

TALKING TO OUR KIDS

about salvation, baptism, and communion

MERCY VILLAGE CHURCH



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www.mercyvillage.church

“You are as much serving God in looking after your own children, training them up in God’s fear, minding the house, and making your household a church for God as you would be if you had been called to lead an army to battle for the Lord of Hosts.”

-Charles Spurgeon

PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET:

At Mercy Village Church, we want to equip parents to have fruitful conversations with their kids about all sorts of biblical/spiritual things. In this booklet we’re focusing on what it means to be a Christian, how to become a Christian (salvation), what baptism is, and why we celebrate communion.

SALVATION

TALKING TO MY CHILD ABOUT SALVATION

This portion of the document is still a work in progress, but we do have a few very helpful tools you can take advantage of in discussing Salvation with your child.

- **Printable PDF: The Good News In 3 Circles** (*See this resource in Appendix-C*): – This material is useful for sharing the gospel with your children and discussing what it means to be a Christian. To request a digital copy of this PDF, please talk to a pastor.
- **Hard-copy Booklet: The Gospel: God’s Plan For Me** – This material is useful for sharing the gospel with your children and discussing what it means to be a Christian. To request a hard-copy of this small booklet, please talk to a pastor.
- **Printable PDF: Welcome To God’s Family: Learn How To Live For Jesus** – This material is helpful for talking with children who are new and growing Christians. To request a digital copy of this PDF, please talk to a pastor.

DECERNING IF MY CHILD’S FAITH IS GENUINE

5 Questions to Ask When Your Child Professes Faith – By Scott Slayton

God gives parents the holy calling of raising children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Our most important work is to help them understand the gospel so they might trust in Jesus and be saved. But most Christian parents face a major question: How do we discern whether or not our kids have truly come to Christ?

Parents tend to run to two extremes. Either we get excited that our kids are showing interest in the gospel and pronounce them Christians too quickly, or we’re so afraid of a false profession that we go a long time without treating them as a believer.

Though we can never know beyond a shadow of a doubt if our child has actually trusted Christ, we *can* see evidence that points to a genuine conversion—even if it looks different from an adult one. Here are five questions we can ask as we attempt to discern a child’s conversion.

1. Do they know they need a Savior?

Awareness of sin—and of the need for a Savior—is an absolute necessity in conversion. While a child will not have years of drunkenness or debauchery to be ashamed of, he will know he has sinned and needs to be forgiven.

When your child tells you he wants to become a Christian or starts talking about baptism, ask what prompted him to think about it. Draw out of him, in his own words, whether he feels conviction for his sins and knows he needs a Savior. Unless he’s convicted of his sins, a child can’t know he has a problem from which he needs rescue.

2. Do they understand Jesus’s death and resurrection?

If your child shows awareness of and conviction for sin, begin to talk to her about Jesus. You aren’t looking for a discourse on the hypostatic union or penal substitutionary atonement. Does she know Jesus is the Son of God? Does

she believe he is real and lived the perfect life we could never live? Can she articulate the basic facts about his death and resurrection? In her own words, can she tell you what Jesus did for her? As she talks about him, do you see an awareness that she grasps and loves this work at a heart level?

3. Do they believe they're saved through repentance and faith?

Our family recently read about the woman who touched the hem of Jesus's garment and was healed ([Luke 8:44](#)). Jesus said her faith made her well. I talked to our daughters about salvation being by faith alone. They are growing up in a Christian family, and they can't remember a time when they weren't going to church and hearing the gospel. I reminded my daughters that none of those things makes them a Christian.

You must make sure your children get this: "For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves" ([Eph. 2:8-9](#)). Good works or baptism or faithful church attendance don't make them a Christian; repentance and trust in Christ does.

4. Do they show signs of new life?

Signs of the Spirit's work in your child's life are not as evident as they might be in an adult. Your 6-year-old isn't going to have a testimony like a man with a notorious past, but a child's salvation is equally miraculous. If they have trusted in Jesus, your children have been born again, and the Holy Spirit indwells them. They will show evidence of conversion.

True believers grow in conviction of sin, compassion for others, and display the fruit of the Spirit. Fruit will appear in childlike form, but it will grow in converted children nonetheless.

5. Are their decisions coming from external pressure?

The invitation system, a pressure-packed VBS or kids camp, and friends being baptized can pressure your child to make a profession of faith without actually grasping the gospel. In Baptist churches, children sometimes ask why they can't take communion and hear, "Because you haven't been baptized yet." In their minds the solution seems simple, "Then let me get baptized so I can take communion."

You can never be certain your child has pure motives for wanting to follow Christ, but you should examine any outside forces exerting pressure on them. Ask what made them start thinking about Christ. Do they merely want to take the bread and cup or did the meaning behind communion draw them to Jesus? Do they merely want to please you or their youth leader, or do they want to obey and follow Christ?

Show Them Jesus Is Better

Children don't undergo a physical change when they come to Jesus, so you must talk, pray, and discern. Invite one of your pastors to talk with your child. He may see and hear things that you don't.

Above all, keep putting the good news of gospel grace before your children. Talk about it in everyday life, in family devotions, and around the table after Sunday worship. Sing together, pray with your kids, and repent to them when you have wronged them. God's Word never returns void, our labor in the Lord is not in vain, and in due time we will reap if we sow. Take every opportunity to show and tell your kids that Jesus is better than life.

BAPTISM

FIRST THINGS FIRST

If you are planning to talk with your child about baptism, we strongly suggest that you have a good understanding of it yourself. If you haven't already, please request and read our ***Baptism at Mercy Village Church*** document. This document will serve to give you a fuller understanding of what Mercy Village Church believes and teaches concerning the sacrament of baptism.

TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT BAPTISM

Help your child understand that, at Mercy Village, we practice baptism as an act of obedience for those who have personally trusted in Jesus.

- Baptism **tells a story** of being rescued from sin by Jesus through faith in His death and resurrection.
- Being baptized **does not save you**. Placing your faith in Jesus alone saves you. Baptism is a picture of what God has already done in the heart of a believer.
- When someone is baptized, that person shares a brief **testimony** so that other believers might hear of God's grace, **rejoice** in His saving work and worship Him together.

If your child starts to express a desire to be baptized, you have a great opportunity to be the first to explain things to them. Below we highlight and explain the main things you should cover in a conversation with your child. But feel free at any time to meet with one of our pastors to have them explain what it means to be a believer, what baptism is, who it's for, and why someone should want to be baptized.

What does "baptism" mean? To baptize is to dip someone under some water and bring them back up—like Jesus died and was raised back to life—it's to show everyone that God has given them a new heart like Jesus.

Baptism tells a story. It's a symbol - something that stands for something else. And baptism is a symbol that shows a person has been united with Jesus Christ in his death burial and resurrection. Here's how:

>**When a person stands in the water before being baptized** that represents their life before trusting Jesus. They were alive to sin or their hearts were sick with sin. They followed and obeyed it as their master.

>But **when a person is put completely underneath the water** that represents the fact that they died to sin and became a believer. They turned away from sin to follow Jesus.

>And **when a person comes up out of the water** and is completely wet that represents their new life that they have. Because of Jesus they have been washed clean from sin

Baptism does NOT save you! Now we know that water cannot wash away someone's sin. They have not been saved because their bodies are wet, but because they have been forgiven by God because of Jesus' death on the cross. So baptism is for someone who loves and trusts Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins and is committed to following him forever. It is not what saves you from sin and death, but it is something you do after you have trusted Jesus. It is important to know that baptism is not what saved someone from their sins only Jesus saves

So why do we baptize in the church? Baptism is a celebration! When someone is baptized, the church—God's family—celebrates that person joining the community of believers! It's an exciting event for everyone and that's why people clap and cheer when someone is baptized. Seeing someone be baptized is really exciting!

Open Your Bibles Together. A good passage to look at together as a family on the topic of baptism is Jesus is baptism and Matthew 3:13-17. We highly encourage you to read this passage together as a family and talk about how Jesus modeled baptism for his followers.

So to recap: Remember these three things that are important to teach your kids about baptism

#1 - Baptism tells a story of being rescued from sin by Jesus through faith in his death and resurrection. It is for those who love and trust Jesus. Help your child understand that baptism is an act of obedience for those who have already been saved

#2 - Being baptized does not save you. Placing your faith in Jesus alone saves you. So baptism is a picture or symbol like we talked about. Help your kids understand that and

#3 - Baptism is a celebration! As excitement is displayed in a Sunday gathering, as someone chooses to walk in obedience by the prompting of the Holy Spirit, your children are seeing people turn from death to life. This is amazing! It shows the power of our God over darkness.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Once again, if your child expresses a desire to be baptized, we would love to partner with you in helping you disciple your kids and in explaining baptism. As the parent/guardian of your child, you are the primary disciple makers in your home. We primarily want to support you and celebrate with you. But that doesn't mean we're unavailable. If you feel like you might be in over your head, please reach out to a pastor and let us help you.

COMMUNION

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

At Mercy Village Church, we refer to communion—like baptism—as a sacrament. The word communion comes from a word that means “sharing” or “fellowship.” When we receive communion, we are sharing in something sacred—fellowship with Jesus and with His people. It is a sacred and regular rhythm of worship—a gift from Jesus to His people. Through it, we remember His sacrifice, reflect on His grace, and are spiritually nourished as we continue to walk in faith together.

While communion is clearly a symbol of Jesus’ broken body and shed blood, we believe it is also much more. Though the bread and the cup do not physically change, Jesus is truly present with His people during this act of worship. We believe that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, communion becomes a real and mysterious encounter with the grace and presence of Christ—a moment that strengthens our faith, deepens our trust, and reminds us that we belong to Him. The word sacrament comes from a Latin term meaning “a sacred oath.” It reminds us that communion is both a sign of God’s grace and a visible, tangible expression of the gospel for the gathered church.

We also recognize that different churches practice and understand communion in different ways. Our desire is to walk in unity with the broader body of Christ while being faithful and clear about what we believe. At Mercy Village, we treat the sacrament of communion with reverence, gratitude, and joyful expectation.

WHEN CAN MY CHILD PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNION?

At Mercy Village Church, children are invited to receive the sacrament of communion once they have placed their faith in Jesus and are ready to receive with understanding and reverence. There’s no set age or script to follow—every child’s story and spiritual growth is unique. That’s why we encourage parents to walk slowly, prayerfully, and intentionally in this area.

If you have any questions about your child’s readiness to receive communion, please speak with a pastor. This allows us to walk with you, affirm your child’s readiness, and share in the joy of welcoming them to the table.

We don’t rush children to the table—but we do prepare them to arrive there with faith and joy.

We believe this is a moment worth waiting for, because communion is not just something to understand—it’s something to treasure.

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT COMMUNION

You don't have to explain everything in one conversation. Think of this as an ongoing journey of formation. The conversations you have along the way are a meaningful part of how God grows your child in faith.

Here are four key themes to help guide your conversations:

Remember

Jesus gave communion to His followers so that we would remember His love and sacrifice. The bread reminds us of His body, broken for us. The cup reminds us of His blood, shed for the forgiveness of sin. Every time we receive communion, we remember what Jesus has done—and we give thanks.

You might say: “This cracker and this juice remind us of the cross. Jesus gave His life to bring us back to God.”

Reflect

Before we take communion, we pause and ask God to search our hearts. We reflect on the ways we've sinned and remember our deep need for grace. We take time to confess and to be honest with God—because communion isn't about pretending we're perfect. It's about remembering the One who saves and sustains us.

You might say: “Before we eat and drink, we take time to pray. We ask Jesus to help us see our hearts and thank Him for His forgiveness.”

Receive

Communion is not just remembering something that happened in the past. It is a way that God meets us in the present. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are drawn close to Jesus and strengthened in our faith. We receive communion in humility and joy, believing that Jesus is with us and for us.

You might say: “Just like food gives our bodies strength, Jesus gives our hearts strength through communion.”

Rejoice

Communion is not only a look backward—it's also a look forward. It reminds us that Jesus is coming again, and one day we'll feast with Him face-to-face. Communion is a small taste of the big feast to come—a meal of hope, joy, and forever-life with God.

You might say: “Jesus promised to come again. Communion helps us remember that one day, we'll eat and drink with Him forever.”

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

- Talk ahead of time – Use the week leading up to communion to read Scripture (Matt. 26, Luke 22, 1 Cor. 11) or talk about the elements at home.
- Use simple symbols – Practice with a small cracker and juice at the table and talk through what each represents.

- Model the moment – Let your kids see you take communion with reverence and gratitude. Whisper a short prayer or explanation if helpful.
- Encourage reflection – Ask your child what they’re thinking or wondering. Celebrate curiosity, and guide them toward deeper understanding.
- Don’t rush the process – If they’re not ready, that’s okay. Keep the conversation going, and invite a pastor to walk alongside you.
- You might say: “This cracker and this juice remind us of the cross. Jesus gave His life to bring us back to God.”

FINAL WORD

Communion is a gift, a grace, and a moment when Jesus meets us. We want our children to grow up not only understanding that—but believing it, cherishing it, and eventually participating with joy and confidence.

We don’t hand our kids the bread and cup too quickly. But we do hold it out as a beautiful promise. As they grow in faith, we help them prepare to receive—and when that moment comes, we celebrate together.

We're honored to walk with you and your family as you disciple your children in the way of Jesus.

APPENDIX A: THE GOOD NEWS IN THREE CIRCLES (for kids)

THE GOOD NEWS IN 3 CIRCLES

A Quick Start Guide for Leaders and Parents

INTRODUCTION

Most people who take their step in trusting Jesus and confessing Him as Lord do so during childhood. And so, any time we interact with children, we have the opportunity to lead them to Jesus.

For youth and adults, [3 Circles](#) is a visual representation designed as a helpful method to explain the gospel in a quick and accessible way. It has proved successful in the U.S. and abroad.

The Good News in 3 Circles booklet is designed to reach children and ignite their passion for Jesus. This booklet will help children who are 6 years old or older take their first step in understanding the gospel using the popular “3 Circles” illustration and God’s Word. It explores topics such as sin, repentance and trust.

Along with this leader [video](#), the children’s booklet demonstrates how you or your child can use this method when explaining the gospel to children and their friends.

PRESENTATION

Using “The Good News in 3 Circles” to lead a child to understand the gospel and put their trust in Jesus is the purpose of this booklet.

Children who have decided to follow Jesus can learn to replicate the 3 Circles presentation to share the gospel with their friends and family.

When guiding a child, go over each presentation element, drawing as you go along. Then, ask the child to follow each step with you as they draw the illustration themselves. After going through the entire 3 Circles gospel presentation, have them practice independently and then share the presentation with you.

FOLLOW-UP

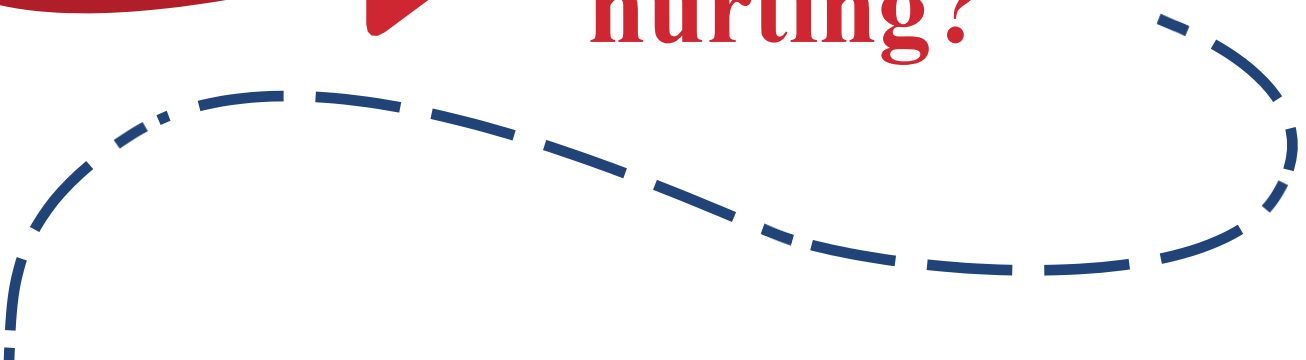
Be prepared for immediate follow-up with a child who hears the presentation and wants to follow Jesus. As a leader, make sure you share the child’s decision with their parents. Parents and leaders, reach out to your pastor or children’s minister for next steps and discipleship opportunities.

Encourage children to share the 3 Circles presentation with their family and friends and invite those they share with to come to church and learn more about what it means to follow Jesus.

THE GOOD NEWS IN 3 CIRCLES



**Do you know
someone who is
hurting?**



We live in a broken world with a lot of pain. But we also have a beautiful world that shows us how everything can work together. It's a design created by God.

GOD'S DESIGN

The Bible tells us that in the beginning, God created everything, and He made it perfect. He **loved** Adam and Eve and put them in charge to take care of the world. God planned a friendship with the people He made and wanted them to enjoy everything. God only gave them one rule: Don't eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

THE BIBLE SAYS:



"God saw all that He had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31).

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims the work of His hands" (Psalm 19:1).



SIN

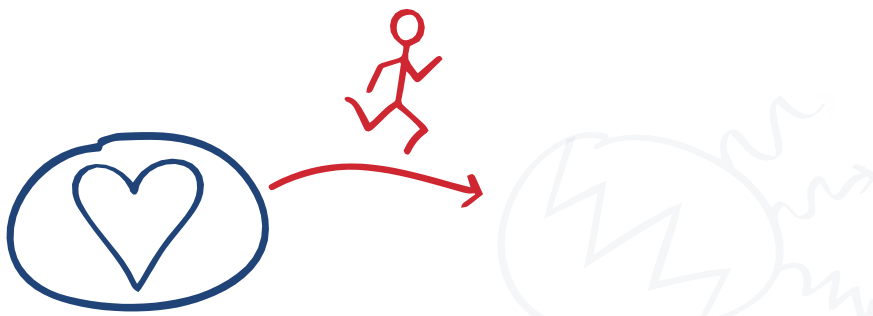
Adam and Eve disobeyed and broke God's one rule. They ate fruit from the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil and they **ran away** from God. The world was not perfect anymore. When people disobey God, it's called sin. Sin separated Adam and Eve from God. They had to leave the garden and live in a broken world where they could get sick, hurt and would one day die. Sin is the cause of death.

THE BIBLE SAYS:



"They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served something created instead of the Creator" (Romans 1:25).

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death" (Proverbs 14:12).



BROKENNESS

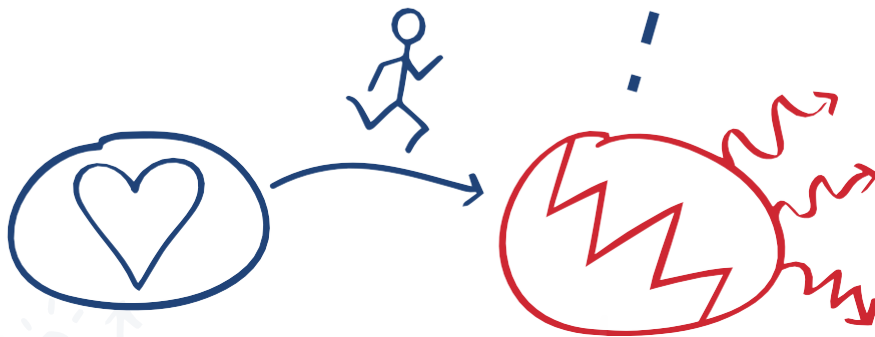
Sin **broke** God's beautiful plan for us and separated us from God.

We experience sin in our own lives, too, when we say and do selfish things that go against the Bible. We can't fix our sin problem by doing our best to be good, obey our parents or go to church. These are all good, but there is only one who can forgive sin.



THE BIBLE SAYS:

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23a).



CROSS

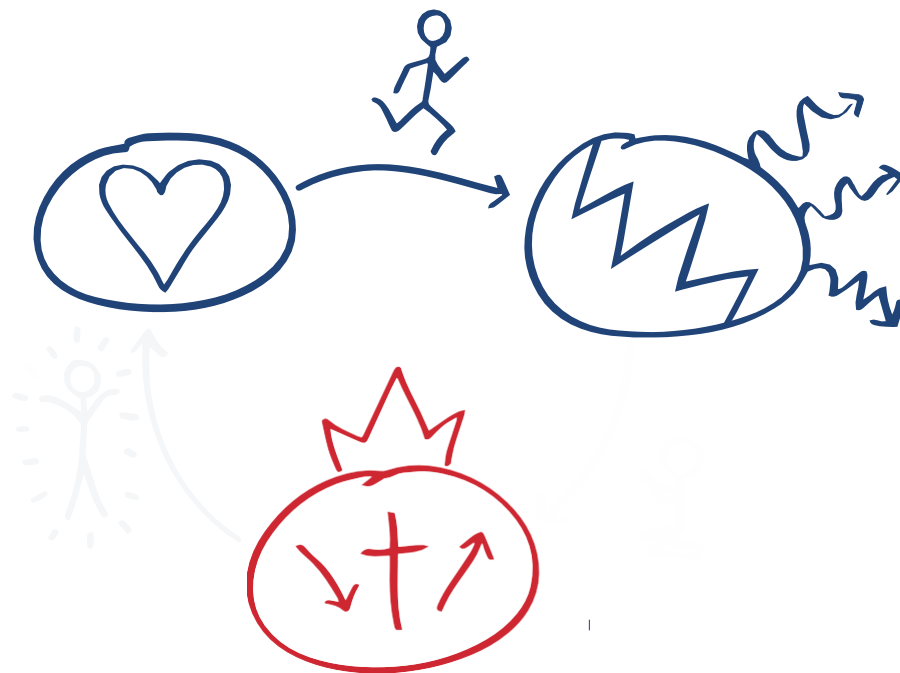
Jesus is the only One who can fix our sin problem. God made a way for us to be with Him forever. He sent Jesus, His only Son, to die on the **cross** and take the punishment for our sins. But that's not the end of the story — God raised Jesus back to life! And He offers us that same kind of forever life. He wants us to receive the forgiveness that Jesus provides.

THE BIBLE SAYS:



“He erased the certificate of debt...and has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the cross” (Colossians 2:14).

“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures... He was buried and raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).



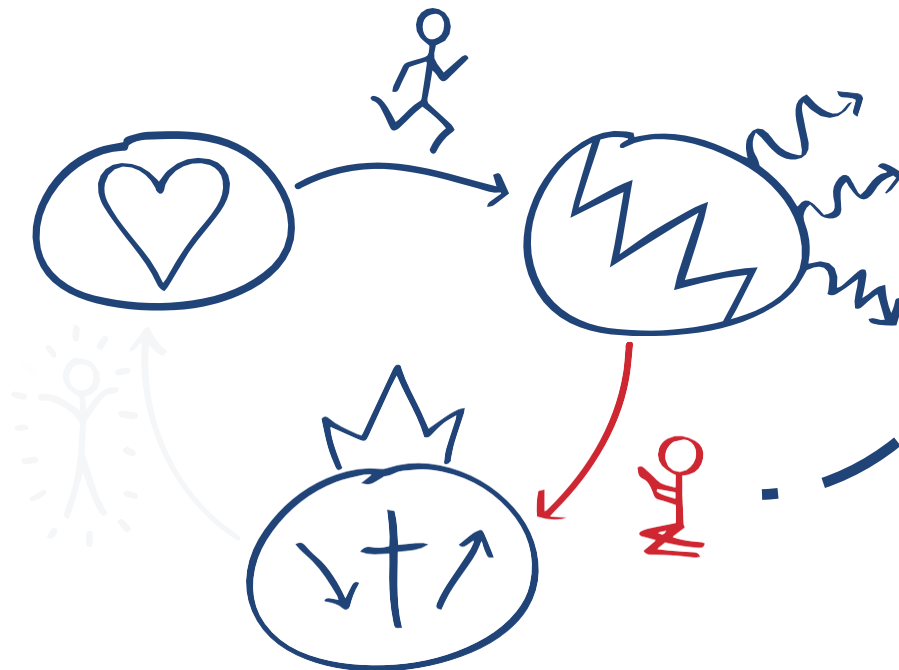
TRUST & BELIEVE

How do we do that? We **pray** to confess our sins and ask Jesus to be in charge of our life. If we put our trust in Jesus, which involves admitting that we sin and need forgiveness and if we believe that Jesus is God's Son who died on the cross for our sins and gives us new life, then we have decided to follow Jesus as our King!

THE BIBLE SAYS:



"For God loved the world in this way; He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).



GROW & SHARE

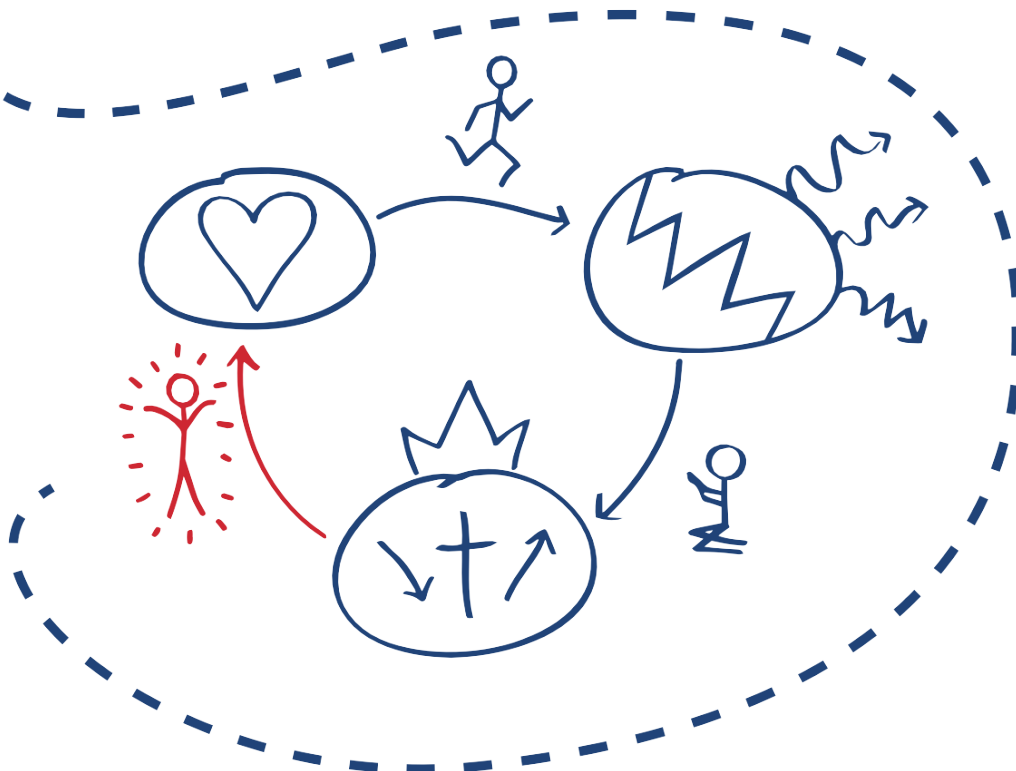
By putting our trust in Jesus, we are now close to God and have a **friendship** with Him. We discover His plan by reading our Bible, praying, going to church and asking other Christians to help us. Even when we sin and disobey, we know God will forgive us. And one day when we die, we'll live forever with God in Heaven. As a Christian, we also have a new job! We need to share the gospel with others. The gospel is the good news about Jesus and his forgiveness of our sins.



THE BIBLE SAYS:

“For it is God who is working in you, enabling you both to desire and to work out His good purpose” (Philippians 2:13).

“For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).



WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Now that you have heard this Good News, God wants you to respond to Him. You can talk to Him using words like these:

Dear God, I need You. I believe Christ came to live, die and was raised from the dead to save me from my sin.

Dear God, please forgive me. I put my trust in Jesus. I know that He is Lord of all, and I will follow Him.

THE BIBLE SAYS:



“If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

“For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).

WHAT'S NEXT:

The Bible teaches how to start your new friendship with God. He desires us to have a relationship with Him and others. How?

PRAY: God wants you to talk to Him about everything.

CHURCH: The church is God's family to help you walk with Him.

BIBLE: The Bible reveals God's design — showing you how to live.

SHARING: Now that you have experienced this Good News, tell others.

THE BIBLE SAYS:



“But these are written so that you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you” (Matthew 6:33).

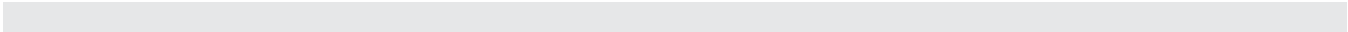
“Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him” (Colossians 2:6).

START SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH YOUR FRIENDS!

Practice drawing the 3 Circles below:



NOTES





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