



NCC GOSPEL PATHWAY

If you are reading this, then you are interested in learning how someone can begin a relationship with Jesus! It is our prayer here at North Circle Church that everyone who calls NCC home will learn the truth shared from God's Word and feel a level of confidence if anyone ever asks for the answer to this question: *How can I know for sure I will go to heaven when I die?* Everything that we share here is customizable and focuses on the truth in God's Word to give you some ideas and confidence on how to talk to someone about making Jesus his or her King. So let's get started!

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Every conversation is going to look different, because everyone has a unique story that has shaped their perspective. The goal of this conversation is to bring each person to a place where he or she can understand what the gospel is, and how the truths in Scripture lead us to eternal life. Quite simply, the gospel is just a Bible word that means, **good news**. Here is a simple summary of that good news:

JESUS LIVED. JESUS DIED. JESUS ROSE. (See 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

Jesus is God in the flesh and He walked this earth to show us that we can know Him in a personal way. He left His place in Heaven to restore His relationship with us that sin had broken. We can't save ourselves with "good deeds", but He came to live a perfect life to save us. But He did more than just that. He died a criminal's death. Jesus took our place on the cross and paid for our sin. He did this because He loves you and He wants to forgive you for everything you've done wrong. He sealed the victory by rising from the dead 3 days later. Because He did this, He offers us the same hope for our future. He is inviting you to place your trust and give your life to Him today. That's the good news you are sharing!

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

And news like this is meant to be shared! It can change someone's life and add them to God's family! So this gospel pathway gives you four simple verses to help you tell the story of Jesus and share how it affects each one of us. **Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, John 3:16, & Romans 10:9.**

Do not feel the pressure to make every conversation or occasion the same. Let the Holy Spirit work and rest in the power of this truth found in **Romans 10:17 ESV, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."**

That verse takes the pressure off of ourselves. We conclude from this: "I cannot convince or argue someone to Jesus." It has to be through that person hearing the truth of the gospel from the word of God. The Holy Spirit then uses the Word to draw that person to faith, and all they have to do is receive that gift of forgiveness and eternal life! **Psalms 19:7 MEV says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul..."** This is God's work, all we need to do is share this good news, help our friend understand it in the moment, and watch what God will do!

CONVERSATION RHYTHMS

Because of the truths in Scripture, we try to create these practices in our gospel conversations:

- *Show your friend the verses in an actual Bible, either the app on your phone/tablet or a paper Bible. Explain to them that this isn't your opinion, but it's actually what God says and you'd like to show them so they can see it for themselves!*
- *When you land on each verse, HAVE YOUR FRIEND READ THAT VERSE OUT LOUD. This ensures that they read it and have to take a moment to process it and then share back with you.*
- *It helps to mark the verses ahead of time - highlight them in your app or in your paper Bible so you aren't fumbling during the convo. Feel free to use whatever version you like, but we have found that CSB or ESV usually works best because you can dial in on the meaning of specific words.*
- *Remember as you read the rest of this pathway - these are just suggestions on how to explain the truth from the Word. Tweak and change the illustrations as you see fit! The conclusions that people will come to are a product of God's work, not yours! Don't feel pressure to get a specific result from this convo.*

VERSES & TALKING POINTS

#1 ROMANS 3:23 CSB // ***"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"***

The purpose of sharing this verse is to get your friend to understand that he or she is a sinner, just like every other human being!

- Ask your friend to read the verse out loud.
- Make sure they understand the definition of the words "sin" and "glory"
 - Sin = Anything we say or do that's wrong. Mistake, failure, etc
 - Glory = Honor or power gained by someone's achievements or characteristics. This speaks of how God is perfect!
- After explaining those words, ask them if they understand what the verse is saying. If they say yes, then ask them to explain it to you in their own words. Don't try to correct them in their answer right away - just let that answer inform you on how quickly they are grasping the concept.

Say something like, "You know when I ask people how they get to heaven, there's an answer that I often hear: 'I hope so - I am a good person.' There is a misconception that if our good outweighs our bad, then certainly God will let us into heaven when we die. But this verse tells us that that just can't be true. Someone could be the best person you have ever known, and better than everyone else you know, but one little sin is enough to make them fall short. Picture you, me, (and anyone else you know in common) decide that we are going to jump over the Grand Canyon. I might jump 5 feet, your friend might jump 10 feet, and you might jump 15 feet! Even though you might jump farther than everyone else, will that be enough to make it to the other side? NO WAY - the Grand Canyon averages 1 mile wide!

#2 ROMANS 6:23 CSB // ***"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."***

The purpose of sharing this verse is to get your friend to understand that the paycheck for sin is death, and God has a gift on the table for all of us!

- Ask your friend to read the verse out loud.
- Make sure they understand the definition of the words "wages" and "death."

Wages = Something you earn - ie minimum wage or a paycheck.

Death = Not alive haha, but the meaning of the word is actually "separation." This is important because Scripture teaches that we are triune beings, body, mind, and spirit. Your body is the shell - that gets buried in the ground when you die. Our mind is what makes you, you. It's the seat of your emotions and what causes you to make decisions. Your spirit is what makes you eternal. So when you die, your body is put in the ground, and then your mind and spirit instantly go to either: be with Jesus forever in a place called Heaven, or separated from Jesus forever in a place called Hell.

So this verse is saying in the first phrase: "The paycheck for sin is death." Even if you are an amazing person, but still just do one little thing wrong, the paycheck for that one sin is separation from God in a place called Hell.

"BUT the gift of God is eternal life" But God wanted to make a way for us to be with Him forever (that's what the word "eternal" means). So He has a gift for each and every one of us on the table. It's available to all of us.

Say something like, "So if I were to take a \$20 bill and put it down here on this table and say, "this is a gift for you - I want you to have this." You can tell all your friends I gave you \$20. You can think and plan ways to spend your \$20. You can even look at it on the table and say, "I believe that is my \$20" But it isn't yours while it's still in the middle of the table, right? It's not yours until you pick it up, receive the gift and put it into your pocket." (You can also use the concept of a Christmas gift here too. It might be wrapped and under the tree and even have your name on it, but it isn't yours until you open it and make it yours.)

This means if you receive this gift and make it yours, then when you die, your mind and spirit will go to be with Jesus to live with Him forever! That's the gift that's on the table for all of us - eternal life.

But have you ever thought about HOW God could give us a gift like that? The end of verse 8, "Through Christ Jesus our Lord"

#3 ROMANS 5:8 CSB // "But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

The purpose of sharing this verse is to get your friend to understand that God sent Jesus to live a perfect life on earth, and then die in our place as a payment for our sin.

OR

#3 JOHN 3:16 CSB // "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."

The purpose of sharing this verse is to get your friend to understand that God sent Jesus to live a perfect life on earth, and then die in our place as a payment for our sin.

- Ask your friend to read the verse out loud. Ask them to retell that in their own words.

Jesus came and lived a perfect life, and then died a criminal's death on the cross. When Jesus died on the cross, He paid for every sin that you've ever committed, as well as every sin that's ever been committed past, present and future! Think about that! How big would you imagine one of your sins to be? Like a "little white lie" is that like a marble? If that's the case, then how many marbles do you think EVERY SIN YOU'VE EVER COMMITTED WOULD LOOK LIKE? Mine would fill this room up to the top probably! And times that by BILLIONS AND BILLIONS - that's the weight that Jesus felt when He was paying for every sin in the world. He died to pay for them all. But it didn't stop there. He rose again and defeated death, sin, hell and the grave by coming back to life! And because Jesus got up, then that means He earned the right to put that gift on the table for all of us.

Ok, so we are all sinners, but Jesus paid the price and purchased our forgiveness! The gift of eternal life is on the table for all of us, now we are going to talk about how to pick up that gift, and make it yours, are you ready?

#4 ROMANS 10:9-10 CSB // *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. 10 One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation.*

The purpose of sharing this verse is to share how to "receive" the gift of eternal life!

- Ask your friend to read the verse out loud. Ask them to retell that in their own words.

Verse 10 just rewords the truth in verse 9. It gives us two simple steps to taking that gift on the table - **Confess with your mouth and then believe in your heart.** Let's take it phrase by phrase!

First up, "confess with your mouth that "Jesus is Lord." What does "Lord" mean? A good way to describe what Lord means is KING. So confessing with your mouth looks like talking to God and asking Him to be the King of your life. Picture the throne of your life - and then you standing up and walking away from your throne, and then asking Jesus to come and take His rightful place as the King of your entire life!

Second, "Believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead." This is the center of the Christian faith. So many religions have founders, but they have all died eventually. Jesus is the only One who actually came back from the dead and He is alive even today. After three days in the grave, He came back from the dead, lived on earth for another 40 days, and then floated back up to Heaven to be on the throne of all things.

So that's how you receive it - confess with your mouth, believe in your heart. If you do those things, you will be saved. This means that you accept the forgiveness that Jesus paid for, you are adopted into God's family as his son or daughter, and the Holy Spirit comes to live in your heart. He will never leave you or forsake you. You will never lose this eternal life. You cannot undo it. No one can take it away from you. Jesus will be with you and give you peace for the rest of your life.

Typically, the way people do this is they pray to God (confess with your mouth) and tell Him you know that you are a sinner, and that you believe Jesus died for you and rose again. Tell Him you want to receive His forgiveness, you want Him to come into your heart and make you a new person. If you

believe in your heart what you say with your lips, then Jesus will save you, forgive you, and make you His son or daughter! Keep in mind, this isn't a Harry-Potter spell - you don't have to say the EXACT same thing. Put that truth in your own words, pray out loud to God, and HE WILL HEAR YOU!

- Ask them, are you ready to say that prayer?

If they are nervous to pray, offer to pray for them first, and ask God to give them the words to say. Try to include the simple description of the gospel in your prayer again also. And then, when you say Amen, keep your head bowed and eyes closed, and let the other person begin praying!

- Ask them, SO WHAT HAPPENED? That means that Jesus made you His son or daughter! There are just a few more things to show you really quick.

LUKE 15:10 CSB // "I tell you, in the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who repents."

- Ask your friend to read the verse out loud. Ask them to retell that in their own words.
- Ask them: Do you know what the red letters mean? The red letters are words that Jesus actually spoke while He was living on this earth. So all the Bible is important, but the red letters are a little extra special to me.

According to this verse, it says there is a party in Heaven when one person makes Jesus the King of their life! The angels have a party nonstop no doubt because of all the people who are trusting Jesus all around the world at any given moment! And who is in the presence of God's angels in Heaven? Jesus is! He's leading the party!

So today is your spiritual birthday! Take a picture with the ones who shared this moment with you. Who else can you tell about this good news who would want to hear? Just remember, sometimes you will not feel very saved. There will be times when you might doubt what happened on this day. But Jesus made you a promise, and that promise is not based on feelings - they are based on facts. He will never walk away from you or disown you!

This is a great time to talk about the first step of obedience after salvation is baptism! Being baptized does not save you. It does NOT wash away your sins. It is a outward symbol of an inward decision that you have already made.