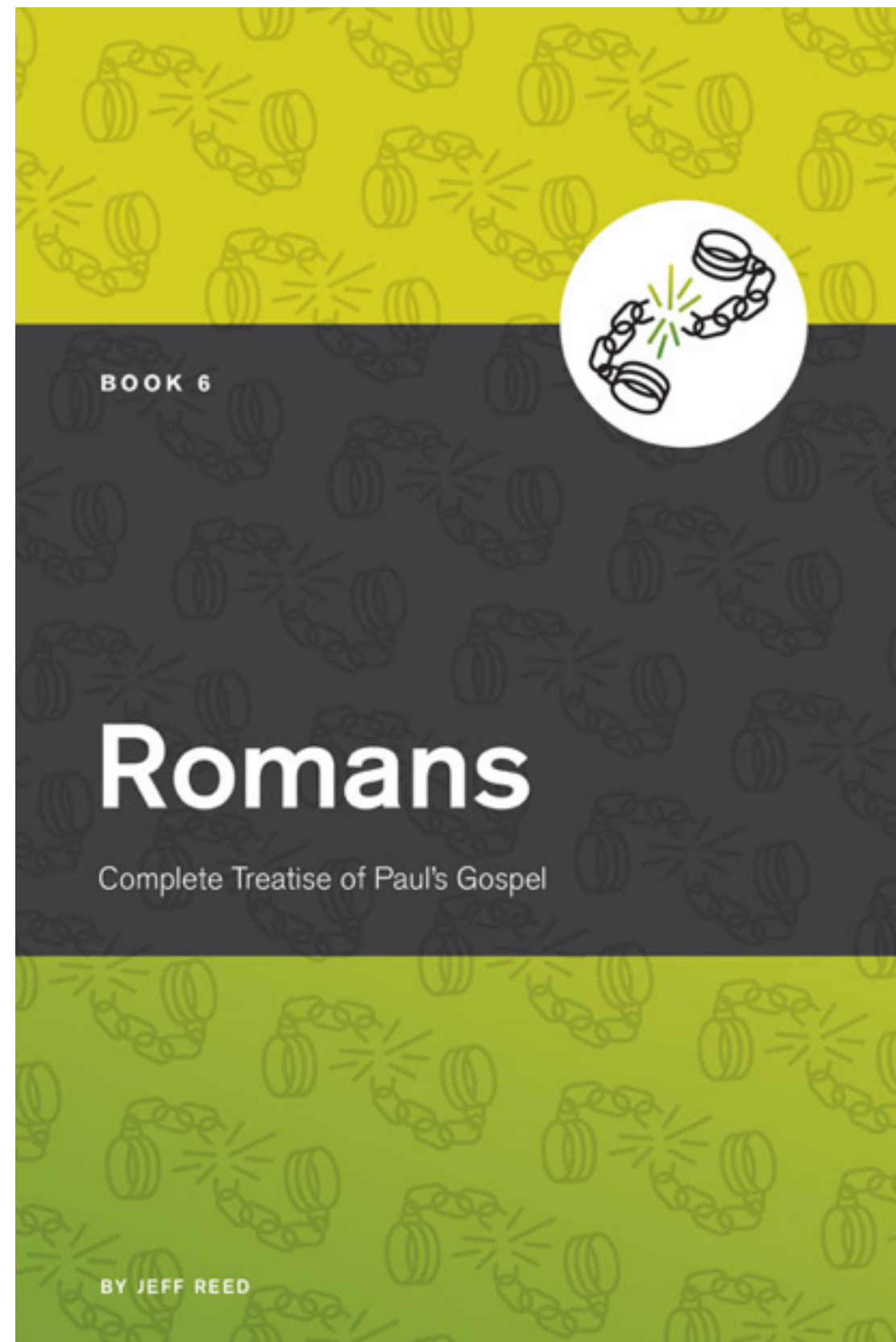
12:1–15:33 (chs. 12–15)



Romans 5:1–8:39

I have created a brief distillation of Paul's argument in the second of 4 sections in Romans: 5:1–8:39.

We will read it together. Then you will work together at your tables to summarize the main 5–7 points or to write a summary paragraph of the argument.



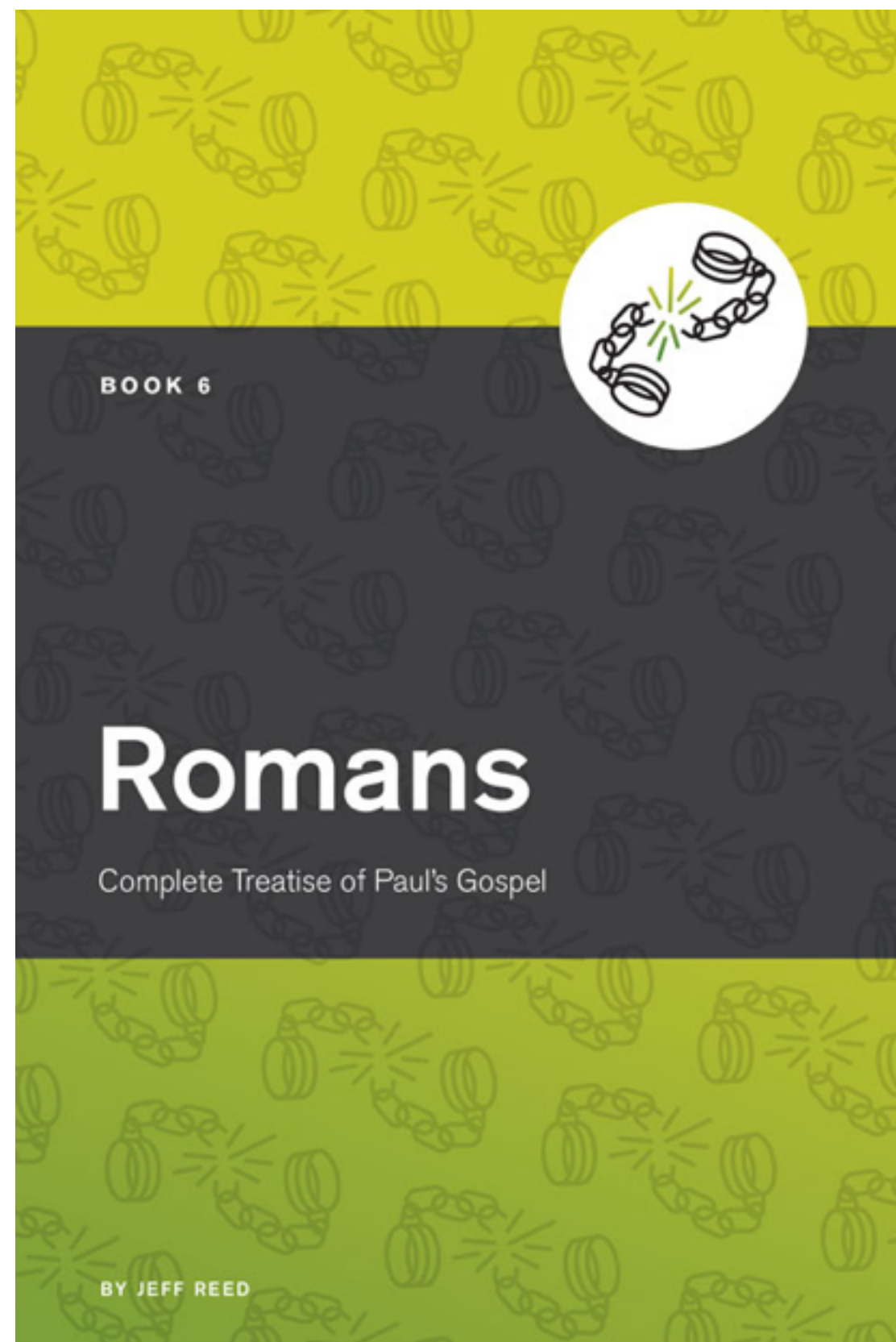
Romans 5:1–8:39

The whole argument: 108 verses

The argument in brief: 33 verses

Listen as I read it (30% of his argument, in his own words).

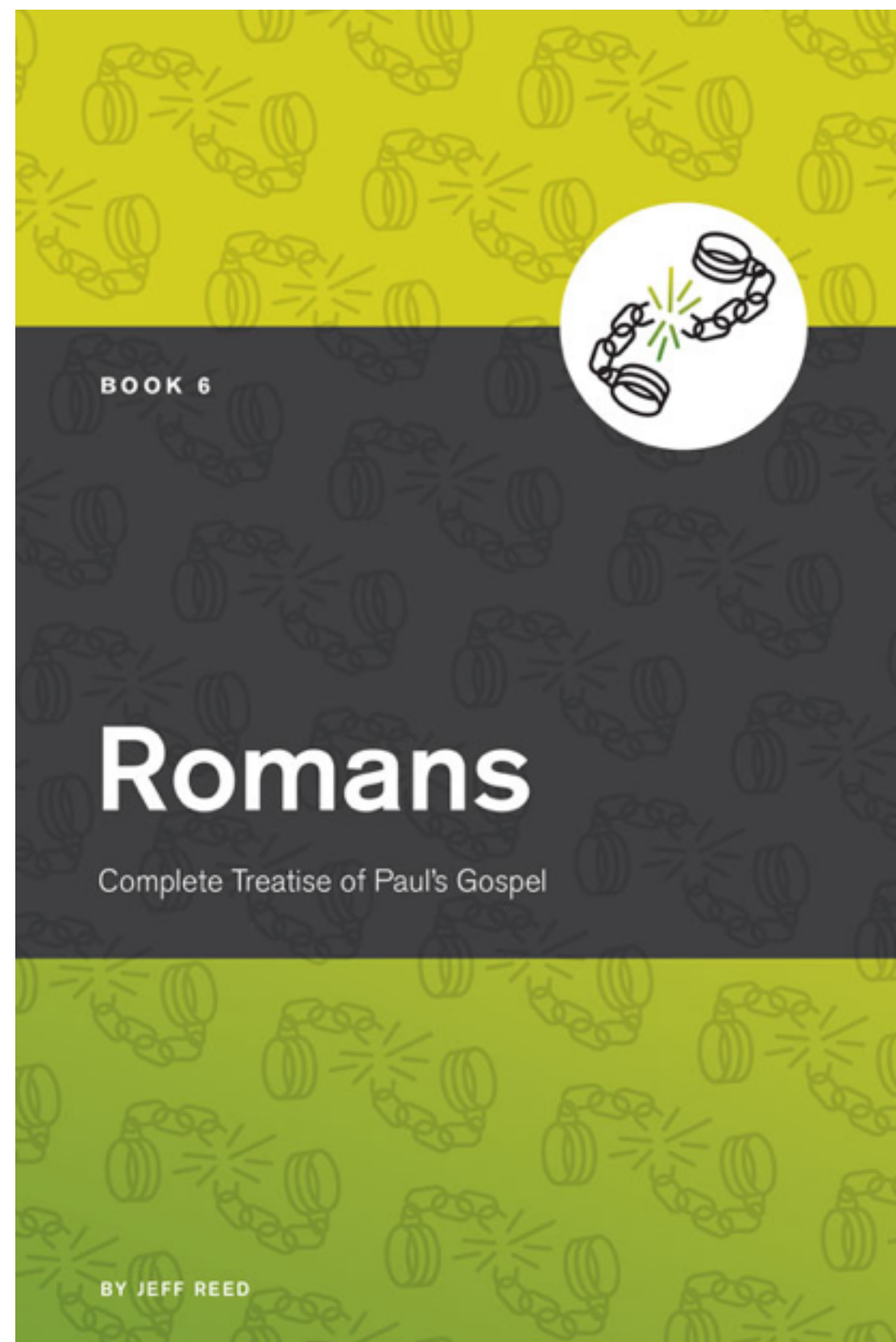
Try to summarize it in 5–7 points, or in one paragraph.



Romans 5:1–8:39

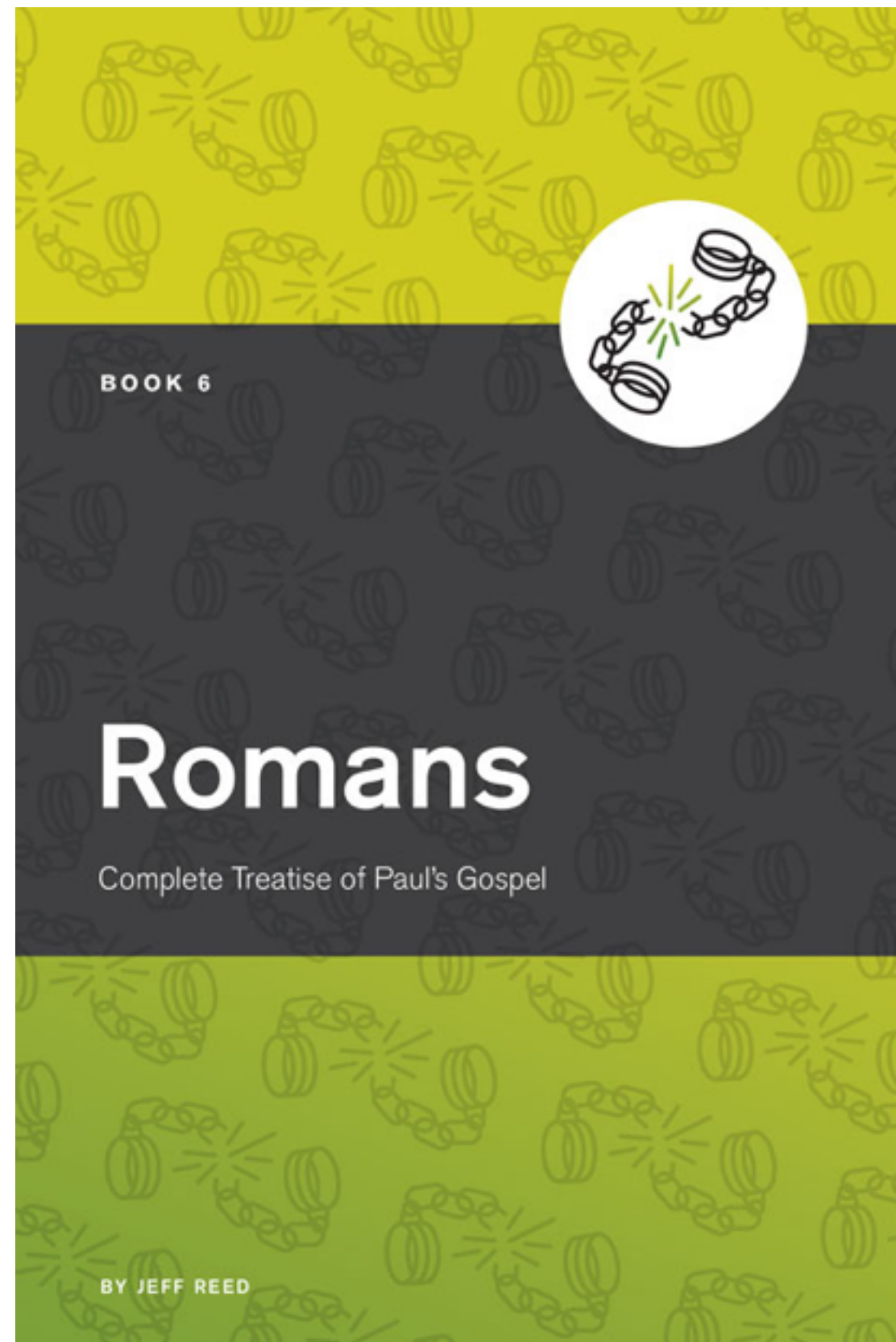
5:1 The result is this: since we have been declared “in the right” on the basis of faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus the Messiah. ²Through him we have been allowed to approach, by faith, into this grace in which we stand; and we celebrate the hope of the glory of God. ³That’s not all. We also celebrate in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces patience, ⁴patience produces a well-formed character, and a character like that produces hope. ⁵Hope, in its turn, does not make us ashamed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:1–5 Wright, N. T.



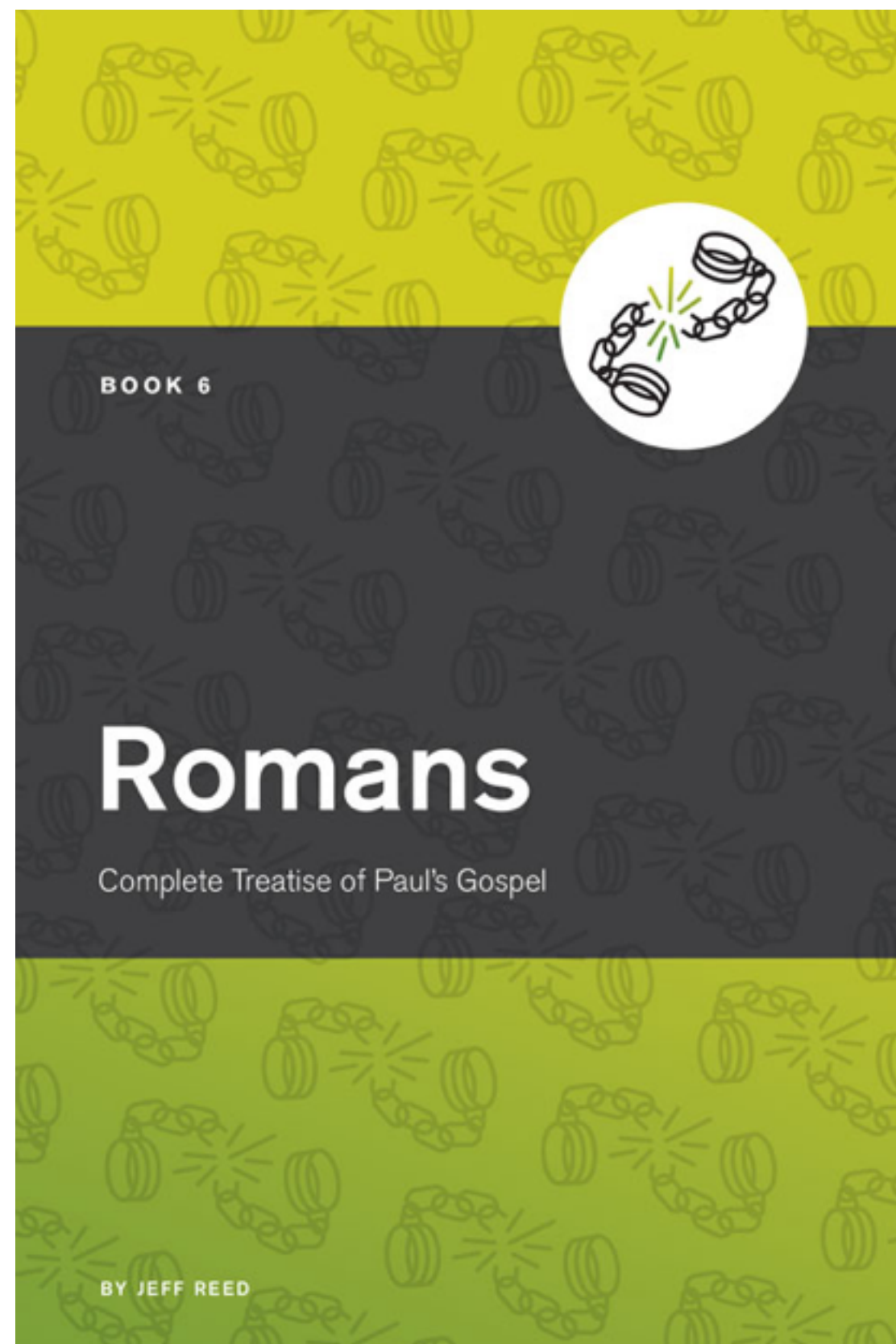
Romans 5:1–8:39

5:12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one human being, and death through sin, and in that way death spread to all humans, in that all sinned....¹⁷For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of covenant membership, of “being in the right,” reign in life through the one man Jesus the Messiah....²⁰The law came in alongside, so that the trespass might be filled out to its full extent. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more;²¹so that, just as sin reigned in death, even so, through God’s faithful covenant justice, grace might reign to the life of the age to come, through Jesus the Messiah, our Lord. Romans 5:12, 17, 20, 21 N. T. Wright



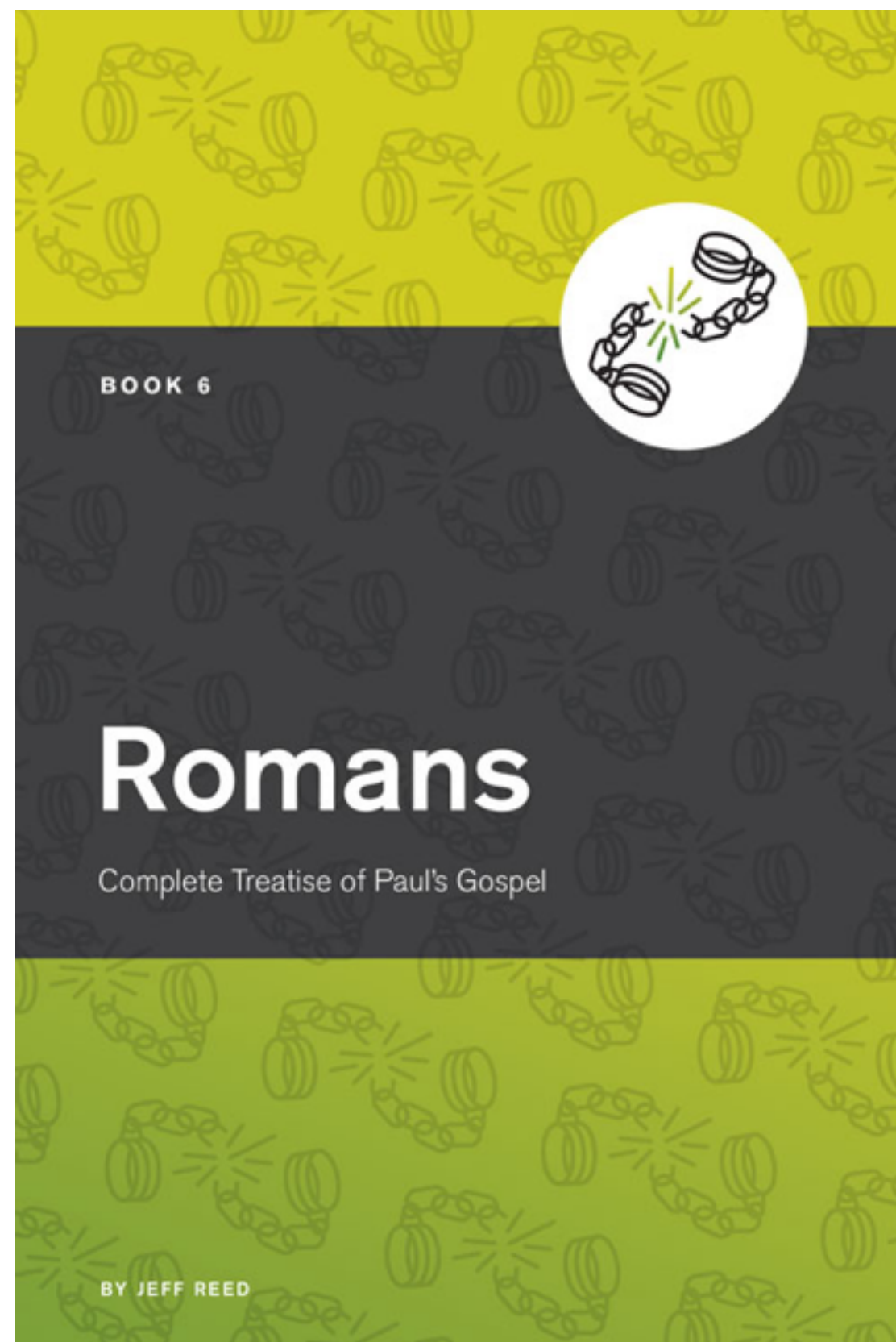
Romans 5:1–8:39

6:3 Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into the Messiah, Jesus, were baptized into his death? ⁴ That means that we were buried with him, through baptism, into death, so that, just as the Messiah was raised from the dead through the father's glory, we too might behave with a new quality of life.... ¹¹ In the same way you, too, must calculate yourselves as being dead to sin, and alive to God in the Messiah, Jesus.... ¹³ Nor should you present your limbs and organs to sin to be used for its wicked purposes . Rather, present yourselves to God, as people alive from the dead, and your limbs and organs to God, to be used for the righteous purposes of his covenant.... Romans 6:3, 4, 11, 13
N. T. Wright



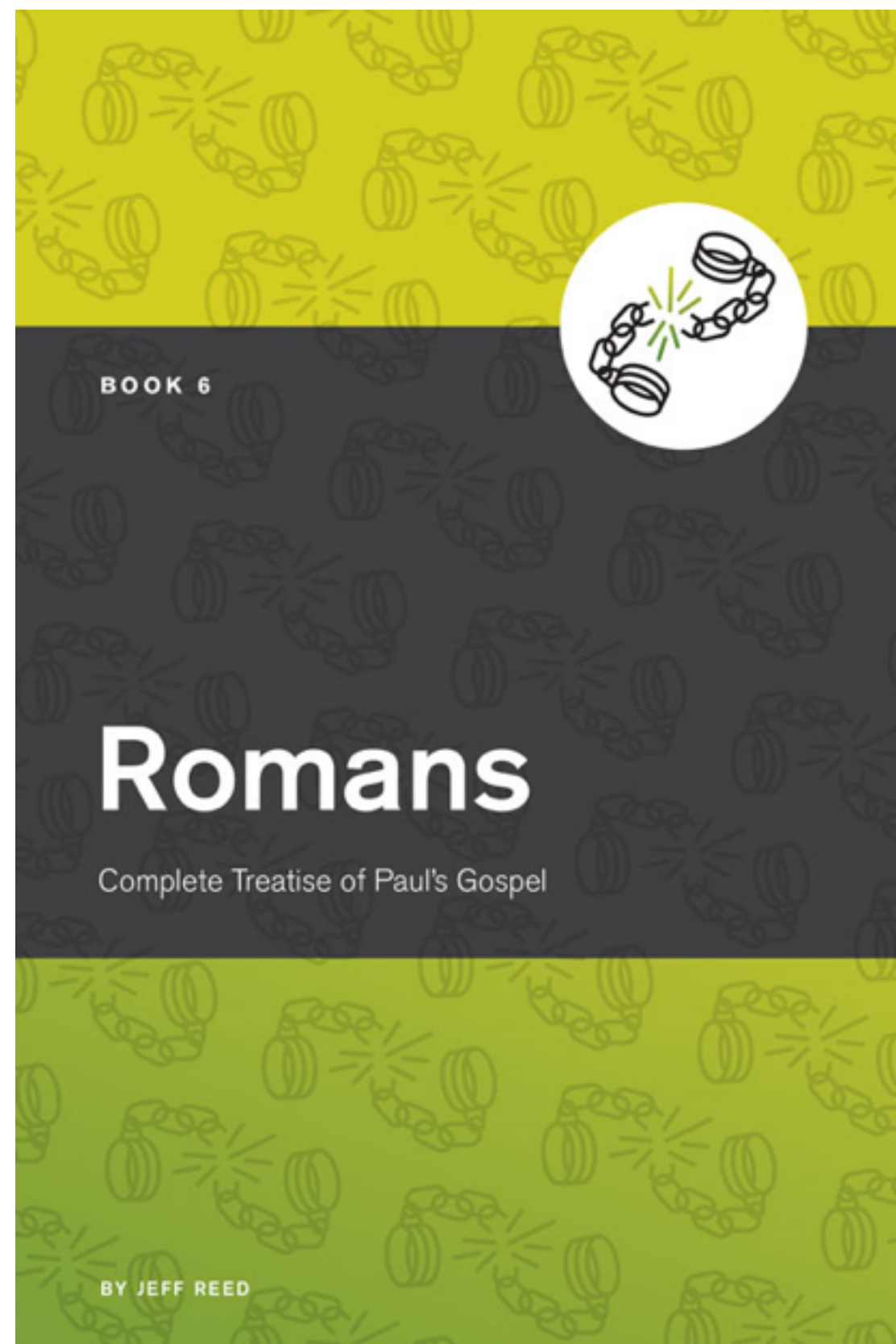
Romans 5:1–8:39

6:17 Thank God that, though you once were slaves to sin, you have become obedient from the heart to the pattern of teaching to which you were committed. ¹⁸ You were freed from sin, and now you have been enslaved to God's covenant justice.... ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and enslaved to God, you have fruit for holiness. Its destination is the life of the age to come. ²³ The wages paid by sin, you see, are death; but God's free gift is the life of the age to come, in the Messiah, Jesus our Lord.... Romans 6:17–18, 22–23 N.T. Wright



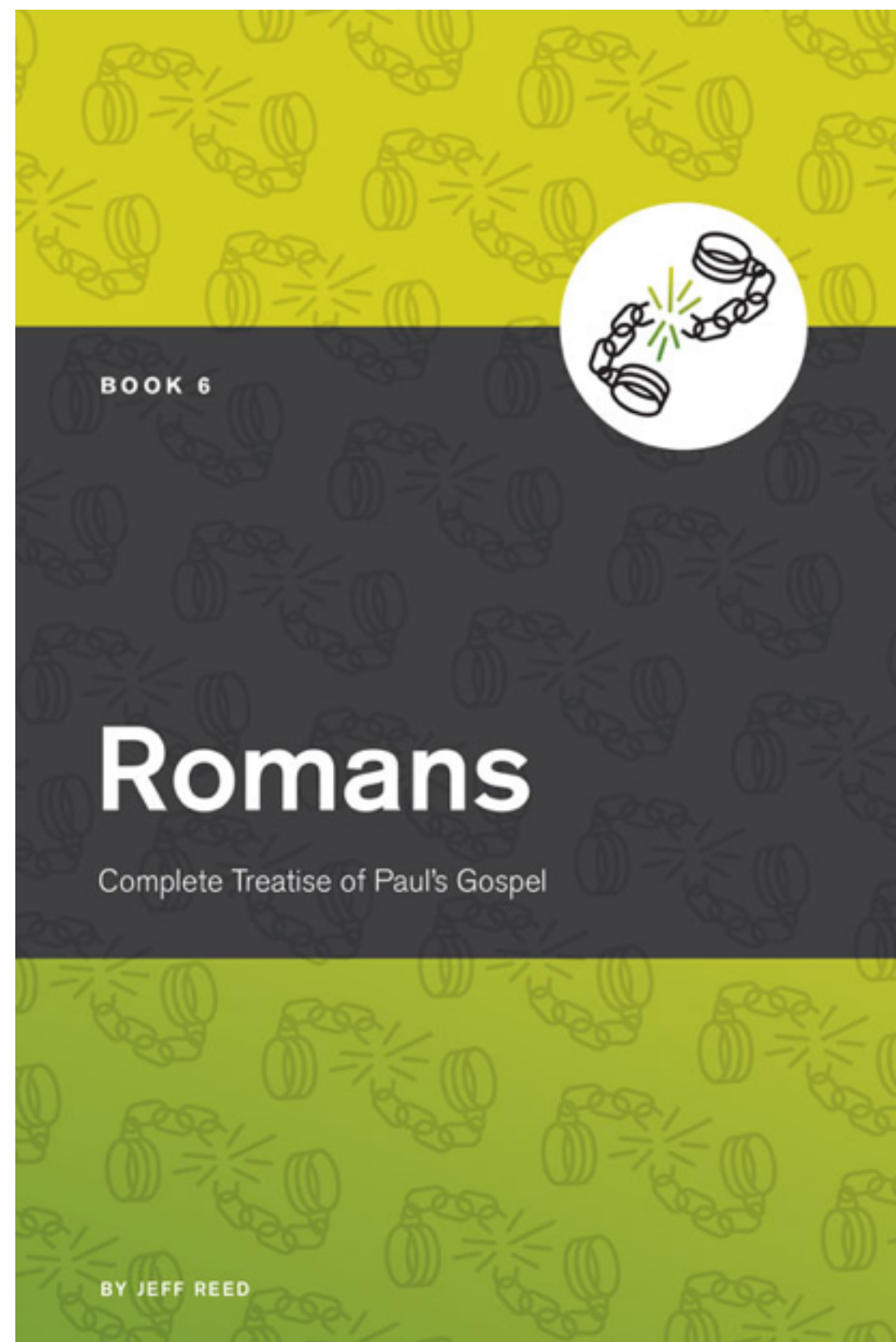
Romans 5:1-8:39

7:1 Surely you know, my dear family—I am, after all, talking to people who know the law!—that the law rules a person as long as that person is alive?....⁴ In the same way, my dear family, you too died to the law through the body of the Messiah, so that you could belong to someone else—to the one who was raised from the dead, in fact—so that we could bear fruit for God....²⁵ So, then, left to my own self I am enslaved to God’s law with my mind, but to sin’s law with my human flesh. 8:1 So, therefore, there is no condemnation for those in the Messiah, Jesus!² Why not? Because the law of the spirit of life in the Messiah, Jesus, released you from the law of sin and death.... Romans 7:1, 4, 25; 8:1, 2
N. T. Wright



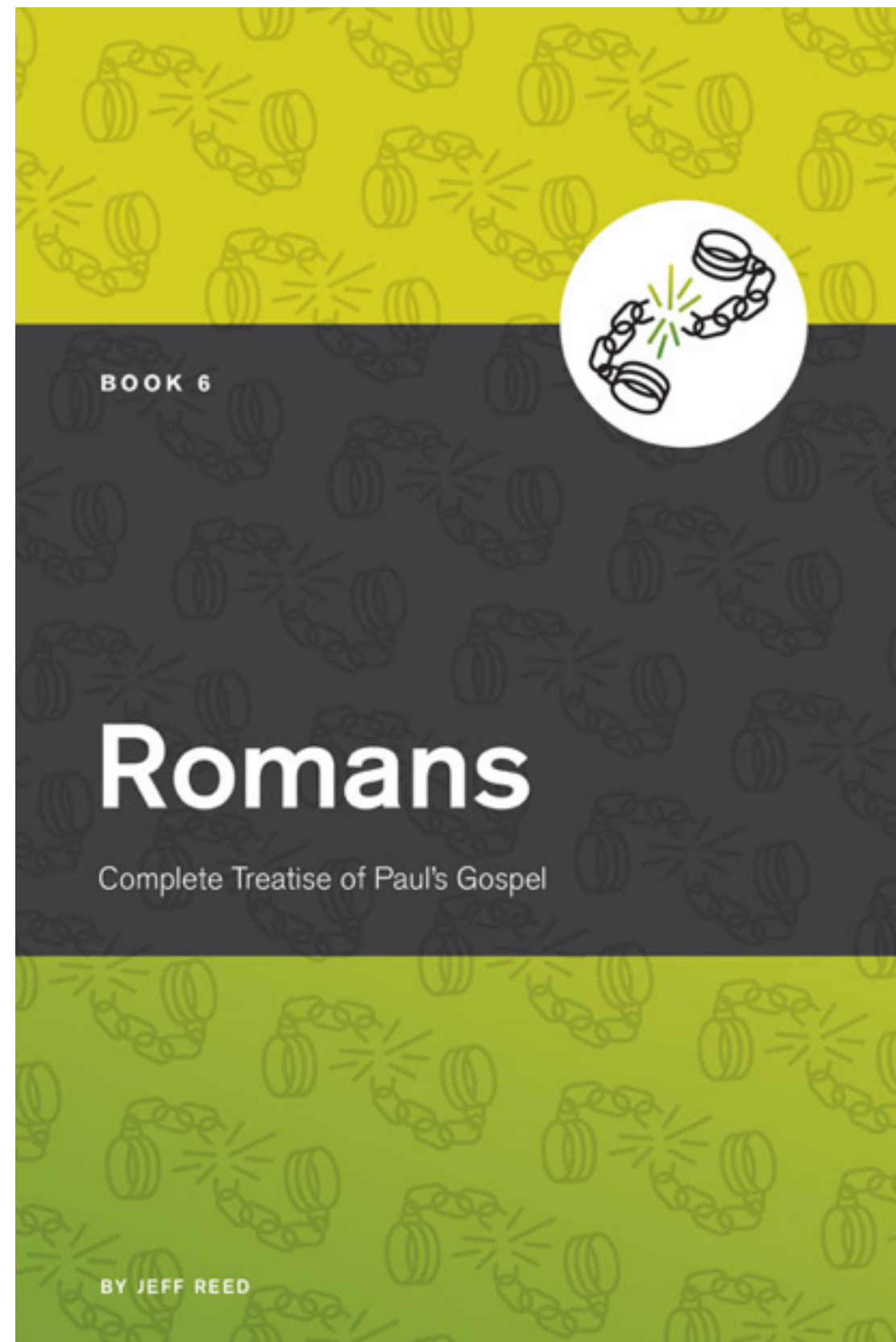
Romans 5:1–8:39

8:9 But you're not people of flesh; you're people of the spirit (if indeed God's spirit lives within you; note that anyone who doesn't have the spirit of the Messiah doesn't belong to him). ¹⁰ But if the Messiah is in you, the body is indeed dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of covenant justice. ¹¹ So, then, if the spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives within you, the one who raised the Messiah from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies, too, through his spirit who lives within you. ¹² So then, my dear family, we are in debt—but not to human flesh, to live our life in that way.... Romans 8:9–12 N. T. Wright



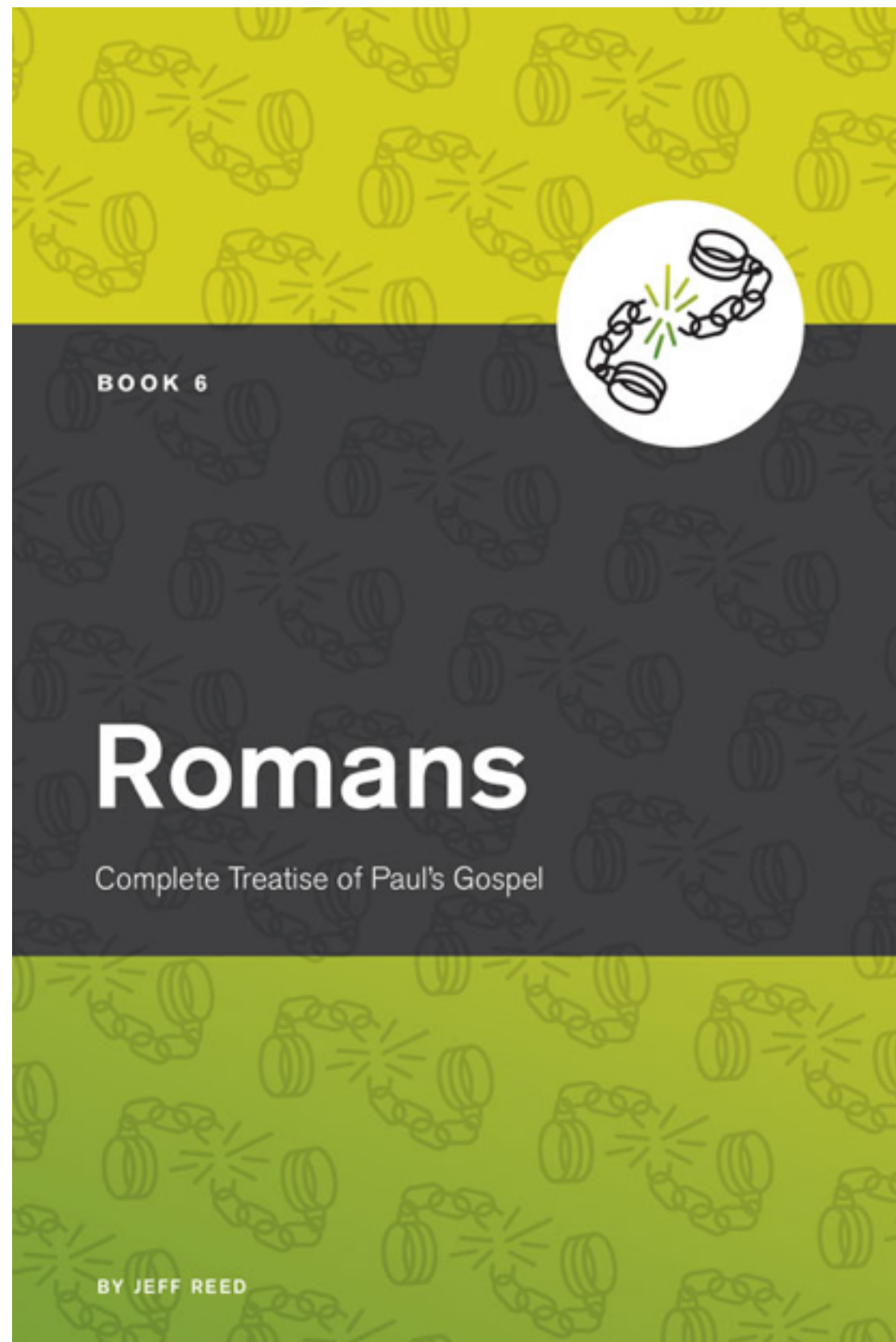
Romans 5:1–8:39

8:18 This is how I work it out....²⁶ In the same way, too, the spirit comes alongside and helps us in our weakness....²⁸ We know, in fact, that God works all things together for good to those who love him, who are called according to his purpose.²⁹ Those he foreknew, you see, he also marked out in advance to be shaped according to the model of the image of his son, so that he might be the firstborn of a large family. Romans 8:18, 26, 28, 29 N. T. Wright



Romans 5:1–8:39

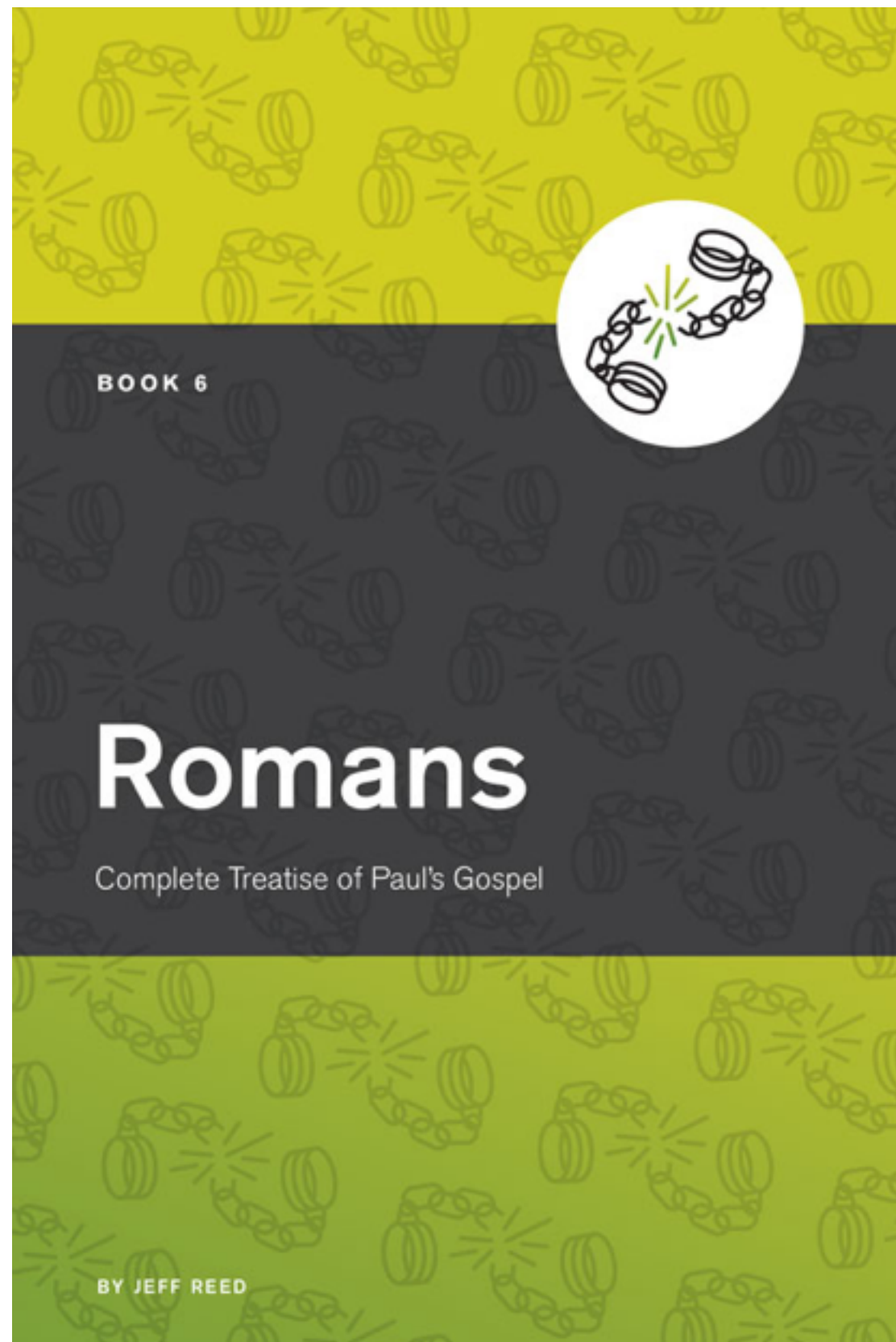
8:31 What then shall we say to all this? If God is for us, who is against us?...³⁵ Who shall separate us from the Messiah's love? Suffering, or hardship, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ...³⁷ No: in all these things we are completely victorious through the one who loved us.³⁸ I am persuaded, you see, that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor the present, nor the future, nor powers,³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in King Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:31, 35, 37–39 N. T. Wright



Romans 5:1–8:39

The essence of Paul's argument (7 main points):

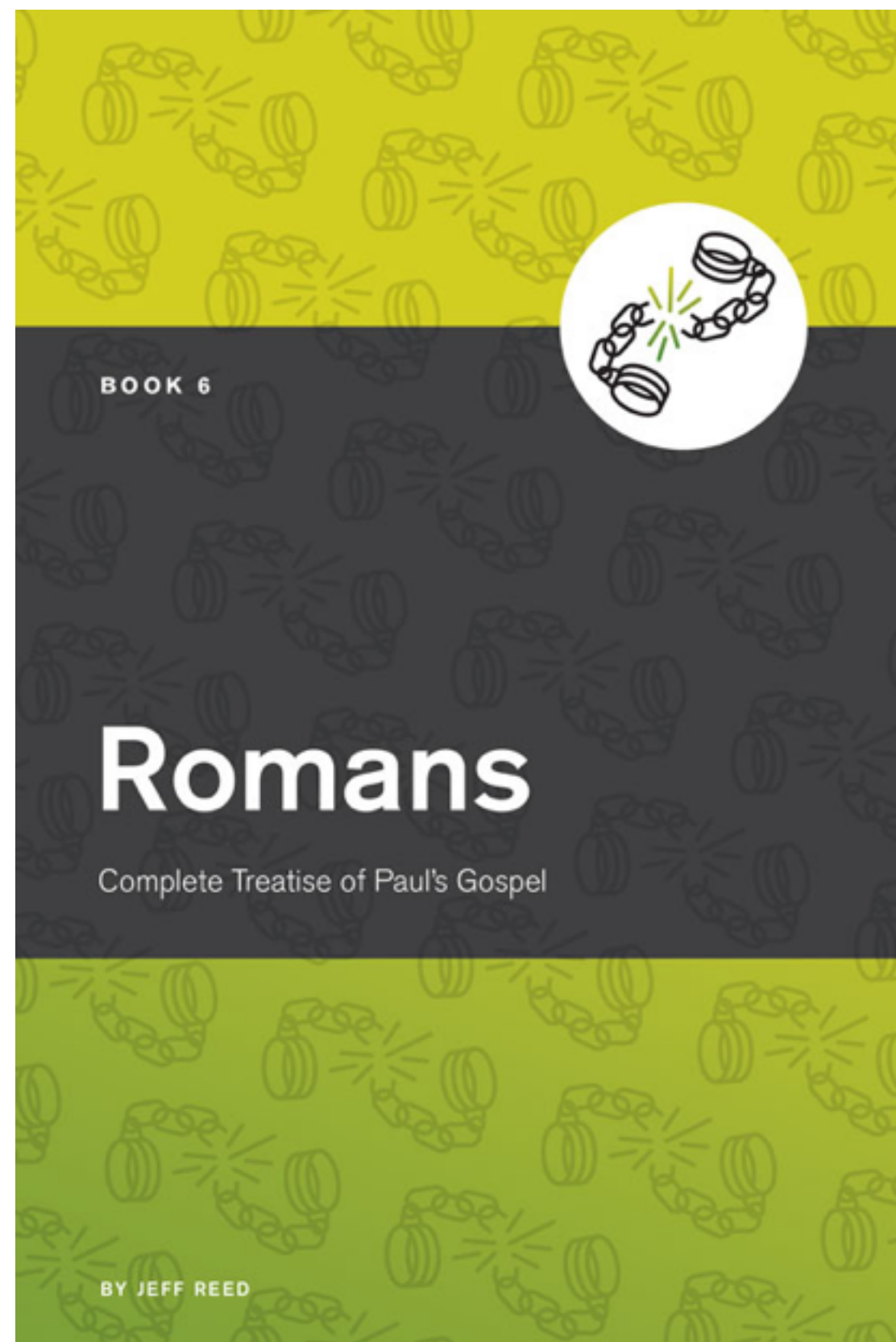
1. If God was faithful to His covenant promise to Abraham to bless all the families through the Messiah—available by faith through which we are part of His family—God will act in the end to deliver us, and we will reign with Christ as He fully sets up His kingdom.
2. Paul gives new shape to the storyline: Sin came in through one man Adam and shaped humanity; one man Jesus dealt with sin by His death and resurrection; the law came in to show us our connection with Adam and to point to Christ; and Christ has dealt with individual sin and will deal with the groaning of creation itself under sin in His coming kingdom. Thus, we must never return to our old fallen humanity and its worldview.



Romans 5:1–8:39

The essence of Paul's argument (7 main points)

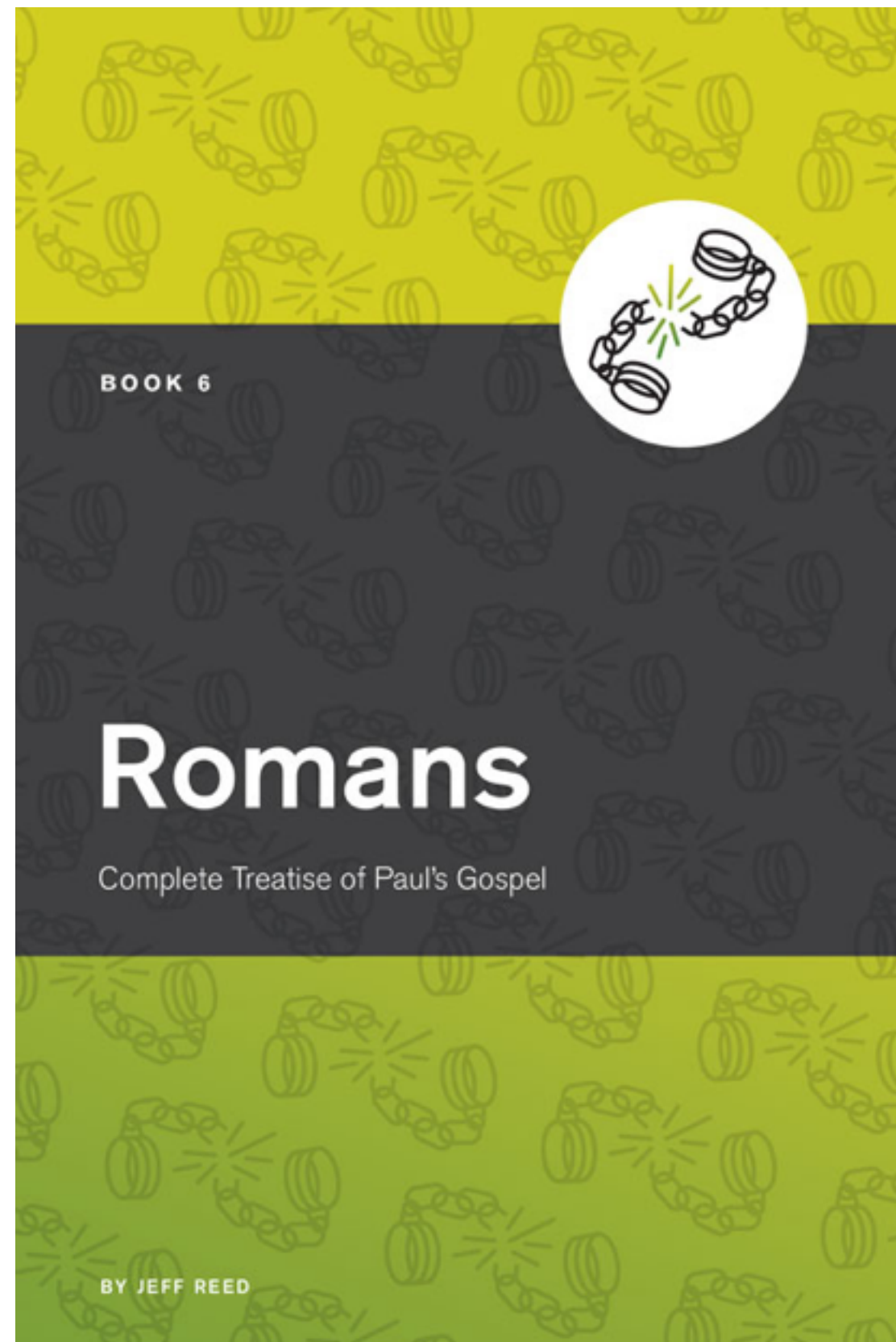
3. Therefore, live as a new people, with a new identity, and follow Christ (i.e. that “pattern of teaching” to which you were committed), committing yourselves to be used for the purposes of His covenant.
4. This new identity must become our new way of thinking—a whole new worldview—not the old law system, which while it was good, was also used to show us our sin, which is now dealt with in Christ and a whole new life has begun.



Romans 5:1–8:39

The essence of Paul's argument (7 main points)

5. In this life we still groan, as does all creation, and the suffering we experience produces character, a clearer focus on God's purposes, and fixes our hope on the full inauguration of His kingdom.
6. But the Spirit comes along and helps us in our weakness, praying for us in ways we do not even know how to pray for (often we do not even clearly understand His plan and purposes). In addition, God works all things together for our good, marking us out in advance to be shaped into the image of His Son.
7. Finally, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ—not persecution, suffering, hardship, famine, etc.—from sharing fully in His coming kingdom. We are His global family.

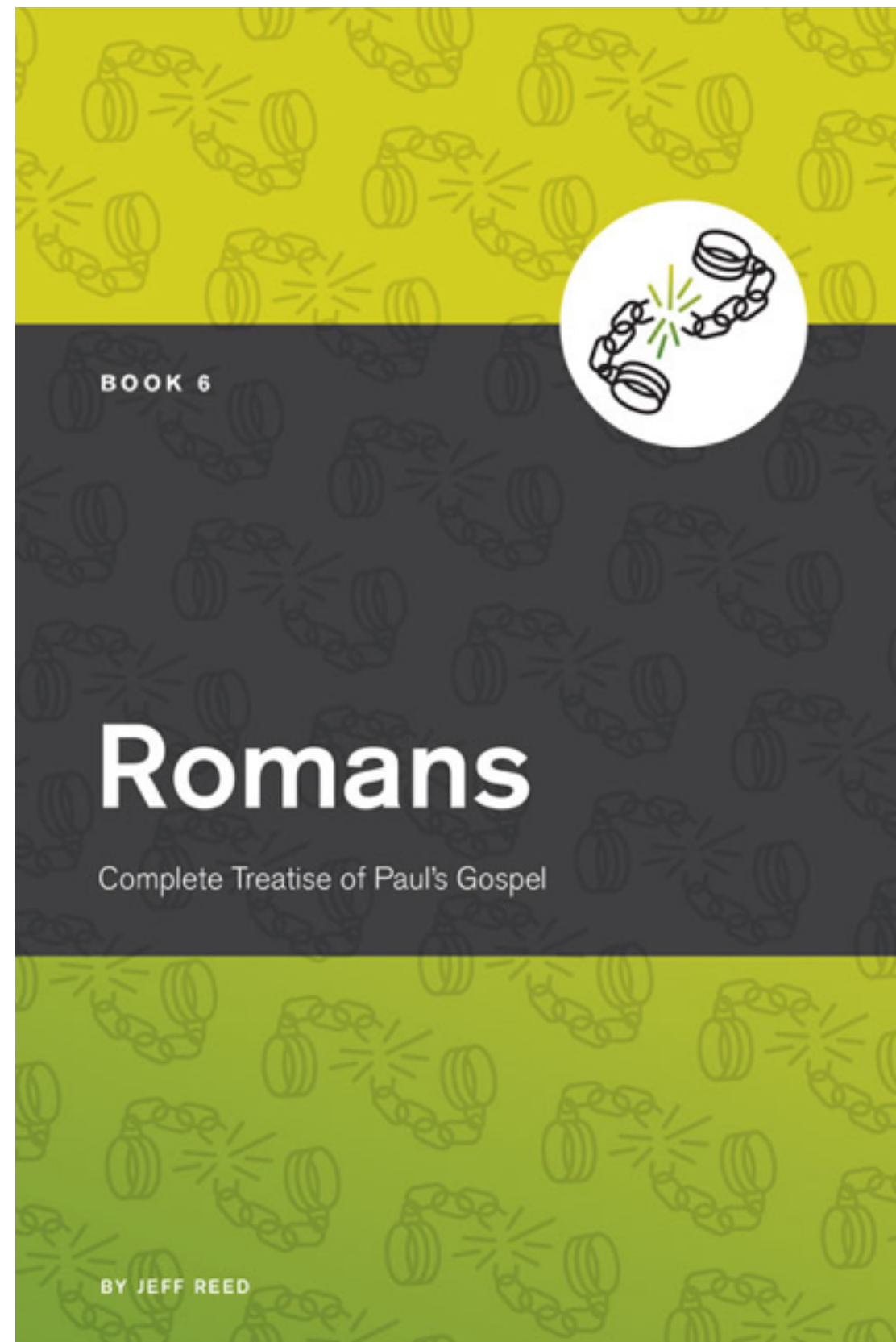


Romans 5:1–8:39

The essence of Paul's argument (one paragraph) in 5:1–8:39

As a result of believing in the Messiah, we are part of His new family and indebted to serving His covenant purposes, not our old way of life and thinking, which will only re-enslave us.

As we bring our minds (our entire worldview) in line with the pattern of the Messiah's teaching delivered to the churches (as Paul is working it out in Romans), God, through His Spirit, will work those purposes out in our lives in a supernatural way. Our "groaning" in this life (we just have the first fruits of the Spirit at this time) as we serve those purposes, will give way to new bodies and a new world when His kingdom is fully set up.



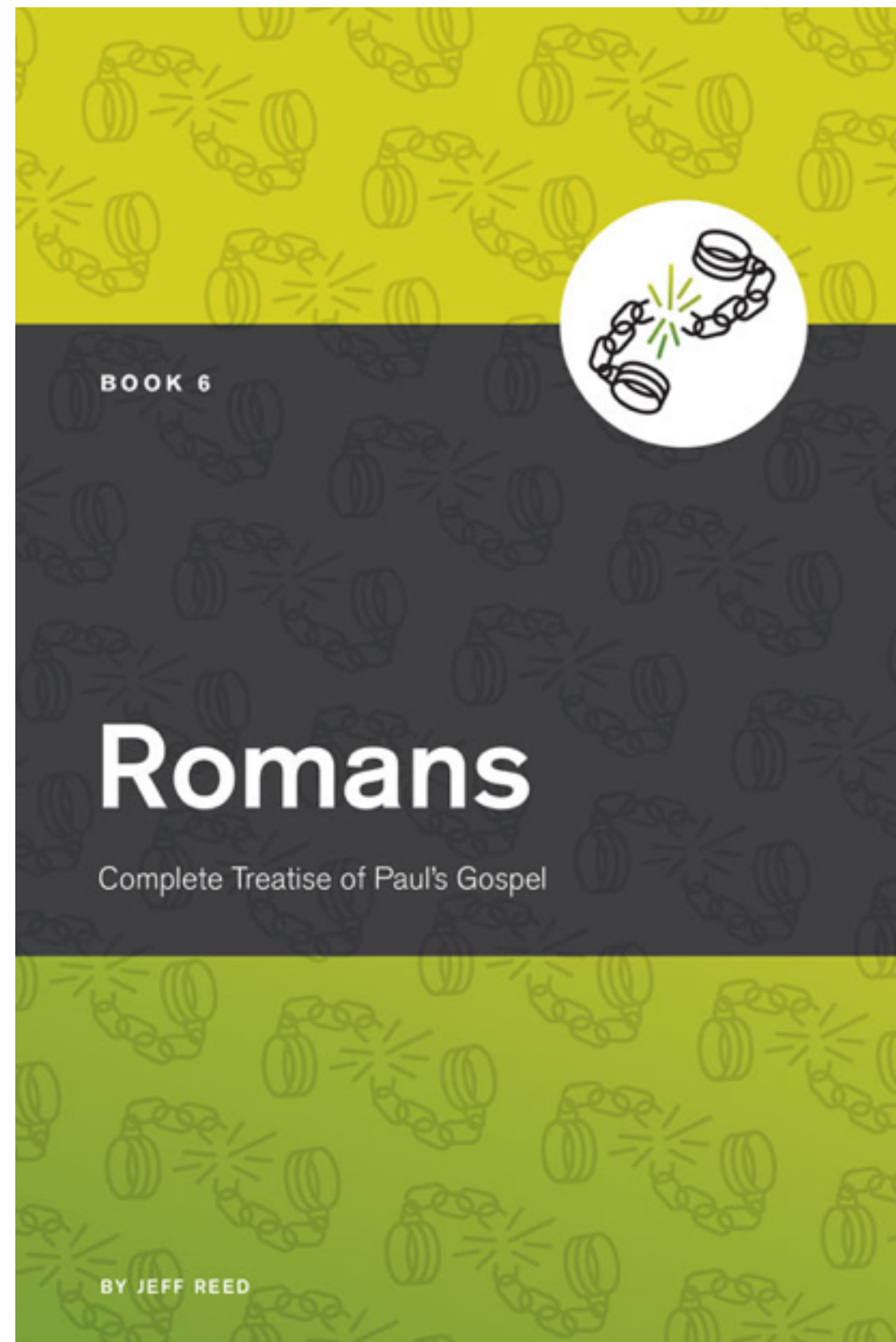
Romans 5:1–8:39

Romans 12:1–2 sets the whole argument in a context that we must keep clear in our minds, to set the intention of his whole argument in 1:16–11:36.

This is his intention:

In light of God's mercies (by faith in the Messiah), we are now part of this new family:

- make a solid commitment to this new life—renew our minds (bring our minds in line with God's)
- allowing the Spirit to work out God's specific will in our lives



Romans 5:1–8:39

So what are we doing in this brief reading?

We are trying to get at the core of Paul's argument—at the author's intention for writing.

When we write a summary paragraph in our own words or summarize it into points, we are beginning to write what we call *biblical theology*.

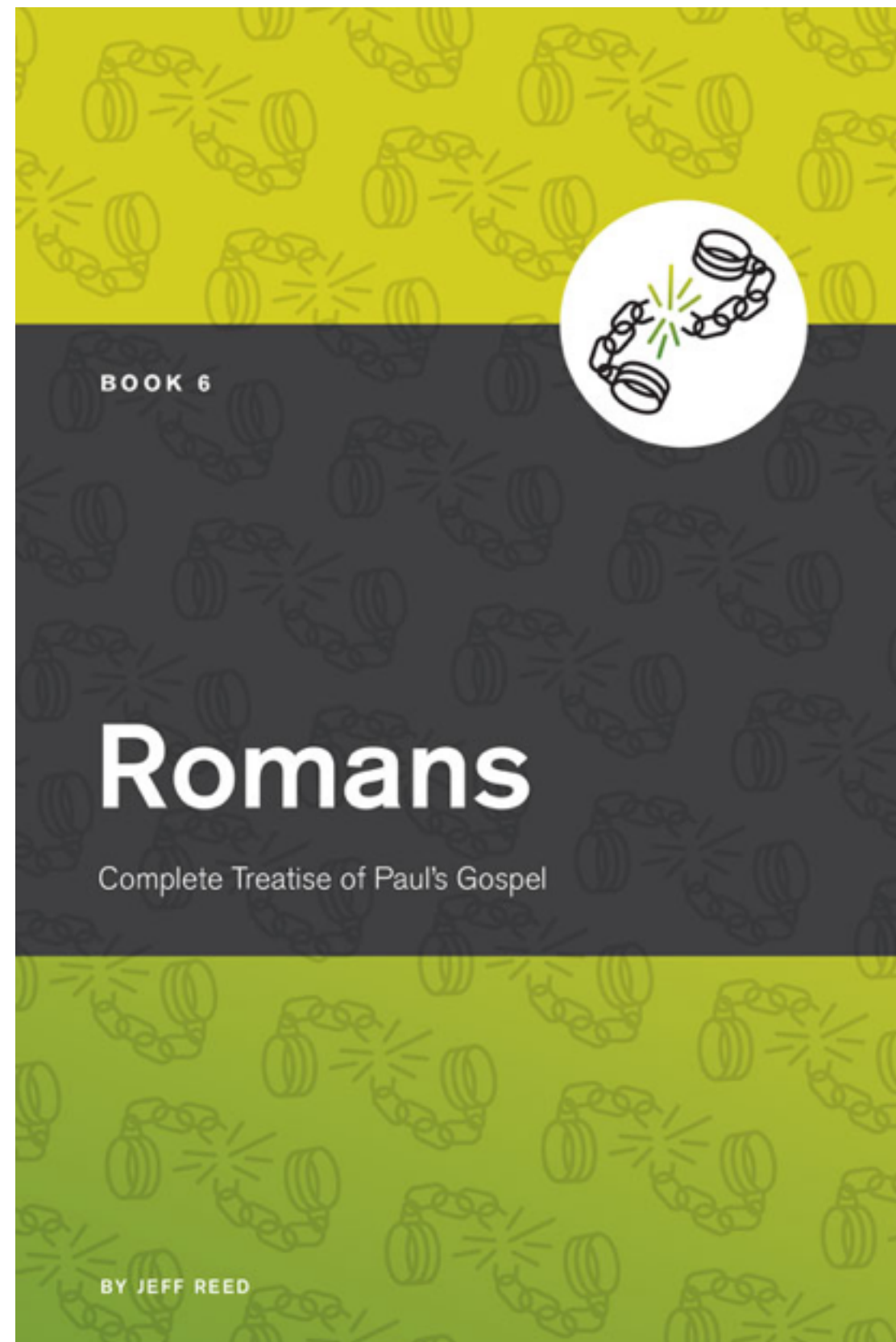
When we start applying it to our situation we are doing *theology in culture*, our culture today.

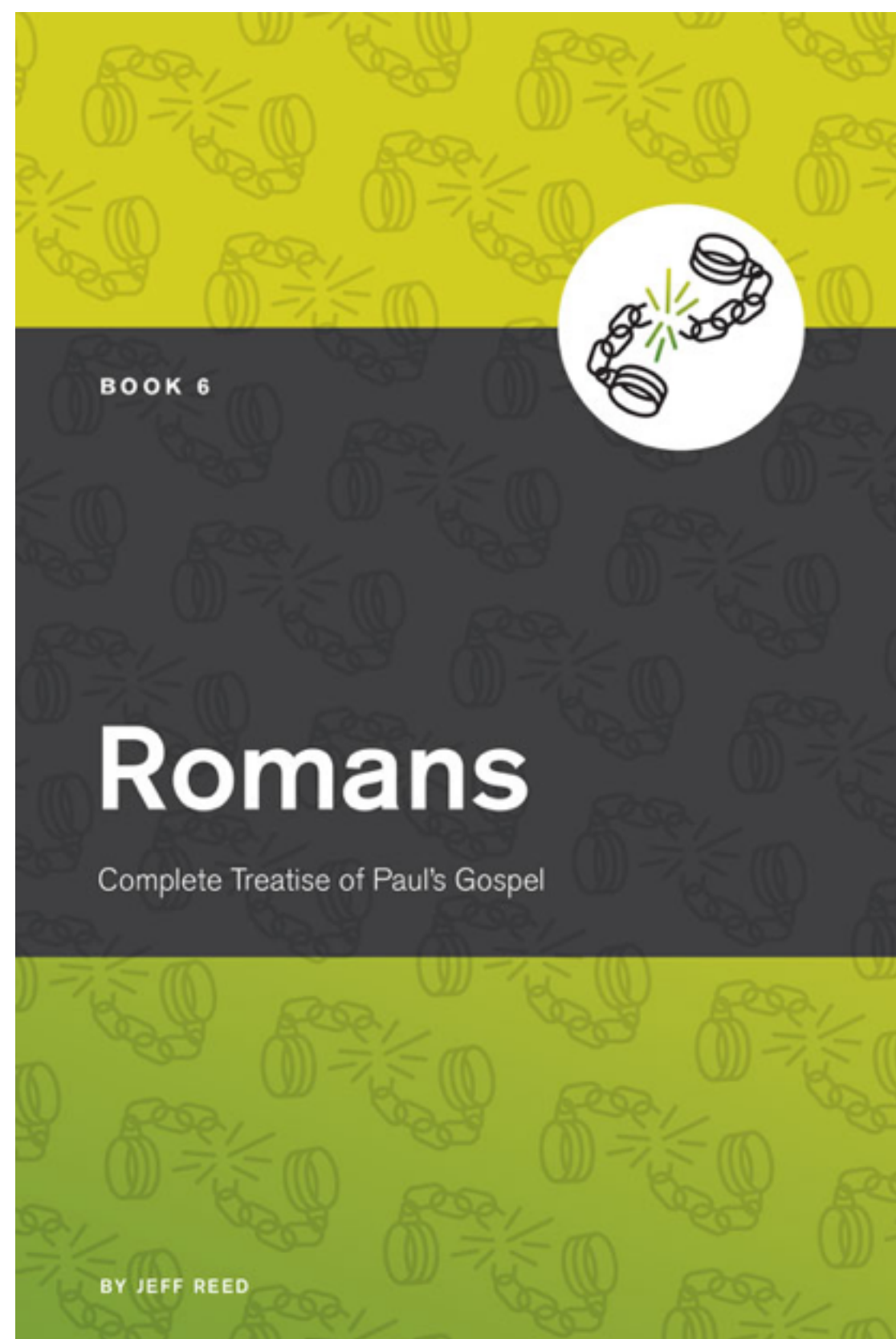
The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

Issue: The gospel as shaping our worldview

Questions:

1. How does the gospel shape our worldview as Christians? What does it mean to decide to fully participate in God's covenant purposes?
2. What would it look like to become enslaved again—at a practical level? How would adopting our old worldview enslave us? or another contemporary political or cultural worldview?
3. Why do we still “groan” in this life? What purpose does it have in shaping our lives?
4. What help can we expect from the Spirit of Christ as we seek to fulfill our commitment to His covenant purposes? What can we expect God to do in the circumstances of our life as part of His family?





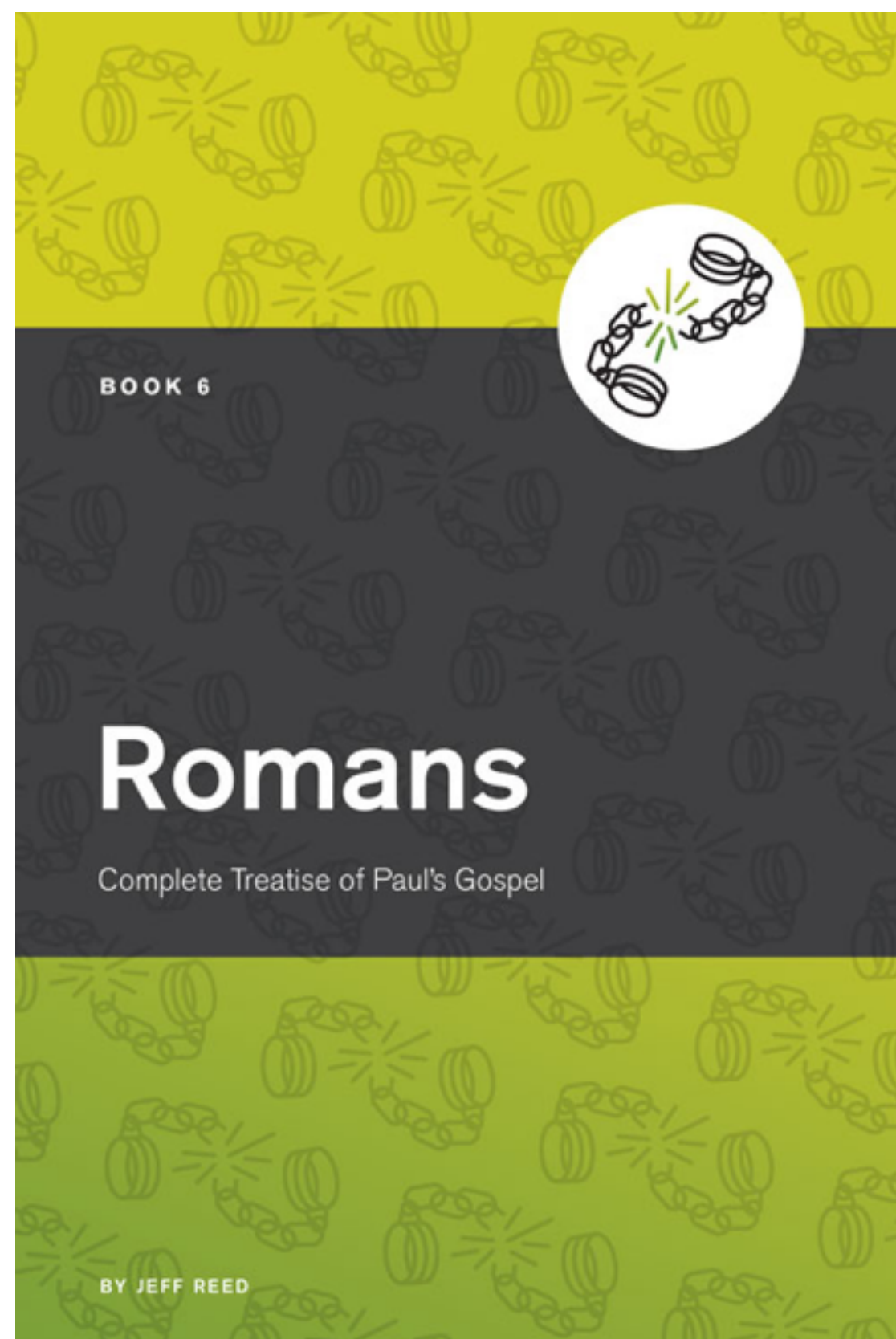
The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

Most of you this morning had a hard time describing the essence of the argument of Paul in Romans 5:1–8:39.

How does it shape our worldview?

In the introduction, I laid out some contemporary worldviews.

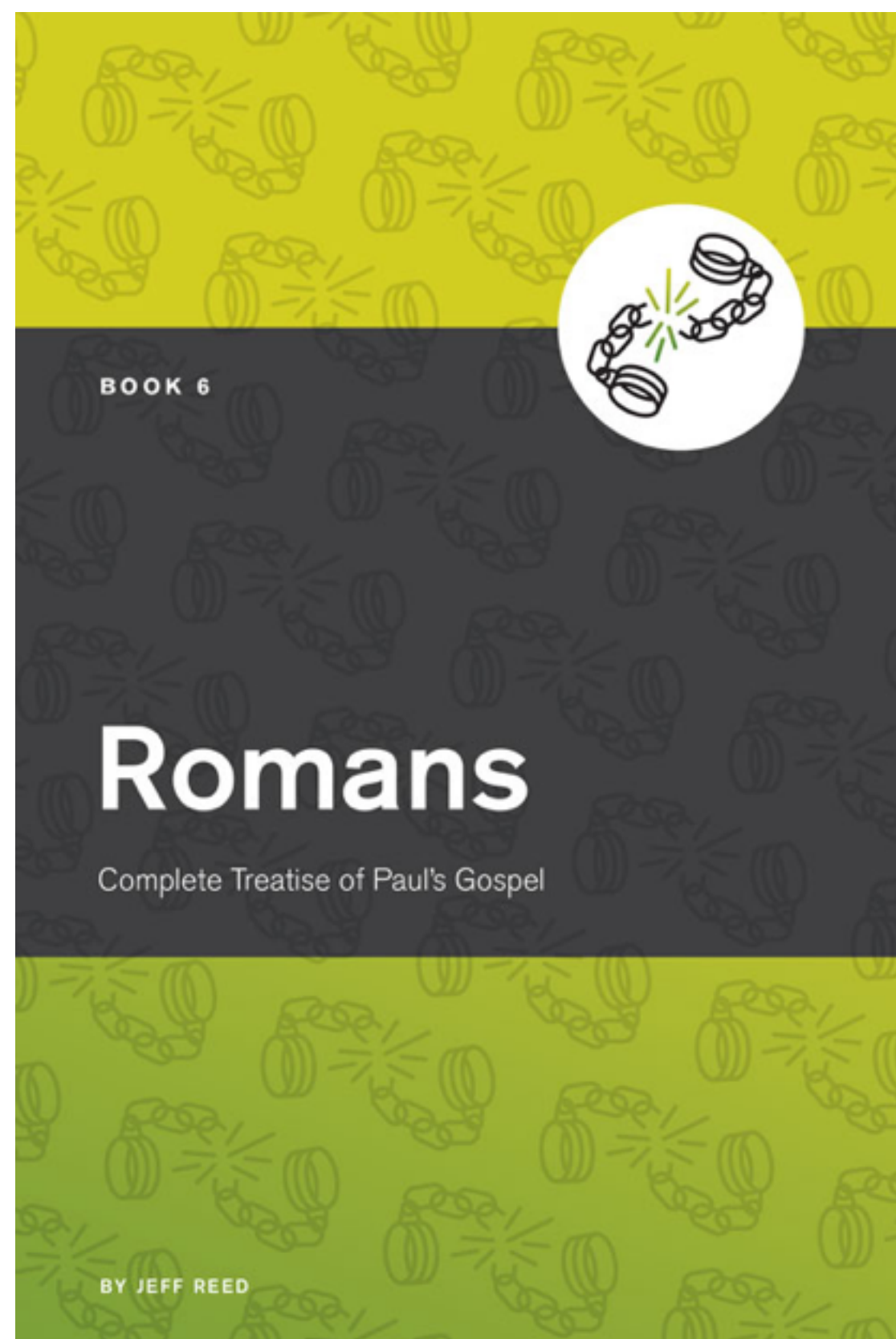
In Paul's day there were three big competing worldviews: the Roman Empire, the Greek polis, and the Jewish nation.



The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

Three new developments in last few weeks:

- Christians in some rural areas (house church movements) are being forced to take down their pictures of Jesus in their homes and replace them with Chairman Xi.
- Chairman Xi will soon be voted in as lifetime president—the new Mao.
- China is using “predictive policing” to put thousands in “Communist Education” camps (CCTV cameras, facial recognition, wi-fi sniffers, license plate numbers, citizen ID cards and “visitors management systems”; 160,00 from one province were recently put in camps).



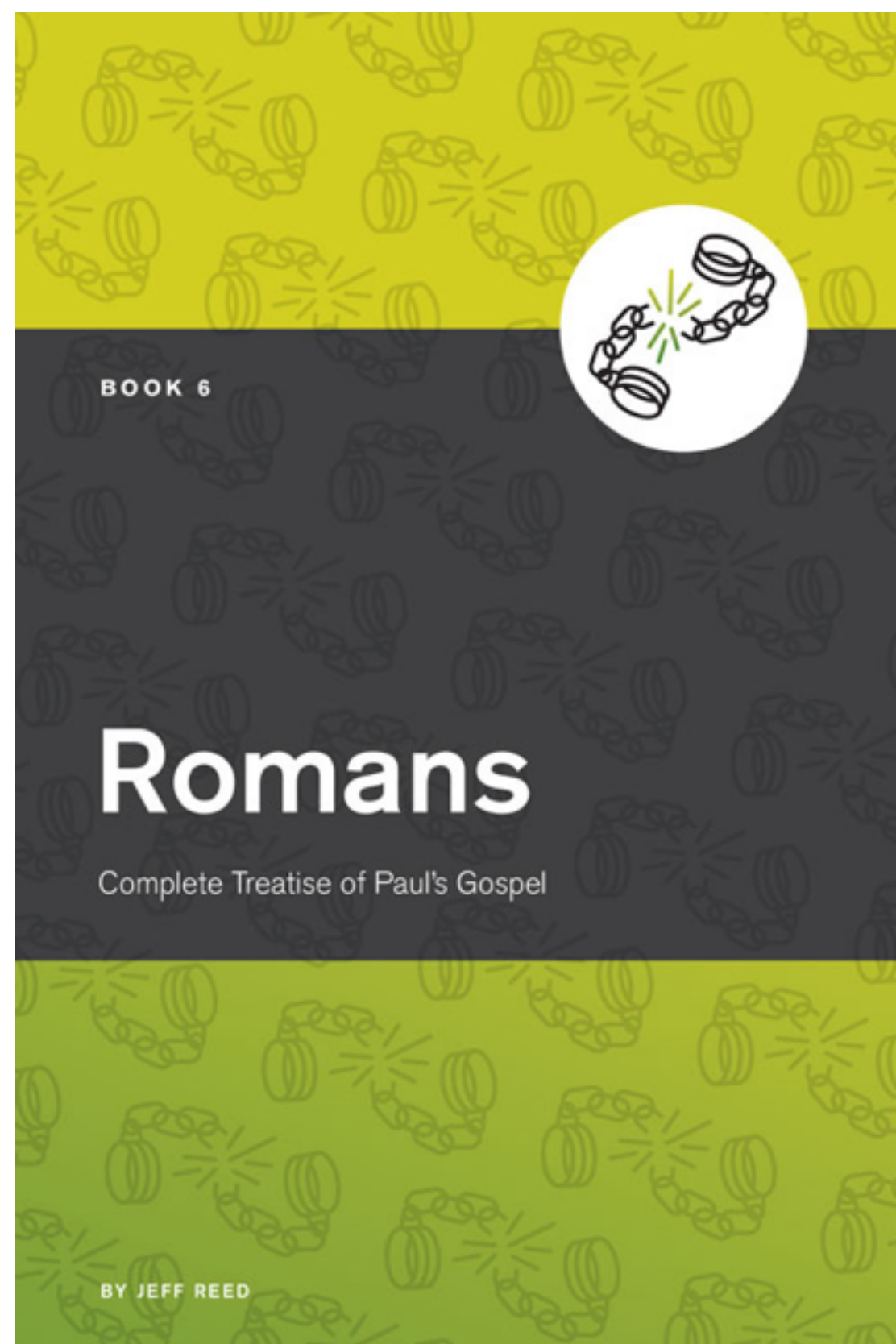
The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

The globalists—Davos globalists, European Union, USA establishment. Setting up a one world government

Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, by Samuel Huntington

Worldview of the globalists:

- China—open doors, democracy will win
- Accept Islam, it will moderate and join the world community.

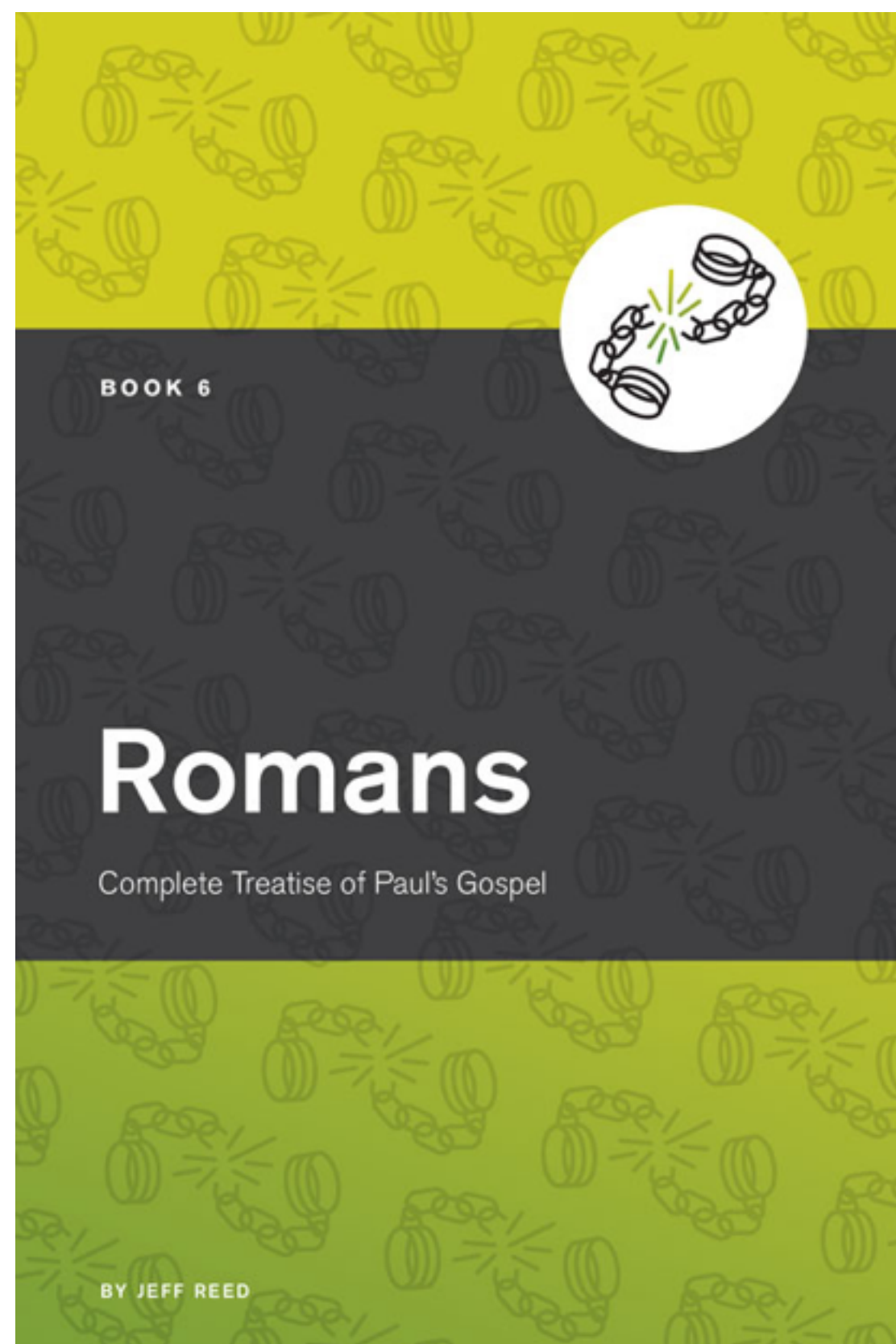


The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

How should we think as Christians? What is our worldview according to Christ?

In Romans 6–8, Paul is reshaping our worldview according to the gospel. That reshaping is not the Roman worldview of the day, and it is different from the Greek worldview—the two dominant worldviews of the day.

Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. The gospel must shape our worldview—rulers, famine, or any other “groanings.”

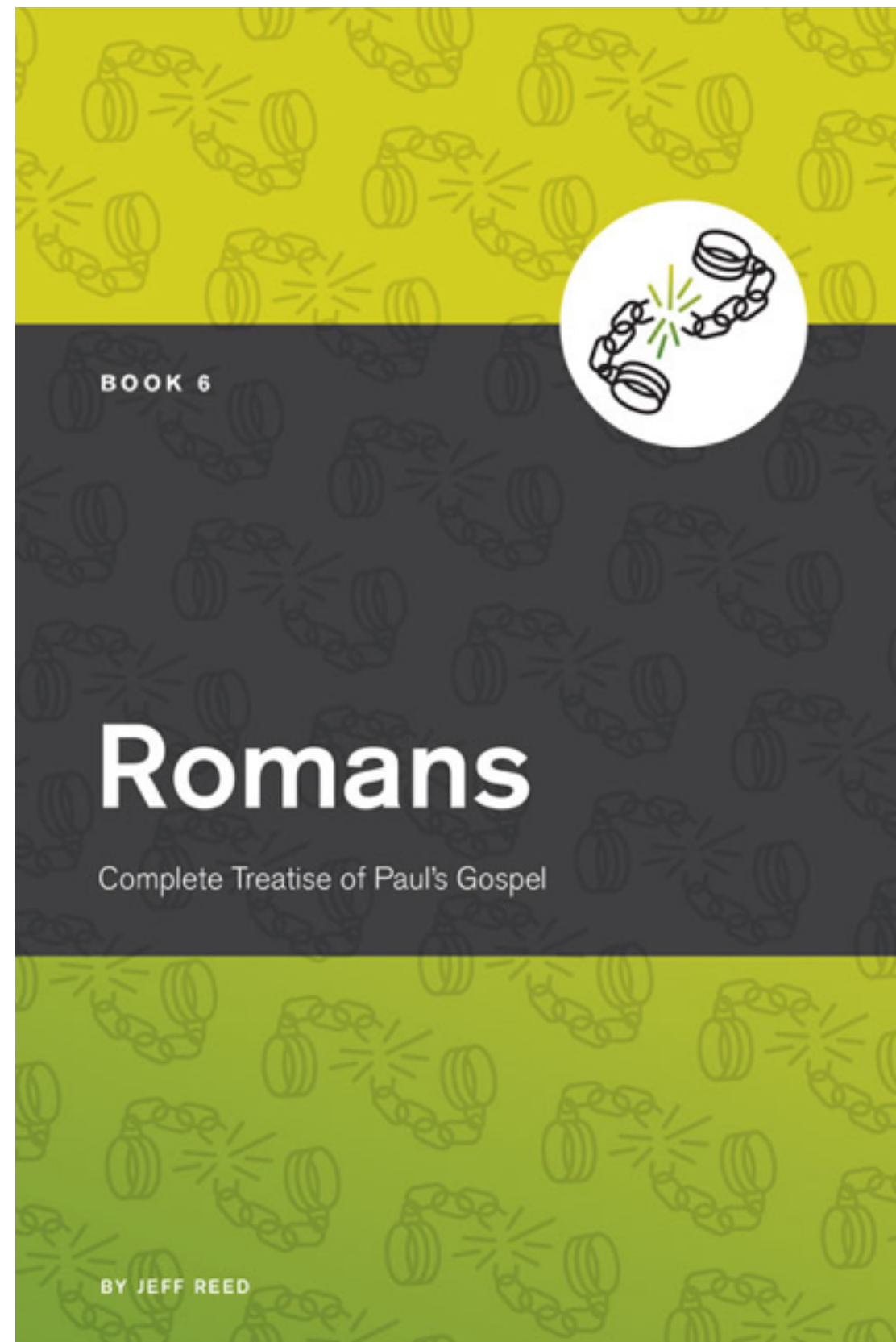


The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

How should we think as Christians? What is our worldview according to Christ?

- How should the Chinese churches think about their situation?
- How should we think about the huge political tensions in our country today? — the globalists, the progressives, the nationalists?
- How should we think about our “groanings,” whatever they be?

China? The nations are always going to “rage,” Psalm 2.
Islam? The battle began with Jacob and Esau and will remain until Christ returns.

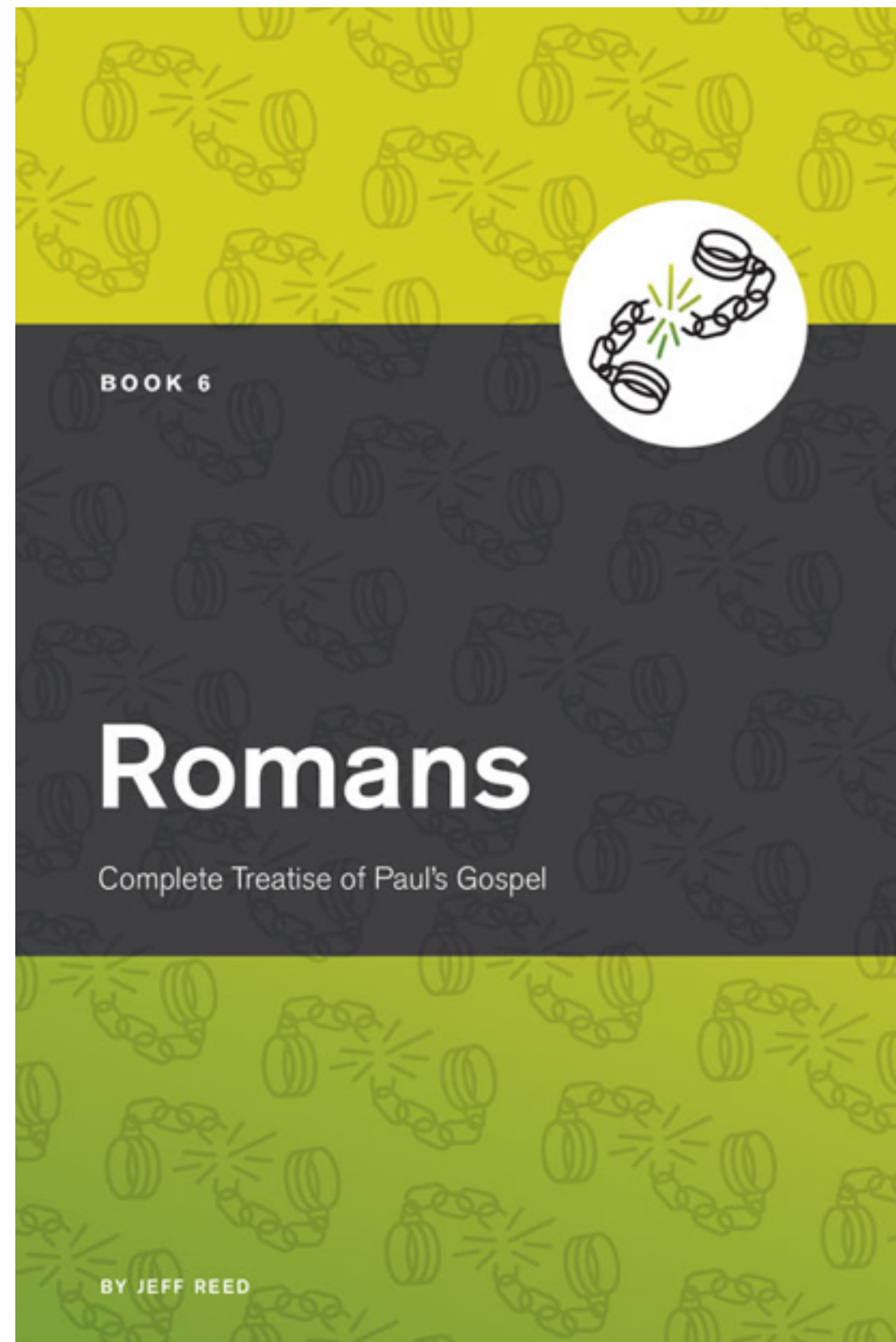


The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

How should we think as Christians? What is our worldview according to Christ?

- We must stay focussed—“engage in good occupations and meet pressing needs.
- Fully engage in God's covenant purposes—the plan to progress the gospel through the multiplication of well established churches.

Great example this week: Chadwick and his team



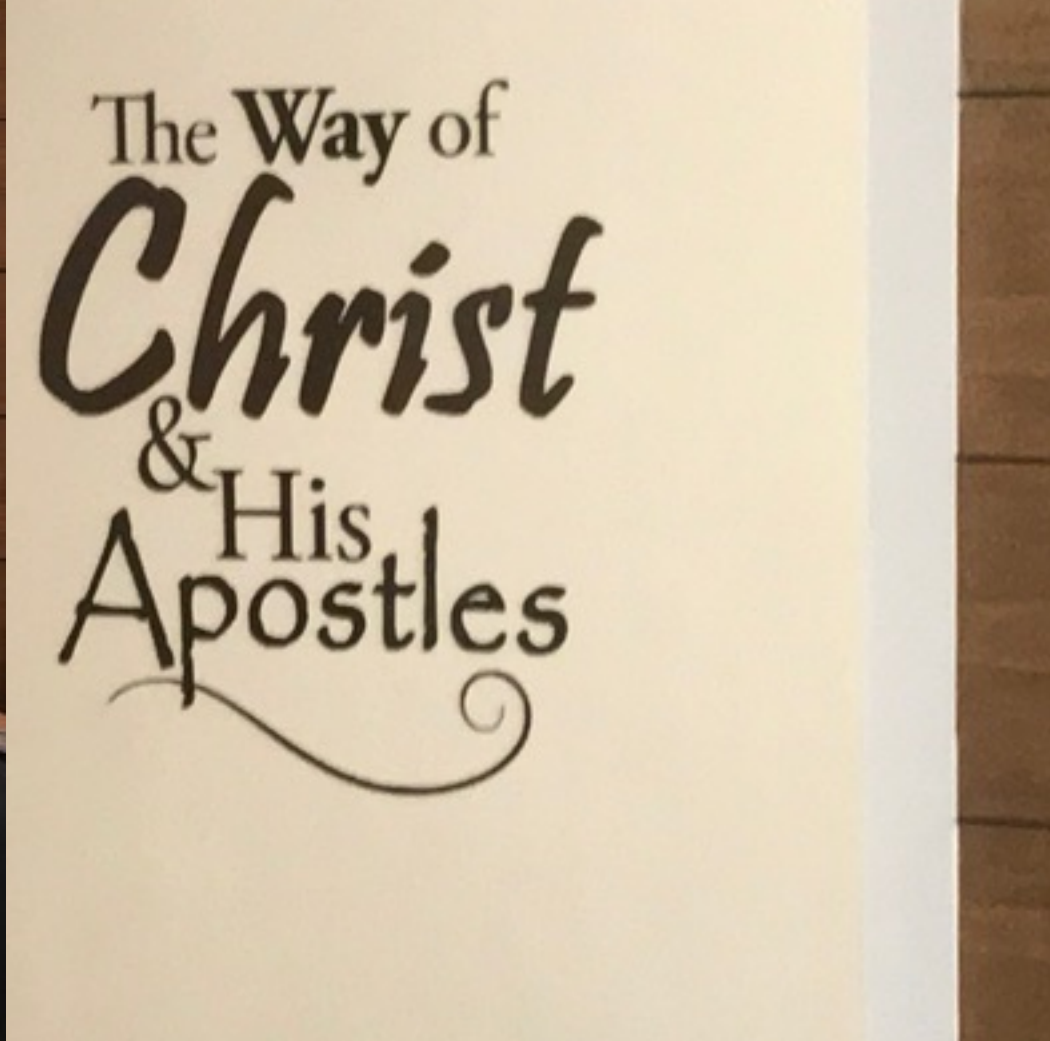
The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

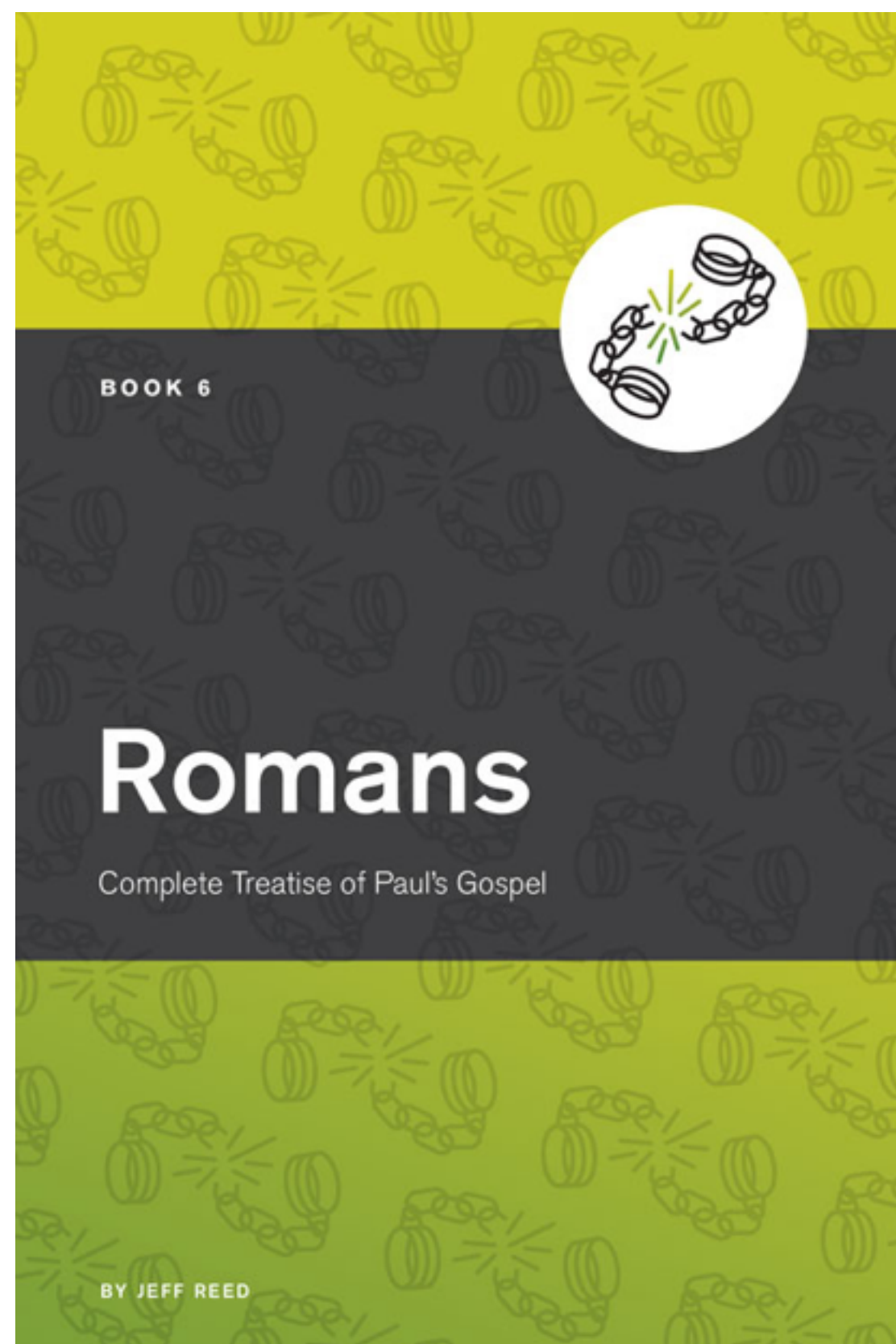
Remember Chadwick's video—the journey of NLAG?

This is his Chennai sodal team: 5 hubs, 53 house churches—well shepherded, becoming established, and “seek the welfare of the city” wells

Global C-BTE Resource Center–Chennai

Global churches planting and networks





The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

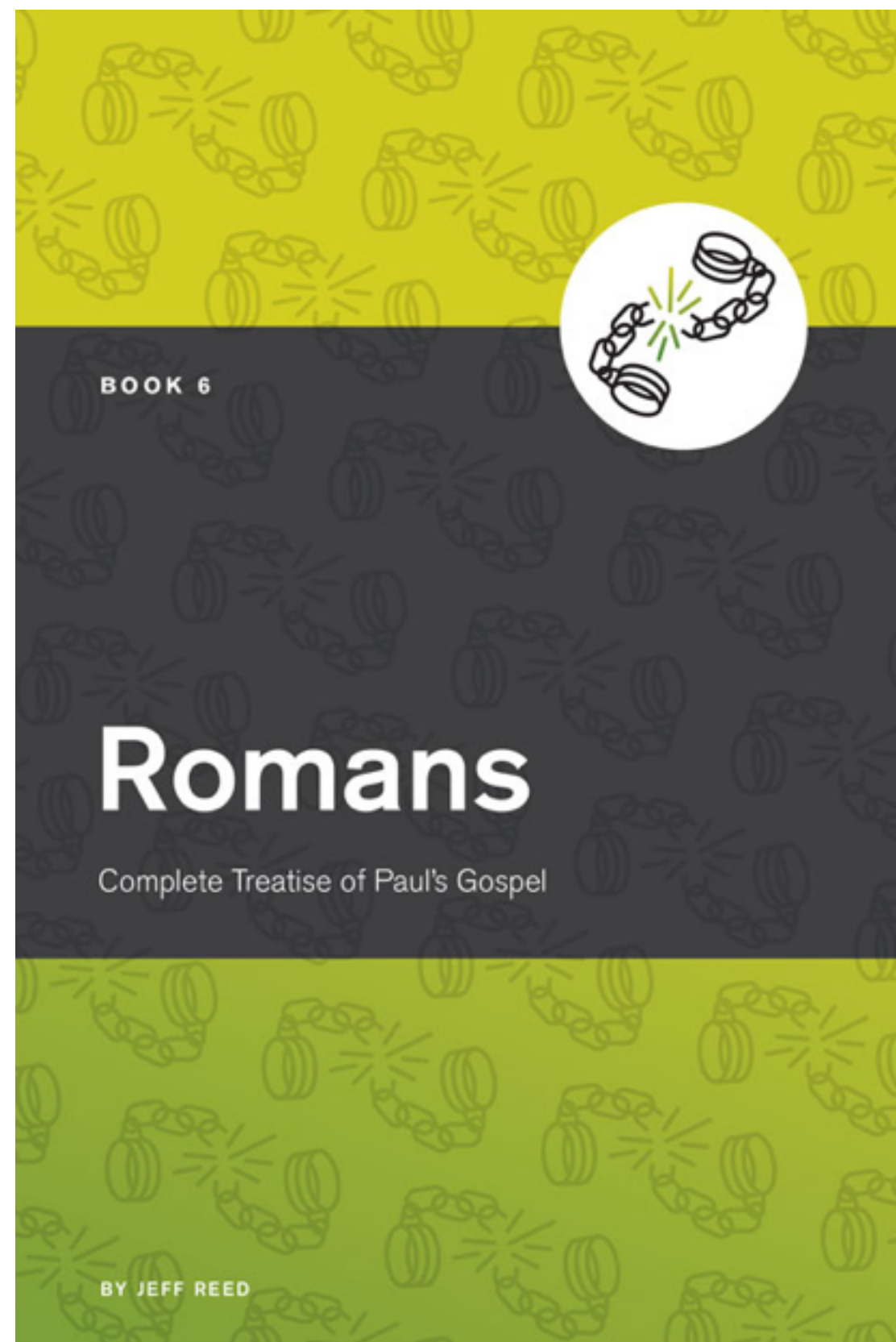
Tonight in your churches

Read the next major section of Romans: Romans 5:1–8:39.

Distill the argument down to a few verses.

Then identify his main points, or write a summary paragraph.

Or...discuss the issues questions.



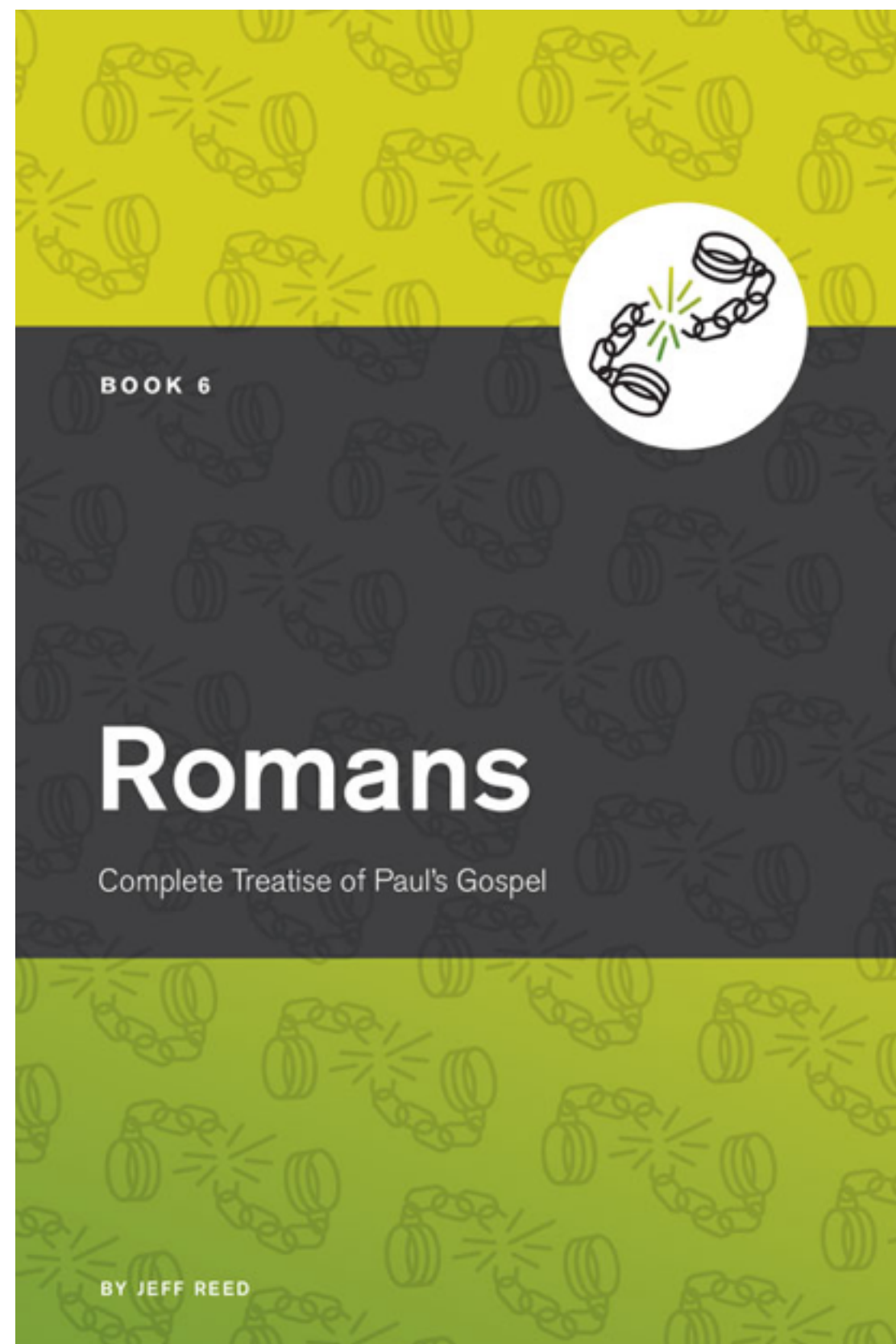
The Significance of Paul's Argument in Romans 5:1–8:39

Next week

Read the next major section of Romans: Romans 9:1–11:36.

Distill the argument down to a few verses.

Then identify his main points, or write a summary paragraph.



Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul

Romans: Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel

Session 1: The Intention of Romans

Session 2: The Gospel and The Story

Session 3: The New Gospel Worldview

Session 4: Reframing the Jewish Story

Session 5: The Gospel as Transformed Community

Session 6: Now Back to the Mission