

HOW TO SPEND TIME WITH JESUS: SOAP AND PRAY

The following acronyms, “soap” and “pray,” are tools to help you get started spending time with Jesus. God wants a real relationship with you and to renew your minds and heart through Scripture and prayer. Just like soap cleans and renews your body, Scripture and prayer cleanses your mind, heart, and soul with God’s thoughts.

Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then, you will be able to test and approve God’s will—His good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Romans 12:1-2

SOAP: Reading the Bible for Life Change

S: Scripture

- Pick a passage of Scripture and read it a few times.
 - We recommend picking a book of the Bible and reading one book at a time
 - You can also find TONS of different bible reading plans on [the Bible App](#)
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you listen to what He wants you to know.

O: Observe

- Reflect on what the passage says about 3 things:
 - 1. God 2. Human beings 3. What God wants for or from you
- Write down truths from the passage in your own words and meditate on what it means.

A: Apply

- How would your life be different if you believed or did what God’s Word says?
- Ask God how He wants to apply the truth you just read to your life.

P: Pray

- Ask Him for the courage to follow Jesus today and remember He is with you today.
- Spend some quiet time with God and follow the PRAY acronym below.

PRAY: Praying with Purpose

P: Praise

- Spend some time thanking God for who He is in your life.
- Prayer starts with focusing our attention and affection on God.

R: Real Life

- Spend time praying about the real things in your life. Write down truths from the passage in your own words and meditate on what it means.
- Prayer is not pretending but bringing our real life to God and learning to live by His power.

A: Ask

- Ask for God's provision, love and power to be made known to people in your life.
- Prayer is trusting God to provide for your needs and work through you.

Y: Your will be done

- Spend some time being silent and listening to His Spirit about specific situations in your life.
- Prayer is surrendering to Jesus and His will

RECOVERING A LIFE OF “REST” RATHER THAN ANXIETY

Jesus wants to transform our worry and anxiety into a life of rest and peace. In our fast-paced culture that is founded on consumerism and busyness, living at peace in Christ is counter-cultural and takes intentionality. We need to set priorities that help us value our relationship with Jesus first and build habits that live with rest and peace.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-29

“Seek first the Kingdom of God and everything you need will be added unto you.”

Matthew 6:33

R: Routines

- Develop habits and rhythms that help you value your relationship with Jesus, family, and friends
- Try to plan your habits and priorities daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually

E: Encouragement

- Find people who can encourage you: who is investing in your life?
- Try to encourage at least 3 people everyday: who are you investing in?

S: Silence, Solitude, Sabbath

- Integrate silence and solitude without technology into your routines
- Start practicing a weekly sabbath—24 hours to not work and value God, family, and friends

T: Time

- Take a regular inventory of your time—what does your schedule say about what you value?
- Say “yes” to big priorities first and “no” to things that are not priorities.

	My Priorities	My Habits
New ways of thinking		
Daily		
Weekly		
Monthly		
Quarterly		
Annually		

TURNING TO JESUS WITH OUR DIFFICULTIES

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.”

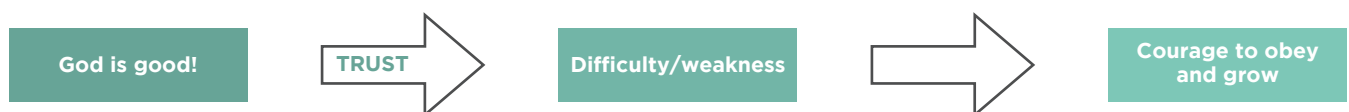
James 1:2-6

Below, we find two different ways we can deal with difficult circumstances and weaknesses in our life:

Paradigm 1: Our circumstances determine how we relate to God. If things are going well, God is good! If things are not going well, we fear God might not be good and tend to drown in insecurity, self-doubt, sin, and other unhealthy patterns.



Paradigm 2: Our relationship with God determines how we relate to our circumstances. Since Jesus demonstrates we can trust God’s character and is with us all the time, we turn to Him with our difficulties and weaknesses. When things are not going well, we find the courage to obey, resiliency, and opportunities to grow through difficult times.



“Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

2 Corinthians 12:8-10

“Lord, I believe! Help me with my doubts!”

Mark 9:24, MSG

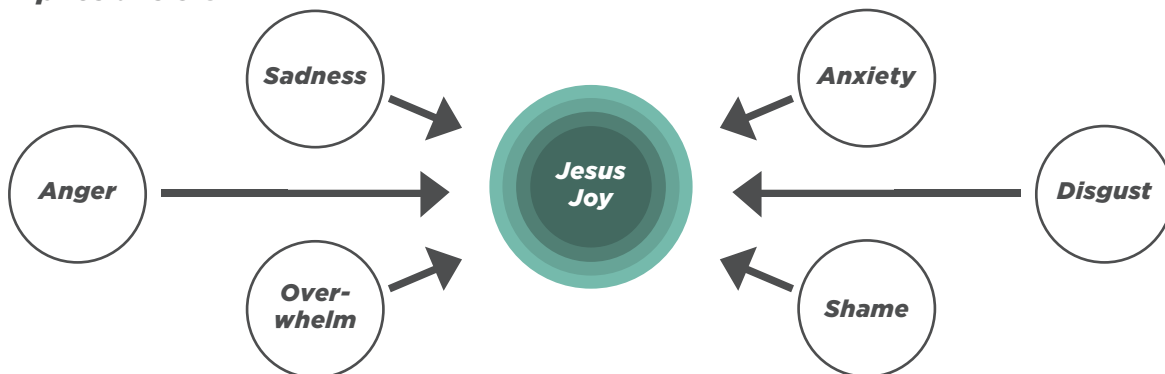
HOW TO DEAL WITH YOUR DARK SIDE

Learning to deal with your dark side is an important part of our maturity. God cares about your whole life and wants to shine His light into your darkness. You don't have to hide your mistakes, struggles, temptations, or negative emotions from Him. We grow when we bring our darkness into the light of Jesus. If we are stuck in negative emotions, chances are we need to name it and tell God and someone we trust about it. Below, are a few tools to help you deal with negative emotions.

Bring your darkness into the LIGHT:

- **L:** List your negative feelings, thoughts, or struggle on paper
- **I:** Invite God to be with you in your struggle (rather than try to control it yourself)
- **G:** Gospel: let God speak to you and remind you of the truth of His love, grace, and power
- **H:** Help: write down how you want God to help you and what you believe He is saying to you
- **T:** Tell someone else you trust about what you are going through (sharing your struggle with God and someone you trust is the best way to deal with negative emotions)

*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.
Ephesians 5:8*



Grief and Gratitude List: The Psalms are filled with laments to grieve what is broken in the world and turn to God to find hope. Naming what you are grieving and grateful helps us return to spiritual health.

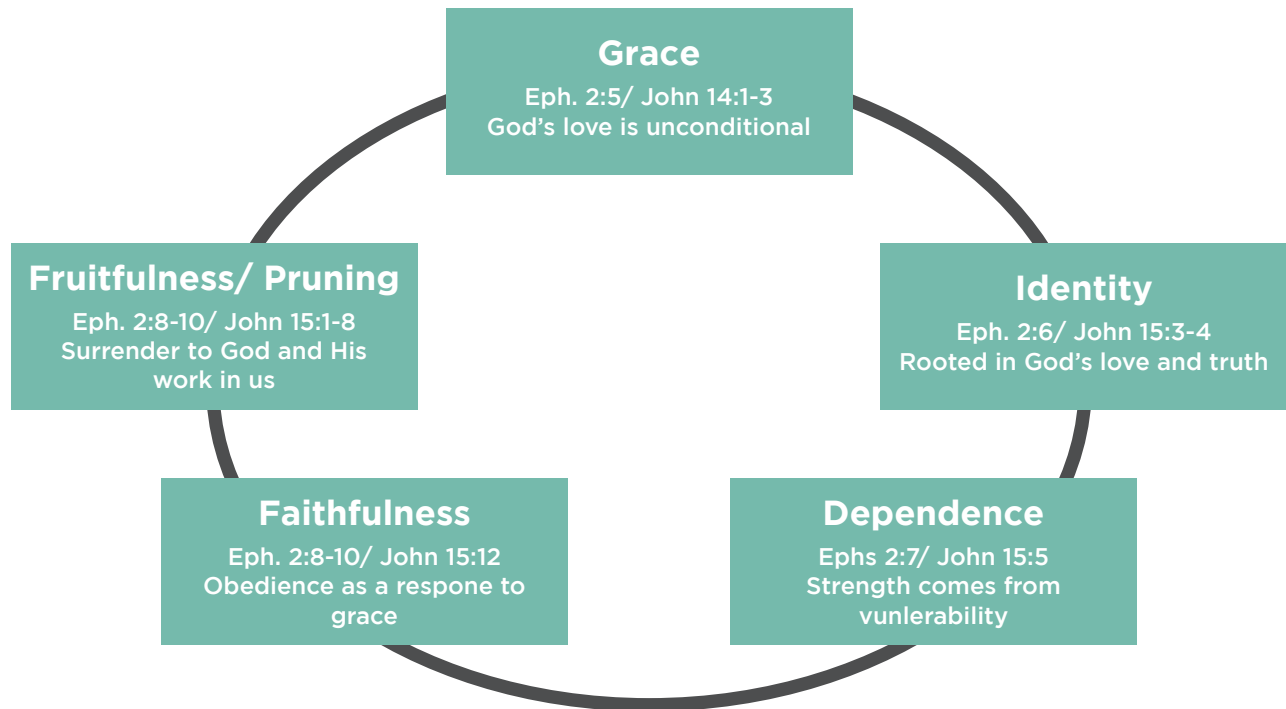
Grief: What am I frustrated about?

Gratitude: What am I thankful for?

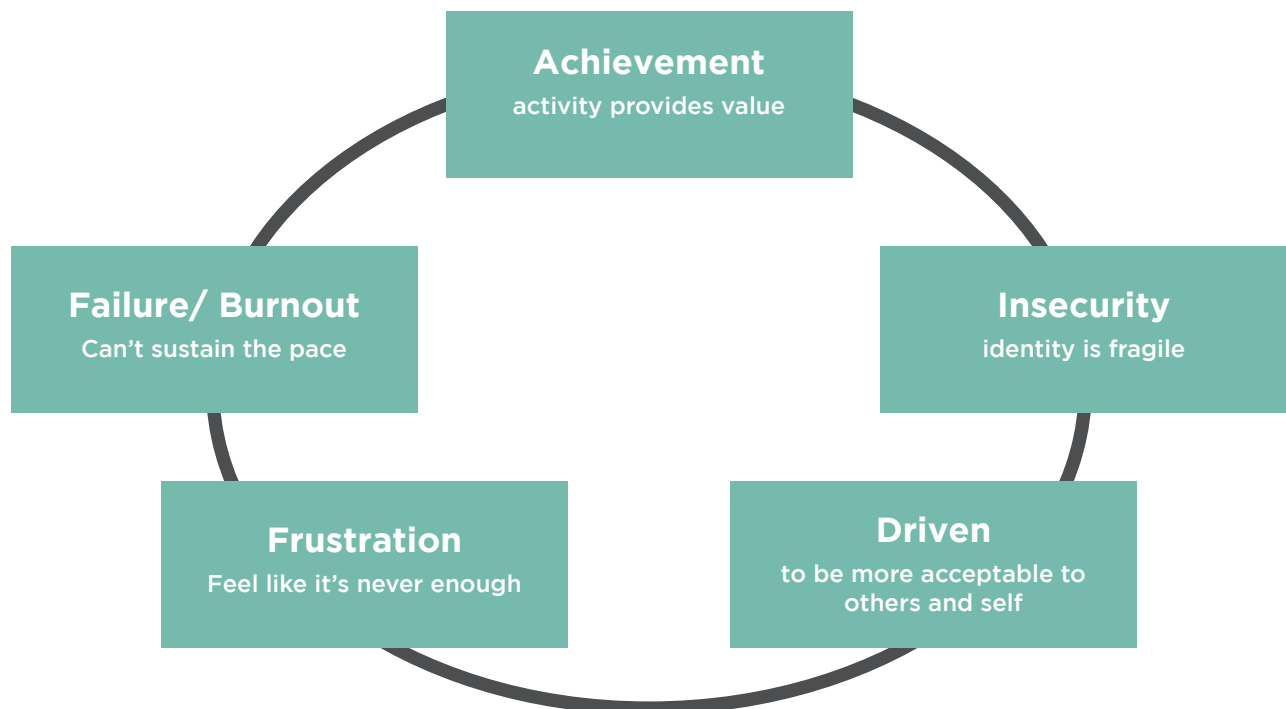
*I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy.
I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.
Psalm 142:1*

HOW TO DEVELOP A MORE SECURE IDENTITY

Live in the The Cycle of Grace

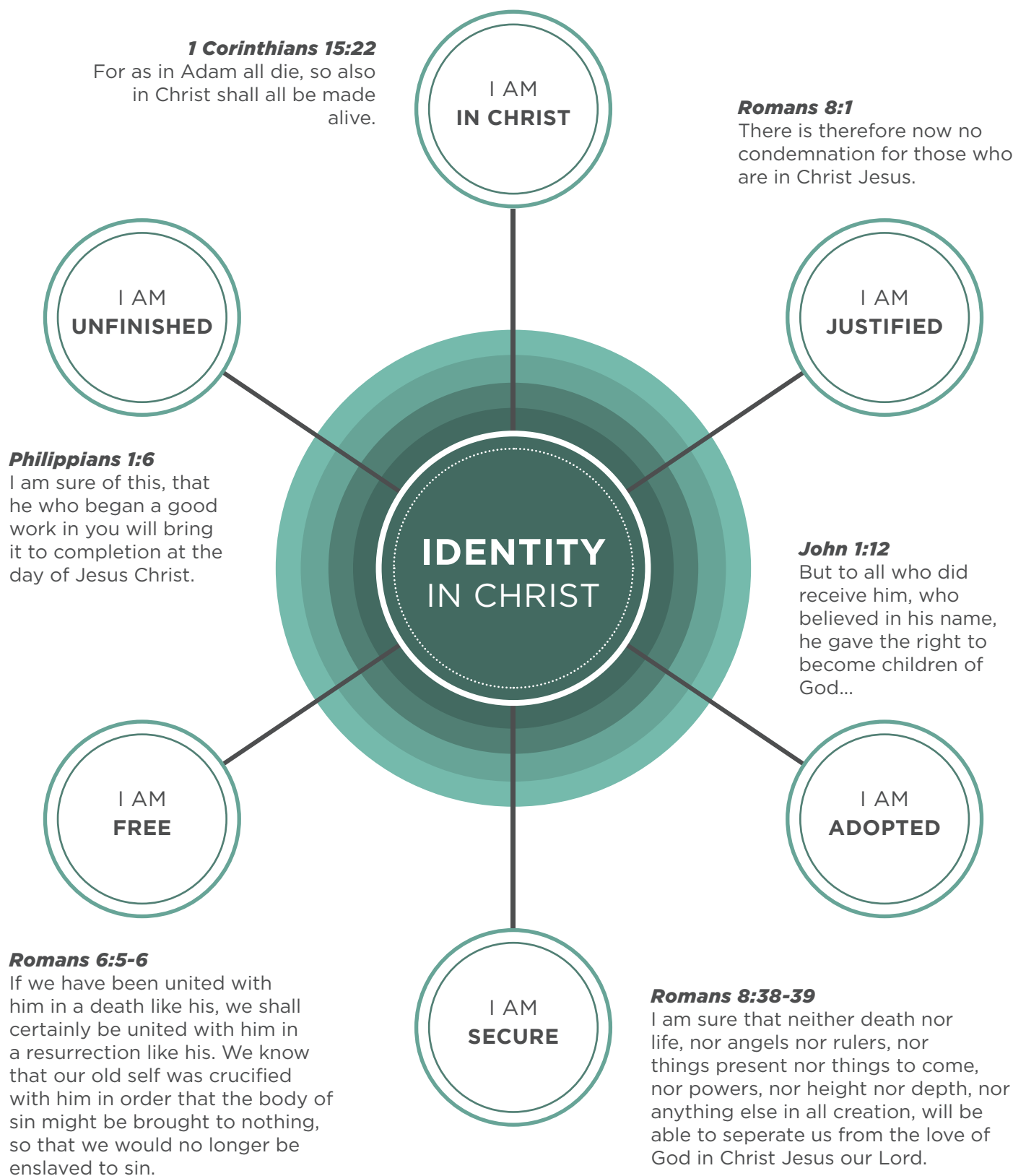


Let Go of The Cycle of Works



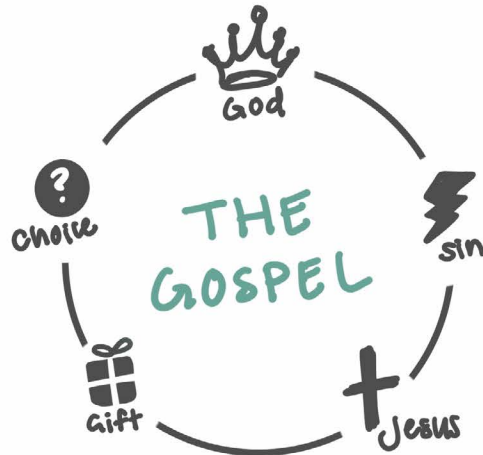
6 CORE TRUTHS ABOUT YOUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

From Visual Theology

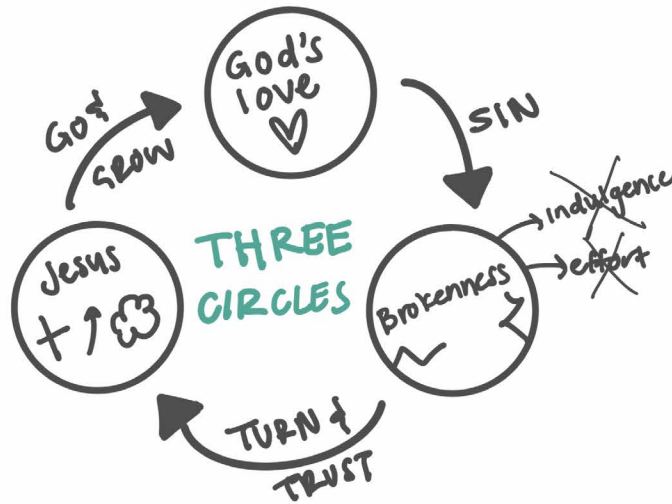


3 WAYS TO DRAW THE GOSPEL ON A NAPKIN

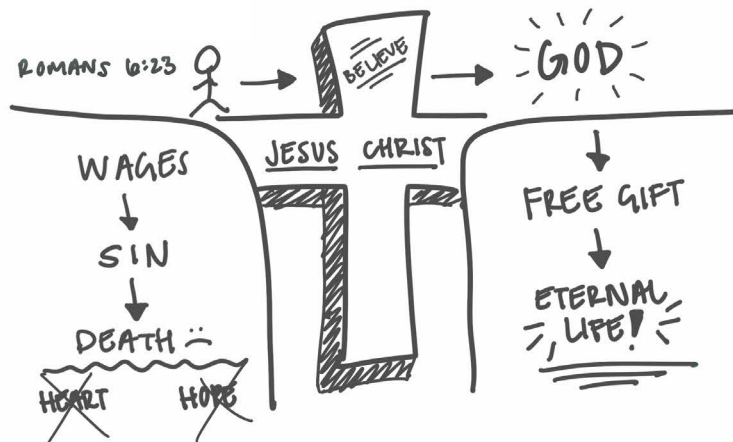
1: The Gospel



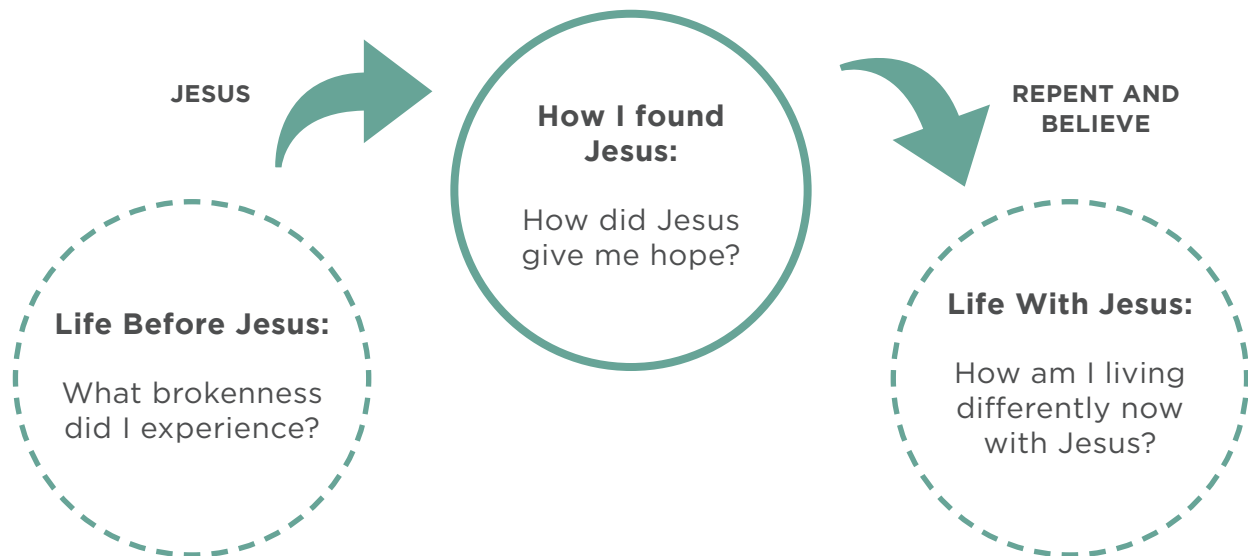
2: Three Circles



3: The Bridge Diagram



HOW TO SHARE YOUR STORY



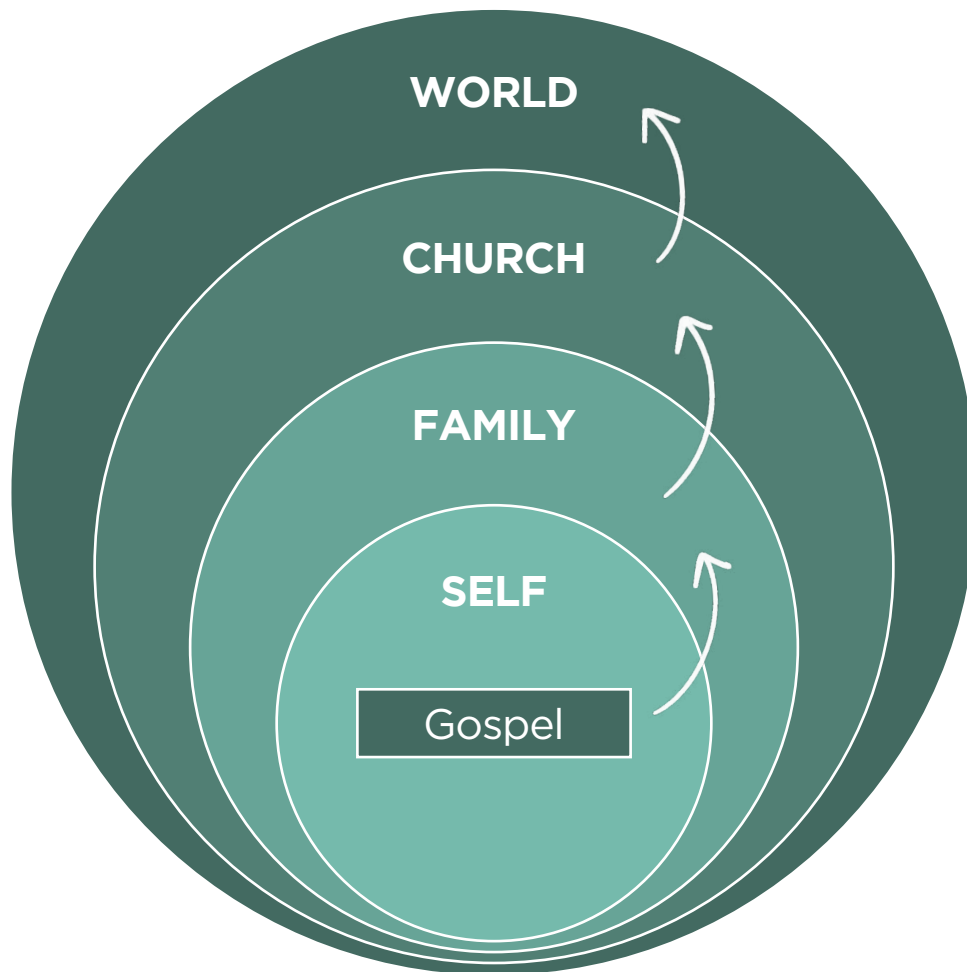
Script out your story using the 3 circles:

- **Circle 1: Life Before Jesus (every great story has a struggle)**
 - What struggle have you experienced that you could not solve on your own?
 - This circle does not just have to be your “salvation moment.” It can also be areas of brokenness in your life that you have needed Jesus’ help with.
- **Circle 2: How you found Jesus (every great story has a hero)**
 - How did Jesus become the hero of your story?
 - How did He give you hope to face your struggle?
- **Circle 3: Life with Jesus (every great story gives others hope)**
 - How are you living differently with Jesus now?
 - What wisdom or freedom has He given you to give others hope?

Tips on sharing your story:

- Try to write a notecard version, a 2 minute version, a 5 minute version, and a 10-15 minute version you can share in a conversational way depending on the relationship.
 - To write a notecard version, write 1 word or phrase that represents your struggle on one side of the card and 1 word or phrase that represents what God has done in your life on the other side.
- Always point to Jesus as the hero of your story and how He has given you hope. Don’t glamorize your sin or project your issues on others when you share your story.
- Your story does not have to be completely resolved to share. Sometimes, letting people into circle 1 of your struggle helps them see the process of how God will work in your life.

HOW THE GOSPEL CHANGES EVERYTHING



For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:[a] The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:14-21

THE ICEBERG IMAGE OF TRANSFORMATION

The image of the iceberg helps us picture the depths of transformation we need in our lives. Like an iceberg, 90% of who we are exists beneath the surface—what happens in our mind, heart and character. God wants our outer life (the 10% people see) to flow from our inner life of a deep relationship with Jesus.

Your outer life for God:

Your service and your skills (10%)

Your inner life with God:

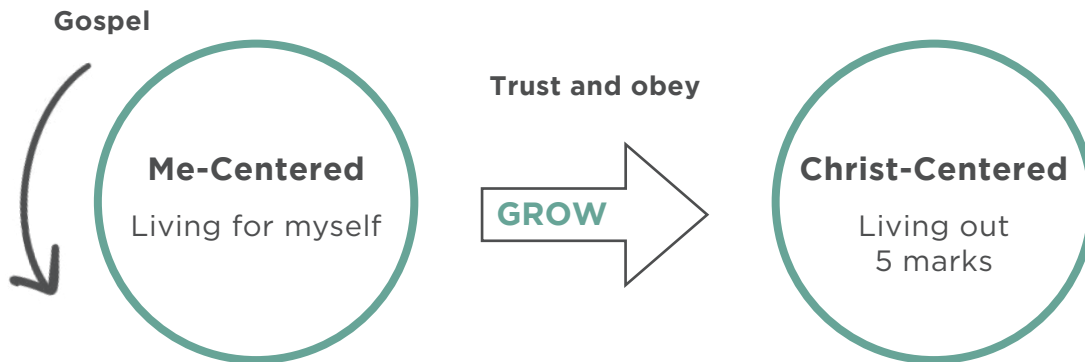
Your heart, mind and character (90%)

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

Ephesians 3:16-21

BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Building a Strong Foundation in Christ



Building My Foundation on Sand	Holy Spirit and Habits	Building My Foundation on the Rock
World: - Conforming to culture & family of origin - Relying on my self	Honesty and humility	Kingdom: - Conforming to Christ and His will - Relying on God and community
Flesh: - My way over God's way - Ruled by feelings, sinful attitudes, and actions, defensive about mistakes	Repent and believe	Gospel: - Christ's way over my way - Ruled by love of Jesus, take thoughts captive, admit weakness and sin
Devil: - Believe lies about God, myself, see the world from my own perspective - Unhealed wounds that rob joy and life - Trapped in guilt/shame/ indifference	Forgiveness and Healing	Word: - Believe truth of God's Word & see God, myself, and world through mind of Christ - Truth restores what has been broken - Walk in freedom, forgiveness, & security

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock...”

Matthew 7:24-27

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

John 10:10

“Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing, and perfect will.”

Romans 12:2