

CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE WILDWOOD

KNOW JESUS



A NEXT STEP DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCE

NEXT STEP DISCIPLESHIP

KNOW JESUS

The idea of being a disciple-maker can be intimidating; but it doesn't have to be. Next Step Discipleship tools are resources designed to help you navigate the path towards helping both yourself and others become like Jesus. This particular resource is to help start the conversation about what it means to Know Jesus - the meaning of His life, death, resurrection, and how our Story intersects with His.

The Know Jesus resource is made up of eight conversation guides that are jam-packed with tools that will help move you from conversation to action: key scripture to read, discussion questions, and application activities.

Introduction: A brief introduction to the conversation that this P2P Talk-Sheet will be guiding you through.

Read It: Two to three passages of Scripture to read together. Don't just sum it up - read the passages out loud together.

Memorize It: A key verse that you and your conversation partner can memorize together. Memorization of Scripture is a valuable way to carry God's Word with you at all times.

CONVERSATION #5

REPENTANCE

When you were a child, you were probably forced to apologize for wronging a sibling or friend. There are good chances that this apology was less than sincere. Some people treat Biblical repentance this way, acting as if a half-hearted apology will solve the profound brokenness in our relationship with God. This falls far short of what the Bible calls repentance.

So what exactly is repentance? It is not about being sorry for getting caught, wallowing in our guilt or feeling remorseful.

True repentance begins with Godly sorrow - the recognition that we have wronged and wounded God and others - and then requires a profound change from the inside out. But this change is a process. It doesn't happen all at once. Christ-followers are characterized by a lifetime of repentance that helps them become the people God intended them to be. Every day is another opportunity to live in repentance, turning away from sin to fix our eyes on Jesus.

READ IT

Psalms 51:7 - 17 A Heart of Repentance

2 Corinthians 7:9 - 10 Grief Leading to Repentance

1 John 1:5 - 7 Living in the Light

Romans 6:11 - 18 Dead to Sin

MEMORIZE IT

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

DISCUSS IT

1. How have you seen people try to replace authentic repentance with a poor substitute?
2. What does sorrow have to do with repentance? What's the difference between guilt and conviction?
3. How should understanding who God is and what Jesus experienced on our behalf motivate us to live differently?
4. **1 John 1:5-7** encourages us to 'walk in the light'. What does that mean? What is the product of walking in the light?
5. What does it mean to be 'slaves to righteousness' (Romans 6)? If someone was observing your life, what might they say that you're a slave to?
6. Are there any sins in your life you find yourself holding on to rather than repenting? What is the cost of refusing to repent?

LIVE IT

Draw a heart on a paper.

Write things that have a place inside of your own heart on the inside of the paper heart. Write things that do not belong in your heart on the outside of the paper heart.

Take time this week to pray over this picture and ask God to help you live in active repentance.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

Help your family understand what authentic Biblical repentance looks like this week:

Share an example of repentance from your own life. Illustrate repentance by explaining what turning 180 degrees look like. You are going one direction and then you start moving the complete opposite direction. That is repentance!

14 Know Jesus Conversation Guide

Discuss It: Several questions to begin the discussion. Don't hesitate to dig further in and ask some of your own.

Live It: Each P2P sheet includes one or two Live It application activities. It's critical to move beyond words to developing life-changing habits in your life. When you next get together, take time to talk over the Live It action items from the previous conversation. Be a source of encouragement and accountability to one another.

Bring it Home: If your conversation partner has a family, check out the Family Time activity. It includes some simple ideas on how you can carry this conversation into your home.

TIPS TO GET STARTED

As you start this conversation, here are some things to keep in mind:

1. **Start, continue, and end in prayer.** Authentic life-change is the result of the Spirit of Truth working in us and through us. Before you begin these conversations, take time to turn it all over to God.
2. **Salvation isn't a series of steps; it's the product of a right relationship with God that only comes through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the transformative presence of the Holy Spirit.** Recognition of this Truth should lead to an allegiance to Jesus (what we commonly call 'faith'), which manifests itself in confession, repentance and baptism. Arguing the 'when' of salvation isn't fruitful. Rather, recognize the Biblical emphasis placed on the full response of faith.

3. **No salvation without the Spirit.** While an allegiance to Jesus requires action, it's not the action that saves us. The product of a Biblical response to Jesus is the presence of the Spirit of God in our lives. That Spirit acts as guide, our source of conviction, and is the 'seal of our salvation' (among so much more). Don't replace the work of the Spirit with an overemphasis on our own personal responsibility and action.
4. **Go back to the Bible.** God's Word is the source of our understanding of Truth. We all have a tendency to root our conversation in opinion rather than God's Word - and this is a huge mistake. Make it about what God says rather than just opinion or feeling. One of the most helpful things that you can do in these conversations is to have your conversation partner read the Biblical references themselves and then ask, 'What do you hear the Bible saying here? How might that shape your life?'
5. **Talk on the way.** These talk-sheets can be used anywhere. Meet at your house, go out for coffee, or take a walk in the park. Fishing? No problem. Grab the next sheet and have an intentional conversation along the way.
6. **Take your time...or don't!** Each of these P2P Sheets gives you a half-hour of conversation. You can take your time navigating each of these topics over multiple sessions. Alternatively, do it all at once! Move at whatever speed your conversation partner is comfortable.
7. **Remember: This is a conversation and not a debate.** It's extremely rare for someone to choose to follow Jesus because someone argued them into submission. The best way to direct people to Jesus is showing them authentic love over time.
8. **Always be prepared to share the Good News.** These talk-sheets are just a tool and sometimes you won't have the opportunity to use them. Get used to sharing the story of Jesus and your story (see Extra Resources) for those times when this tool isn't available.
9. **Sometimes the conversation will take more time.** Not everyone will immediately respond to the Truth about Jesus after completing these talk-sheets. Don't be disappointed if you don't see the result you were hoping for. Keep praying and keep the conversation open! Our hope is that these conversations will plant seeds that will flourish into full-grown faith.
10. **This is not the end - it's a new beginning.** While we want every person to make the decision to follow Jesus, getting them 'converted' isn't the end-game. Following Jesus is a lifelong commitment and new Christ-followers need a 'guide on the side' that will help them to navigate and grow. We call this discipleship. The Next Step Discipleship resources are designed to help you continue this relationship as a mentor in your conversation partner's life. So commit to being a disciple-maker and pick up the Making Disciples guide to discover what comes next.

CONVERSATION #1

LIGHT & DARKNESS

From nearly the beginning of time there has been a war raging between two opposing forces. The Bible refers to these two forces as Light and Dark. Light represents God, His Son (Jesus), and the workings of the Spirit of God in this world. Darkness, on the other hand, represents evil, pain, suffering, brokenness - all of those things which have haunted the footsteps of the human race.

About this divide, the Bible is very clear: we have a choice to make. We can either stand for the Light or for the Darkness; and we can't just choose to try to live on the line between the two. Inaction is to choose to buy into the Darkness. The story of the Bible (and of this whole world) is that Jesus is calling us out of the Darkness and into the Light. He invites us into a new type of relationship with God where we become a force for restoration in our broken world.

READ IT

John 1:1 - 14	The Light Enters the World
John 3:16 - 21	Walking in the Dark
John 8:12	Light of the World
Ephesians 5:8 - 13	Living in the Light

MEMORIZE IT

John 8:12

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

DISCUSS IT

1. Why might the Bible use Light and Darkness as an analogy between God and the evil in this world?
2. How have you seen the forces of Darkness at work in this world? How have they effected your own life? How have your own actions added to the Darkness in this world?
3. How does the passage from John 1 describe Jesus? According to John, what is the product of Jesus coming into this world?
4. Why did the people of this world choose to reject the Light (John 3) and what is the product?
5. What does it mean for Jesus to be the 'Light' (John 8:12)?
6. Ephesians 5 describes those who have chosen to follow Jesus. How should someone living in the Light interact with the Darkness around them?

LIVE IT

Make a list of things in your life that belong to the Darkness. Consider what it would look like to surrender those things to God and allow Him to redeem them.

Next to each item on the list, write one way that the Light (God) can overcome that Darkness.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

As a family, make two lists with one list being titled 'Light' and the other 'Darkness'. With each, brainstorm things in this world that belong to the Light (God) and things that belong to the Darkness (evil).

Afterwards, read John 8:12 together and explain that Jesus came into this world to defeat darkness and that someday there will be only Light.

CONVERSATION #2

REDEMPTION

Sin is any action that separates us from God. The Bible makes it clear that each and every one of us has sinned and that the curse of sin has taken its toll on the world and in our lives - separation from God, brokenness, evil, pain, and ultimately death. But God is not without a plan. He desires to save human beings from sin and its consequences.

Redemption means 'to buy back'. Jesus came into this world and died a horrible death in our place in order to redeem us - buying us back from the Darkness and giving us an opportunity to become the people that He intended us to be. God is in the business of redemption and He would love to change your life, your purpose, and your eternity. And it all starts with Jesus.

Share Your Story (Extra Resources)

READ IT

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Romans 6:23 | The Cost of Sin in this World |
| Ephesians 2:1 - 10 | Abundant Grace |
| 2 Corinthians 5:17 - 21 | God's Ministry of Reconciliation |

MEMORIZE IT

Romans 3:23 - 24

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

DISCUSS IT

1. **Romans 3:23 - 24** says that 'all have sinned'. What is an example of sin in your own life? What has been the consequence of that sin?
2. According to **Romans 6:23**, what is the cost of sin in our life? Why do you think that sin has such a high cost?
3. How does the writer of Ephesians describe what Christ did for us?
4. Grace can be described as 'an undeserved gift'. Why is the work of Jesus and the salvation that He offers described as grace? Why are you undeserving of this grace?
5. The writer of 2 Corinthians describes those who follow Christ as 'new creations'. What are some things in your life that you would love to be new (or redeemed)?
6. What would redemption look like in your life?

LIVE IT

Take some time to envision what a 'new life' in God might look like.

On a notecard, write down a list of things that you think might change in your life if you were to choose to walk into the redemption that God is offering.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

Explain the concept of redemption to your children this week through this object lesson:

The next time your child is in trouble and is going to be punished, explain that you are going to take their punishment on yourself (and really do it!). Afterwards, tell them that this is what God has done for us - we deserved to be punished because of the sins we commit, but Jesus took that punishment for us!

CONVERSATION #3

FAITH & ALLEGIANCE

You just need to jump on social media to find a million different opinions and beliefs, but the Biblical concept of 'faith' is something so much more than just mental assent. In the Bible, faith is described as, 'confidence in what we hope for and certainty in what we do not see'; but it also moves a person to action. In his book, Salvation by Allegiance Alone, Matthew Bates argues that the Biblical concept of 'faith' is better understood as allegiance: life-altering belief, unwavering commitment and transformational action all tied into one.

The Bible tells us that it is through faith in Jesus that we discover salvation. When we root our confidence and hope in Jesus - His death on the cross, His resurrection from the grave, and His eventual return as King - then we begin down the path of new life.

READ IT

Hebrews 11	Examples of Real Faith
James 2:14 - 26	Faith in Action
John 11:25 - 27	Faith in Jesus
1 Peter 1:6 - 9	The Value of Faith

MEMORIZE IT

Hebrews 11:6

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

DISCUSS IT

1. How might you describe the Biblical concept of 'faith' to someone else?
2. Share about someone you know that had great faith. How did this faith display itself in both their beliefs and actions?
3. How did the actions of the people in Hebrews 11 reflect their deep faith in God and his promises?
4. Read **James 2:14-26**. In your own words, explain why faith without works is dead.
5. According to John 11 and 1 Peter 1, what hope do those who have faith in Jesus receive?
6. What are the obstacles to authentic faith in your own life? How might you begin to overcome those obstacles?

LIVE IT

Read **Mark 9:14 - 25**. Doubt is a normal part of life. Take some time to write some of the doubts that you have regarding God, Jesus and the Bible; but then pray that God will help you navigate these faith challenges.

Date Completed

Everyone has faith in something. What are you putting your hopes in? Take time to make a list of things that you have faith in and the product of that faith. Remember - faith is more than simply believing. It incorporates both commitment and action.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

Teach your children to recognize reasons for faith in God through the world around them - perhaps a sunset or a passing butterfly.

Take the time to stop and share those moments as a family.

CONVERSATION #4

CONFESSION

The word 'confession' makes many people envision a box where we admit all of our sins to a priest; but this poorly reflects what the Bible means when it talks about confession. Confession starts with acknowledging who Jesus is: Lord of all things and the Son of God. When we recognize this as true, the natural next step is to confess how far short we fall of living a life that honors Him.

The challenge comes in that each of us has a tendency towards allowing multiple things to have lordship in our life - and there can only be one. When recognizing Jesus as Lord, it means that we're acknowledging that all of those other things vying for power in our lives are not.

READ IT

Matthew 6:19 - 21, 24 Two Masters

Romans 10:9 - 11 Confession and Salvation

Matthew 16:13 - 18 Peter's Confession

1 John 1:8 - 10 Confessing our Sin

MEMORIZE IT

Romans 10:9

If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

DISCUSS IT

1. What might it mean to allow something to have 'lordship' in your life? What are some common things that people choose to serve?
2. In Matthew 6, why does Jesus claim that we can only serve one master? How have you seen this to be true?
3. Read **Romans 10:9 - 11**. Why is confession such a big deal to the writer of Romans?
4. Why do we find confessing our sins to each other so challenging? What might be the product of this kind of transparency?
5. Is there any sin in your life that you are in need of confessing?
6. What does it mean for this world if Jesus is truly King?
7. What master might you have to give up if you were to declare Jesus as the true and rightful Lord of your life?

LIVE IT

Many people repeat Peter's confession (Matt. 13:16) when they are baptized. This week, write your own confession of who Jesus is to you. Think of this as a 'vow' to God.

Date Completed

Write a letter to God. Share several things in this letter: (1) Who you believe Him to be, (2) How you have fallen short and sinned against Him (be specific!) and (3) your desire for forgiveness and a changed life.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

Take time to be real with your family. When we try to give the impression that we never mess up, the inevitable product is disappointment when our children recognize our imperfection. Alternatively, when we readily acknowledge our mistakes and take the time to ask for forgiveness, our families will begin to recognize the value of authenticity and grace, and won't be emotionally defeated by their own failures.

CONVERSATION #5

REPENTANCE

When you were a child, you were probably forced to apologize for wronging a sibling or friend. There are good chances that this apology was less than sincere. Some people treat Biblical repentance this way, acting as if a half-hearted apology will solve the profound brokenness in our relationship with God. This falls far short of what the Bible calls repentance.

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Psalm 51:7 - 17

A Heart of Repentance

2 Corinthians 7:9 - 10

Grief Leading to Repentance

1 John 1:5 - 7

Living in the Light

Romans 6:11 - 18

Dead to Sin

MEMORIZE IT

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

DISCUSS IT

1. How have you seen people try to replace authentic repentance with a poor substitute?
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LIVE IT

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Take time this week to pray over this picture and ask God to help you live in active repentance.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

Help your family understand what authentic Biblical repentance looks like this week:

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CONVERSATION #6

BAPTISM

Jesus kicked off His ministry with modeling baptism (Matt. 3:13 - 17). Before leaving this earth, He commanded His followers to continue His ministry by 'teaching and baptizing' (Matt. 28:18 - 20). Throughout the book of Acts, we see the early Church at work in making disciples (Acts 2:41; 8:26-39; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:13-15; 16:16-34; 22:16). In each of these salvation accounts, conviction results in immediate repentance, confession and immersion into water.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, baptism is aligned with spiritual rebirth (John 3), the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38 - 42), clothing oneself with Christ (Gal. 3:27) and connection to Christ's resurrection (Rom. 6). While there's nothing magical about the water, the Bible makes it clear that baptism is part of the faith response that every believer should have to the news of Jesus.

READ IT

Acts 2:36 - 41	The Call to Baptism
Romans 6:1 - 5	Baptism Into the Life and Death of Jesus
1 Peter 3:21 - 22	Baptism as a Pledge
Galatians 3:26 - 28	Unity as a Product of Baptism

MEMORIZE IT

Galatians 3:27

For all of you who were baptized into Christ
have clothed yourselves with Christ.

DISCUSS IT

1. **Acts 2:36 - 41** describes the response of those who heard the first message of the Apostles. What does Peter tell them is the product of repentance and baptism?
2. In Romans 6, how does the writer describe how we are linked to Jesus through baptism?
3. Read **Acts 8:30 - 38**. What was the Ethiopian's response when He learned the truth about Jesus? Why did he have such urgency?
4. How does the writer of Galatians describe our new relationship to other Christ-followers when we choose to be baptized into Jesus? What does it mean to 'clothe yourself in Christ' (Gal. 3)?
5. Why does the Bible present so many different images of what baptism does in the life of a believer?
6. According to what we've read today, what is baptism and what does it represent? Is there anything you need to do in response to these teachings?

LIVE IT

Read through the salvation accounts this week. Note what is asked of those convicted and what their response is.

Salvation accounts: Acts 2:37-41, 8:9-13, 8:34-39, 9:17-19, 10:39-48, 16:27-34, 19:1-5

Date Completed

If you have more questions about baptism and salvation, check out 'Common Misunderstandings' in the Extra Resources.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

Discuss what you have learned about baptism with your family. If you discern that your children are ready to move in the direction of accepting Jesus as their Savior, have them write out a letter to God.

In this letter, have them answer the questions:

- Who is Jesus to you?
- Why do you need Jesus in your life?
- How will your life look different with Jesus in it?

CONVERSATION #7

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

It would have been amazing to see the power of God in action as they did in some Old Testament accounts. It would have been spectacular to walk and talk with Jesus. But we are given an even greater opportunity today: the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

God sent the Holy Spirit to the Apostles in Acts 2 to mark the beginning of the Church and every Christ follower since then is promised this same Spirit. What exactly is the Holy Spirit? The Bible reveals that the Holy Spirit is our advocate, teacher, encourager and helper. He reveals God's heart to us both by convicting us of sin and urging us to action on God's behalf. He produces new qualities and characteristics in our lives that align with God's vision for this world. He gives us the power to live out God's purpose in this world. He is the seal of salvation on our lives. There is no hope of a forever with God apart from the transformative work of His Spirit in our lives.

READ IT

John 16:7 - 15	The Counselor from God
Romans 8:9 - 16	The Spirit and Spiritual Children
Romans 8:26 - 27	The Spirit of Intercession
Galatians 5:16 - 25	Keeping in Step with the Spirit

MEMORIZE IT

John 14:26

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

DISCUSS IT

1. The idea of God's Spirit residing in our lives might be a completely new idea to you. What is challenging to you about this idea?
2. Read **John 16:7 - 15**. Why did Jesus say that it was important that He leave this earth?
3. What might it mean for the Spirit to be a Counselor/Advocate? Why would we need a Counselor?
4. Read **Romans 8:9 - 16, 26 - 27**. Make a list of the things that the Spirit does in the life of a believer. Which of these ideas is the most exciting to you?
5. The writer of Galatians tells us to 'walk by the Spirit'. How might your life look different if you were to walk with the Spirit?
6. When you read over the qualities that the Spirit produces in the life of Christ-followers (Gal 5:22 - 23), which do you recognize the need of in your life?

LIVE IT

Take some time to read over the titles of the Spirit found in the Bible (see below). Reflect on what each of these titles can tell you about the Spirit and about what the Spirit can do in your life.

Titles of the Spirit: Advocate, Breath of the Almighty, Comforter, Eternal Spirit, Helper, Lord, Seal of our Salvation, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of Grace, Spirit of Adoption, Spirit of Wisdom, Spirit of Knowledge, Spirit of Truth, Spirit of Holiness, Spirit of Glory, Spirit of Revelation

BRING IT HOME

The concept of the Holy Spirit can be confusing to children. 'Introduce' your child to the Holy Spirit by sharing His characteristics.

Make a chart listing the following: advocate, teacher, encourager and helper.

Next to each ask your child for examples of what that characteristic looks like in action and write it down. For example, a helper may set the table or wash the dog.

Date Completed

CONVERSATION #8

THE COST

Following Jesus is not easy. Many come to Jesus believing that all of their problems in this life will be solved; that their lives will now be free of all sorrow, pain and challenges. The Jesus of the Bible makes no such promises. Rather, He said that the Way was narrow and that few would find it. That His followers would be hated and suffer because of Him. His first followers discovered the truth of this statement: all but one of the Apostles were martyred because of their faith. Following Jesus comes at a cost.

While many Christ-followers in our culture will never face the threat of death because of their faith, there is still a cost. When we accept the invitation to follow, we are agreeing to put the desires of Jesus ahead of our own. We are committing to put in the challenging work to be transformed into His image. We are dedicating ourselves to walk in His path no matter what life throws at us.

READ IT

Matthew 8:18 - 22	The Cost of Following Jesus
Matthew 10:32 - 39	Loving God First
Luke 14:25 - 33	Counting the Cost
Philippians 3:4 - 11	The Humility of Jesus

MEMORIZE IT

Matthew 10:38

Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

DISCUSS IT

1. As you read through Jesus' words in Matthew and Luke, what are some of the costs that come alongside following Him?
2. Luke 14:26 - 27 contains some really challenging statements about the cost of following Jesus. What does Jesus mean by 'hating your own life' and 'carrying your cross'?
3. Why do you think that there is such a big cost to following Jesus?
4. Read Philippians 3:4 - 11. How does the author describe the things of his past in comparison to knowing Jesus? What created such an extreme commitment in him?
5. At this point in your life, what has Christ called you to sacrifice in order to accept His freedom? What are some things that you would be unwilling to sacrifice for the sake of Christ?
6. Is becoming a follower of Jesus worth the cost? Based off of these conversations, what are the decisions that you need to make?

LIVE IT

Read the story of Stephen (Acts 7:54-60). Stephen was the first disciple who was martyred. Place yourself in his shoes: What was he thinking in those last moments? Do you believe that he found Christ worth the cost?

Date Completed

In Luke 14:25 - 33, Jesus challenges people to 'count the cost' before making the decision to follow Him. This week, make a list of things in your own life that would become part of the cost of following Jesus. Make a second list stating what you gain in following Jesus.

Date Completed

BRING IT HOME

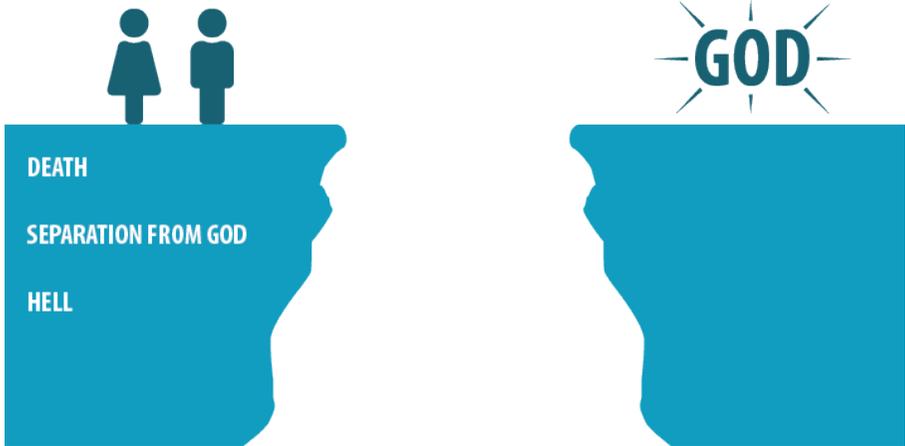
As a family, choose something to give up for the week (the Bible calls this a fast). Some ideas include: dessert, television, or another activity that you all might enjoy. Use the time you would normally spend enjoying that activity developing a relationship with God by reading His Word or praying together.

EXTRA RESOURCES

GOD'S STORY IMAGES

One simple way to share God's Story is through a series of illustrations called 'The Bridge of Faith'. In each image, there is a verse to read, a basic truth that needs to be understood, and some key questions to make that truth more personal.

Image 1: Sin



SIN

Our sin and rebellion separate us from God and the that He intended for us.

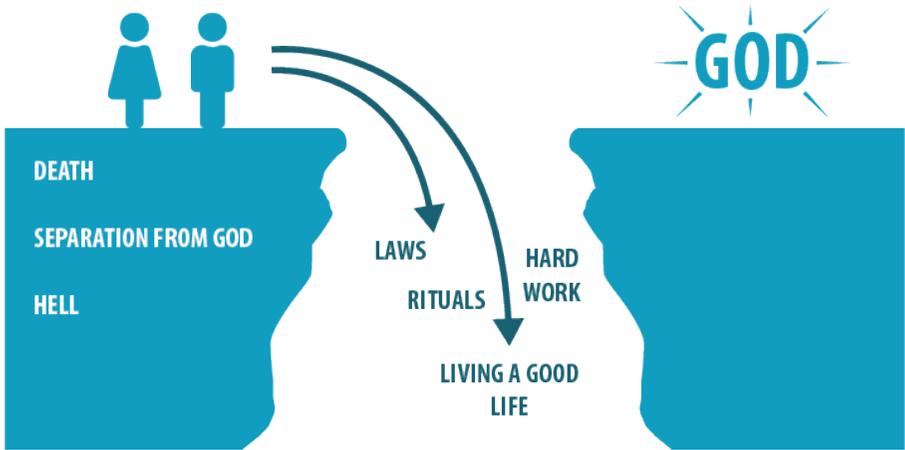
Read: Romans 6:23

What does this verse say about sin?

How has sin shown up in your life?

What are the consequences of having sin in our life?

Image 2: Fall Short



FALL SHORT

Although humans have tried for all creation, there is nothing that we can do to bridge the gap between us and God.

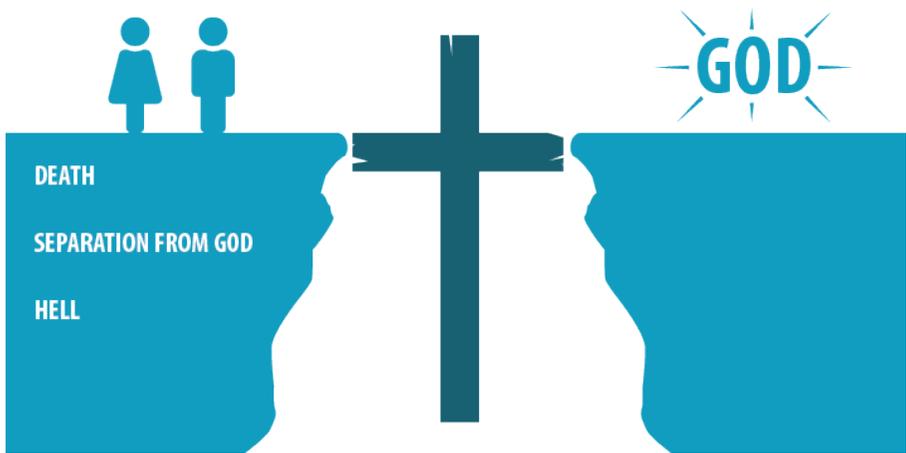
Read: Romans 3:23

According to God's Word, who has sinned?

What attempts have you made to 'save' yourself?

How have those attempts fallen short of providing hope and life?

Image 3: The Cross



THE CROSS

Jesus came to earth and died on a cross so that we could escape the consequence of sin and have a right relationship with God. Jesus did what we had no power to do.

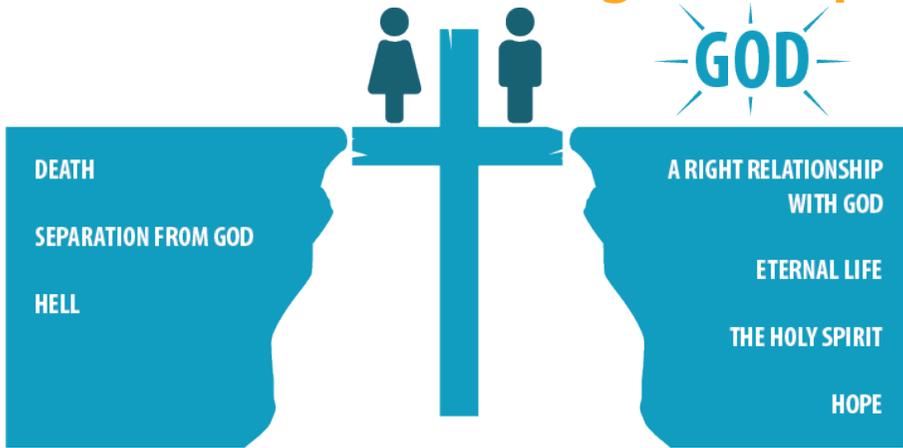
Read: John 3:16

What does this verse have to say about being saved?

What is our only path towards a right relationship with God?

How have you tried to have a right life without trusting in Jesus?

Image 4: Hope



HOPE IN JESUS

When we choose to follow Jesus, make Him Lord of our life, and choose obedience, we have the hope of eternal life and a right relationship with God.

Read: Acts 2:38

What are the promises made to those who choose to follow Jesus?

How does the grace and forgiveness that God offers make you feel?

EXTRA RESOURCES

SHARING YOUR STORY

God's story is often revealed through the lives of those who have experienced the hope and salvation that flow from Him. Sharing your story is an important part of sharing God's story with others. We believe that the core of your story can be found by answering these three questions:

- Who was I before I encountered Jesus?
- What circumstances surrounded my choice to believe in and follow Jesus?
- How has God transformed my life since I began following Jesus?

TIPS FOR SHARING YOUR STORY

- **Be Real and Transparent:** God's grace, love and forgiveness shine through in the darkest of stories. Be real and open up your life. Our sincere transparency allows the listener to be honest with the brokenness in their own life.
- **Make Jesus the Center of the Story:** Remember that this is the story of what God is doing in and through our lives. We aren't the hero! Keep Jesus at the center of Your Story by making Him the hero.
- **Keep it Short:** There will be future opportunities when you have time for the long story, but in this exercise we're focused on making your story concise. Aim for 10 minutes by focusing on the key questions.

The following is an example Timeline from the life of Joshua McGrew. On the following page, begin to reflect on your own story.

Who was I before I encountered Jesus?	What circumstances surrounded by choice to believe in and follow Jesus?	How has God transformed my life since I began following Jesus?
<p>I grew up in a Christian home.</p> <p>I originally decided to follow Jesus when I was ten years old. This decision was largely based off of my friends.</p> <p>As I grew older, I found myself growing progressively more legalistic (it was more about following rules than having a relationship with Jesus).</p> <p>I went off to a Christian college and became a Youth Minister. I believed that by working hard I could earn God's love. Church became more about 'doing' than 'being'.</p>	<p>When I was 25, I fell head-over-heels for a young lady who was going through some troubled times in her marriage.</p> <p>We ended up having an affair.</p> <p>In May 2010, I stood on stage at the Church and was real with my brokenness. In the midst of me sharing, a man in the audience stood up and yelled, 'I forgive you!' Those words helped me to understand the love and grace of God for the first time in my life.</p> <p>I recommitted my life to doing things God's way, but recognized that it was going to be about love for God and not works this time around.</p>	<p>It took time, but God has healed many broken relationships in my life.</p> <p>I have a beautiful family that started in a rough place but is now seeking God together.</p> <p>For years, I worked multiple jobs to meet my family's needs. God looked out for us during this time and we were never in need.</p> <p>Three years later I was hired at the same church community that I had resigned from. God's grace is overwhelming!</p> <p>I don't have it all together, but thankfully I have a God who loves me in spite of my brokenness.</p>

Who was I before I encountered Jesus?

What circumstances surrounded by choice to believe in and follow Jesus?

How has God transformed my life since I began following Jesus?

EXTRA RESOURCES

COMMON MISUNDERSTANINGS

This is a non-comprehensive list of common false beliefs about salvation. Each includes a common misunderstanding as well as key scripture that can be used to reveal some truth.

‘Pray Jesus into your heart.’

- This phrase is never found or used in the Bible.
- This phrase is never linked to salvation in the Bible.
- This belief is commonly defended using Revelation 3:20. This verse was not written to non-Christians on how to be saved. Rather, it is written to Christians and is about how to repent.

‘Accept Jesus into your heart.’

- This phrase is never found or used in the Bible.
- This belief is commonly defended using Romans 10:9. Romans 10:9 is an incomplete statement on salvation and also excludes the need for repentance. When aligned with other key scripture on salvation, this verse holds true in that confessing our need for Jesus is ONE PART of our response.
- In other places, calling on Jesus’ name is linked with baptism (e.g. Acts 22:16).

Infant Baptism

- A baby cannot have faith, and faith is essential to baptism (Col. 2:12).
- A baby cannot, and has no need to repent.
- This belief is based on the doctrine of ‘original sin’, but Ezekiel 18:20 teaches that there is no such thing as original sin.

‘Baptism does not save you.’

- Baptism is the act of obedience that is commanded us for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).
- Baptism is our participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus (1 Peter 3:21; Romans 6:1 - 6).

‘Baptism is a work. We are saved by faith alone.’

- Ephesians 2:8 is commonly used to defend this belief. The truth is, we cannot be saved through our own actions. Every act that is centered on our own efforts or will is futile. God, on the other hand, can require whatever action He wishes us to take.
- We are saved by faith in the working of God at baptism (Col. 2:12).

‘Baptism is an outward sign of an inner grace.’

- This phrase is never found or used in the Bible.
- In Acts, there are multiple examples of individuals getting baptized without any additional witnesses: the Ethiopian Eunuch and Paul.
- Baptism is an actual participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (Rom. 6:1- 4).

‘Baptism is not important. Even Paul said it wasn’t in 1 Corinthians 1:10 - 17.’

- Paul himself was baptized (Acts 22:16).
- In 1 Corinthians, Paul is rebuking the division that is being created as a result of the ‘importance’ of the person doing the Baptism. He expresses his relief that his name isn’t part of the divisiveness since he baptized only a handful of them.

‘What about the thief on the cross? He wasn’t baptized but Jesus said that they would see each other in paradise.’

- Baptism wasn’t a necessity until after the resurrection of Christ. The thief could not take part in something that had not yet happened (Rom. 6:2 - 4).
- As the Son of God, Jesus had the right to forgive anyone He chose to during His ministry on earth (see Matthew 9:2 - 6 as an example).
- Jesus was talking to the thief, not us.

Believer’s Baptism

- In the Bible, the concept of ‘believer’s baptism’ is reflected in John’s (the Baptist) baptism. This baptism was superseded by baptism into Jesus. This is reflected in Acts 19:1-6 where a group of Ephesians needed to be baptized because they had only received the baptism of John, which did not include the promise of the Holy Spirit and was not linked to the resurrection of Jesus.
- Any dunk into the water does not constitute baptism. Baptism should always be done in a Biblical way and for Biblical reasons.

NEXT STEP

Each of us is on a journey towards becoming like Jesus. Along that journey, we will encounter key milestones that will lead us to new growth. Discover your Next Step today!

DISCIPLESHIP

start here

1 SHARE JESUS AS LORD

Faith // Confession // Repentance // Baptism

Discover a life-giving relationship with Jesus.

Resource: Know Jesus Guide

5 EQUIPPED FOR SERVICE

Spiritual Gifts // Heart // Abilities // Personality // Experience

Explore your natural gifting by serving like Jesus.

Resource: SHAPE Test & Ministry Team

2 SHARE IN THE BASICS

Bible // Prayer // Meditation // Mission // Core Values

Learn the basic habits of growing in a relationship with God (how to read the Bible, pray, and sharing your story).

Resource: Basics Study (12 Weeks)

6 EQUIPPED FOR STEWARDSHIP

Resources // Stewardship // Generous Giving

Learn how to manage your resources in a way that honors God.

Resource: Stewardship Challenge & Financial Peace Class

3 CONNECT TO THE CHURCH

Family Membership

Gain an idea of who CCW is and how you can become a part of the family.

Resource: Foundations Class (2 Weeks)

7 MULTIPLY YOUR LEADERSHIP

Resources // Stewardship // Generous Giving

Make an impact by starting down the path of leadership.

Resource: Servant-Leadership Training

4 CONNECT TO DISCIPLESHIP

Relationships // Mentoring // Spiritual Guidance

Discover authentic community by getting connected to a Disciple-Maker in a Group.

Resource: Discipleship & Care Groups

Stop by the Next Step Station (front lobby) and connect with a Coach to discover your path towards growth.



NEXT STEP

DISCIPLESHIP

ccw.church

