



ON MISSION

A Simple Way to
SHARE THE GOSPEL

DUSTIN WILLIS | AARON COE

Foreword by DAVID PLATT

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Dedicated to the thousands of missionaries who work hard every day to make Jesus known in North America, many of whom are doing so without great fanfare and without much financial reward.

One hundred percent of the royalties from this Bible study will directly support missionaries in North America through Send North America.

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SEND NETWORK

Your life has a mission. We want to see you succeed in this mission, whether by leading a church, planting a church, or living on mission in your everyday life. The Send Network was established to deliver resources and provide opportunities that equip you and your church with the gospel and that mobilize you to be on mission in your local community and beyond.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A Bible study like this is the product of the ideas of countless people. Though two people had the opportunity to write the study, hundreds of people contributed to its fruition.

Threaded throughout the pages of this study you will find an incredible tool called Three Circles. Three Circles is a simple way to take life conversations and turn them into gospel conversations.

Our good friend Pastor Jimmy Scroggins and the people of Family Church in West Palm Beach, Florida, have not only generously given this tool away through this study and through the Life Conversation Guide but have also boldly shared the gospel by using Three Circles all over south Florida and throughout the world. Jimmy, thank you for your boldness, zeal, and sacrifice in advancing the gospel.

Learn more about Family Church in West Palm Beach, Florida, at **gofamilychurch.org**.

FOREWORD

DAVID PLATT

Ordinary people with extraordinary power preaching, praying, giving, and suffering for the spread of the gospel.

This is the picture of the early church we see on the pages of the New Testament. A small band of 12 men responded to Jesus' life-changing invitation: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19, ESV). In the days to come, they watched Jesus, listened to Him, and learned from Him how to love, teach, and serve others the same way He did. Then came the moment when they saw Him die on a cross for their sins, only to rise from the dead three days later. Soon He gathered them on a mountainside and issued this call:

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.
And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

MATTHEW 28:18-20

Just as Jesus had said from the beginning, these followers would now become fishers of men. His authoritative commission would become their consuming ambition.

Later Jesus' disciples gathered with a small group of other Christ followers, about 120 in all, and they waited. True to His promise, Jesus sent His Spirit to every one of them, and immediately they began proclaiming the gospel. In the days to come, they scattered from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the ends of the earth (see Acts 1:8), and within one generation they grew to over four hundred times the size they were when they started. How did this happen?

The spread of the gospel in the Book of Acts took place primarily because ordinary people, empowered by an extraordinary presence, proclaimed the gospel everywhere they went. To be sure, God appointed well-known apostles like Peter, John, and Paul for certain positions of leadership in the church. Yet it was anonymous Christians who first took the gospel to Judea and Samaria, and

it was unnamed believers who founded the church in Antioch, which became a base for the mission to the Gentile world. It was unidentified followers of Jesus who spread the gospel throughout all of Asia. Disciples were made and churches were multiplied in places the apostles never went. The good news of Jesus spread not just through gifted preachers but through everyday people whose lives had been transformed by the power of Christ. They went from house to house and to marketplaces and shops along streets and travel routes, leading people to faith in Jesus on a daily basis.

This is how the gospel penetrated the world during the first century: through self-denying, Spirit-empowered disciples of Jesus who were making disciples of Jesus. Followers of Jesus were fishing for men. Disciples were making disciples. Christians weren't known for casual association with Christ and His church; instead, they were known for complete abandonment to Christ and His cause. The Great Commission wasn't a choice for them to consider but a command for them to obey. And though they faced untold trials and unthinkable persecution, they experienced unimaginable joy as they joined Jesus to advance His kingdom.

I want to be part of a movement like that. I want to be part of a people who really believe we have the Spirit of God in each of us for the spread of the gospel through all of us. I want to be part of a people who gladly sacrifice the pleasures, pursuits, and possessions of this world because we're living for treasure in the world to come. I want to be part of a people who forsake every earthly ambition in favor of one eternal aspiration: to see disciples made and churches multiplied from our houses to our communities to our cities to the nations.

This kind of movement involves all of us. Every follower of Christ fishing for men. Every disciple making disciples. Ordinary people spreading the gospel in extraordinary ways all over the world. Men and women from diverse backgrounds with different gifts and distinct platforms making disciples and multiplying churches through every domain of society in every place on the planet. This is God's design for His church, and disciples of Jesus mustn't settle for anything less.

That's what this Bible study is all about. Dustin Willis and Aaron Coe explain biblical foundations and explore practical implications of the way God has designed your life to be part of His purpose in the world. As you study and apply these truths, I encourage you to join God's work in your neighborhood, in North America, and among the nations for the sake of His great name.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Life on Mission provides five weeks of study. Each week is divided into sections for group interaction and personal study. After your first group session, you'll complete a week of daily, personal study before the next group session.

START

The first section of each group session includes initial icebreakers and group discussion designed to spark conversation and introduce the topic of the session.

WATCH

The Watch section of each session provides key statements for participants to follow during the video interview.

RESPOND

The final component of the group session provides discussion questions related to the video interview teaching and offers an opportunity for learners to share and grow together.

PERSONAL STUDY

The individual component of the study offers five short, interactive devotions for use each week between group sessions. Complete the devotions and learning activities before attending the group session related to that topic.

Your life on mission matters. How you spend these moments with God will determine just how much. Use the two parts of this material—group and personal study—as necessary preparation for your life on mission.

TIPS FOR LEADING A GROUP

PRAYERFULLY PREPARE

Prepare for each session by—

- › reviewing the weekly material and group questions ahead of time;
- › praying for each person in the group.

Ask the Holy Spirit to work through you and the group discussion as you point to Jesus each week through God's Word.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Create a comfortable environment. If group members are uncomfortable, they'll be distracted and therefore unengaged in the group experience. Plan ahead by taking into consideration—

- › seating;
- › temperature and lighting;
- › food or drink;
- › surrounding noise;
- › general cleanliness (put pets away if meeting in a home).

At best, thoughtfulness and hospitality show guests and group members they're welcome and valued in whatever environment you choose to gather. At worst, people may never notice your effort, but they're also not distracted. Do everything in your ability to help people focus on what's most important: connecting with God, with the Bible, and with others.

INCLUDE OTHERS

Your goal is to foster a community in which people are welcome just as they are but encouraged to grow spiritually. Always be aware of opportunities to—

- › **INVITE** new people to join your group;
- › **INCLUDE** any people who visit the group.

An inexpensive way to make first-time guests feel welcome or to invite people to get involved is to give them their own copies of this Bible study book.

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION

A good small group gathering has the following characteristics.

- › **EVERYONE PARTICIPATES.** Encourage everyone to ask questions, share responses, or read aloud.
- › **NO ONE DOMINATES—NOT EVEN THE LEADER.** Be sure what you say takes up less than half of your time together as a group. Politely redirect discussion if anyone dominates.
- › **NOBODY IS RUSHED THROUGH QUESTIONS.** Don't feel that a moment of silence is a bad thing. People often need time to think about their responses to questions they've just heard or to gain courage to share what God is stirring in their hearts.
- › **INPUT IS AFFIRMED AND FOLLOWED UP.** Make sure you point out something true or helpful in a response. Don't just move on. Build personal connections with follow-up questions, asking how other people have experienced similar things or how a truth has shaped their understanding of God and the Scripture you're studying. People are less likely to speak up if they fear that you don't actually want to hear their answers or that you're looking for only a certain answer.
- › **GOD AND HIS WORD ARE CENTRAL.** Opinions and experiences can be helpful, but God has given us the truth. Trust Scripture to be the authority and God's Spirit to work in people's lives. You can't change anyone, but God can. Continually point people to the Word and to active steps of faith.

KEEP CONNECTING

Think of ways to connect with group members during the week. Participation during the group session is always improved when members spend time connecting with one another away from the session. The more people are comfortable with and involved in one another's lives, the more they'll look forward to being together. When people move beyond being friendly and in the same group to truly being friends who form a community, they come to each session eager to engage instead of merely attending.

Encourage group members with thoughts, commitments, or questions from the session by connecting through—

- › **emails;**
- › **texts;**
- › **social media.**

When possible, build deeper friendships by planning or spontaneously inviting group members to join you outside your regularly scheduled group time for—

- › **meals;**
- › **fun activities;**
- › **projects around your home, church, or community.**

PERSONAL STUDY
GOD'S
DESIGN

INTRODUCTION

“In the beginning God ...”

GENESIS 1:1

The first words of Scripture reveal the ultimate foundation for life on mission. God is the giver of life. He alone is worth of our worship. Nothing else in this world can satisfy the longing of our hearts. People need to know this life-changing truth.

But many people don't know it. People aren't worshipping God. And we're not just talking about strangers in remote villages around the planet. We're talking about people around you every day—neighbors, friends, coworkers, classmates, even family members. Many people who are part of your daily life don't have the abundant, eternal life found only in a relationship with God.

God's design for our lives, His desire for all creation, has been broken by humanity's selfish pursuit of sin. Only the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ can restore people to a right relationship with their Creator. Only the loving grace of God can transform our selfishness into faithfulness. A self-centered life can be turned around to become a God-centered life on mission.

But this mission isn't something we do for God.

It's God's mission.

That mission is the work God has been doing since the beginning of time. The mission of God requires that His people leverage their lives for His glory, using their time, influence, and abilities to share the good news of salvation. Before ascending to heaven, Jesus called His disciples to join this work:

Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:18-20

The Great Commission isn't for a select few; it's for everyone who follows Christ. The movement of God's mission sweeps across everyday, ordinary lives to draw in businesspeople, soccer moms, grandmothers, neighbors, students, lawyers, teachers, baristas, contractors, white collar, blue collar, or no collar at all. God's mission goes forward through the work of regular people like you and me, filled with the Spirit, laying down our lives, denying ourselves for the mission of God and the redemption of sinful people. This is the invitation.

Jesus invited us to life on mission
over two thousand years ago.

It's not a program or a method of evangelism.
It's the movement of God.

Through His church—all God's people.
This is God's plan to change the world.

LIFE ON MISSION

Many people believe mission and ministry are carried out by a select few professional clergy or an elite number of mission agencies and nonprofit organizations. But in reality, God's mission was given to every member of His church. All Christ followers are called to be everyday missionaries.

Everyday missionaries practice life on mission where God has placed them, whether in an office complex, a Third World country, or a college campus. For the mission to reach fulfillment, every believer must participate willingly, passionately, and sacrificially.

Ephesians 4 tells us God has given leaders to the church to build up His people until they "become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13, NIV). That verse doesn't say church leaders are placed over us to do all the work. When we choose to join God on His mission through His church, we dare to be the everyday missionaries He called us to be, to carry out the work of the gospel.

Your life has a mission. If you're a follower of Jesus, He has a purpose and a plan for you. Ephesians 3:20 tells us God is able "to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us" (NASB). Think about that: the God of the universe has a plan far beyond what your mind can conceive. He wants to do more in and through you than you can imagine. What exactly does that look like? What does that mean? How will it all play out in the coming weeks and in the next five years?

We live in a culture that's all about us. Social media has ushered in the selfie generation, which defines itself by self-promotion. In contrast, the purpose of God's mission isn't about us. As we begin to understand what life on mission is about, it's vital to understand our goals. The ultimate goal isn't for us to do good things for others. It's not even to start churches or share our faith. Yes, those are good aspects of the mission, but they aren't the ultimate aim. The ultimate aim of our lives is to bring glory to God.

Ephesians 3:21 identifies the central purpose of any effort we give to God's mission: "To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever" (ESV). One early church document tells us, "Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever."¹ The goal of the mission is God's glory.

You don't have to waste years of your life wondering what your purpose is. First Corinthians 10:31 says, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for God's glory." The purpose of your parenting is to glorify God. The purpose of your job is to glorify God. And the purpose of your life's mission is to glorify God.

Maybe you think, *OK, I get it. Living for God's glory is the aim, and joining God in His mission to reach my community and beyond is a means toward that great intention, but I have no idea how I'm going to add missions to the chaos called my life.*

The objective of this study isn't to get you involved in some new missions program or create another church event but rather to walk alongside you in creating gospel intentionality within the everyday rhythms of your life. We want to help you have conversations in your everyday life that share the transformative hope and power of the gospel.

The approach we'll share is as simple as 1-2-3. Three Circles is a simple way to share your faith as you focus on these key truths:

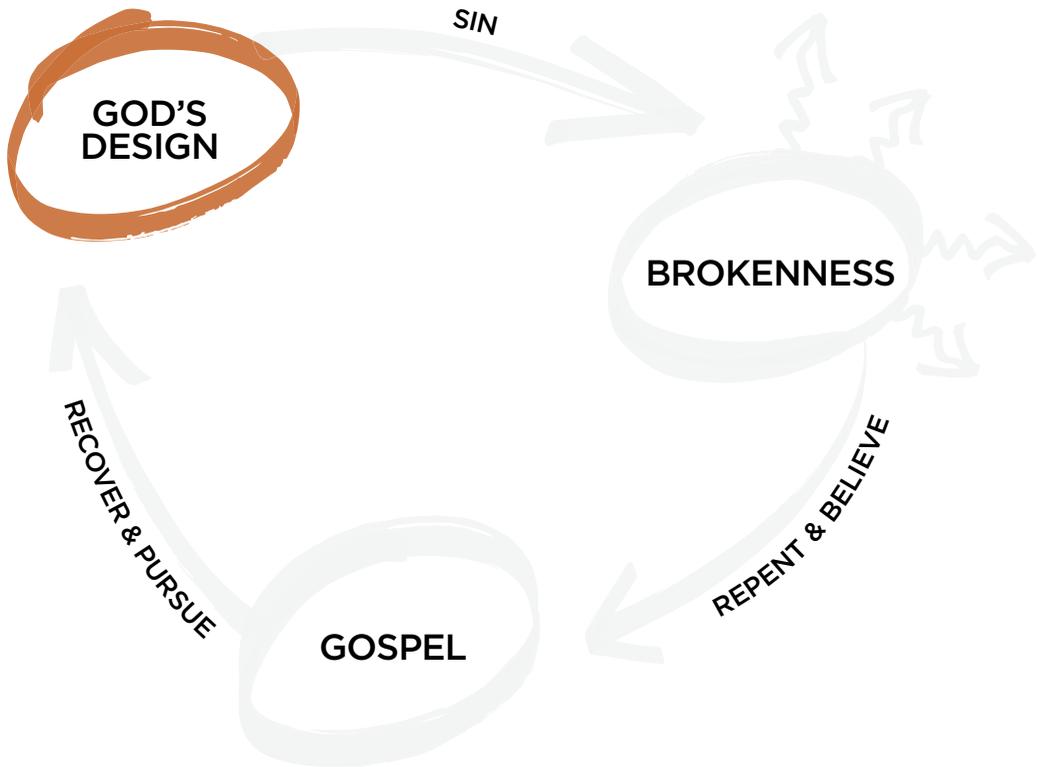
God's design

Brokenness

Gospel

By the end of this study, you should be comfortable introducing Three Circles in daily conversations with other people. The Three Circles diagram and easy-to-remember concepts provide a natural way to share the good news of Jesus with the lost people you encounter every day.

1. "Westminster Larger Catechism" [online, cited 6 August 2014]. Available from the Internet: www.reformed.org/documents.



The Bible tells us that God originally designed a world that worked perfectly, where everything and everyone fit together in harmony. God made each of us with a purpose: to worship Him and walk with Him.

GOD'S DESIGN

God's perfect design echoes in His creation. The world God created is so intricate and so detailed that His perfect design is obvious. The best argument for God's design is the presence of life and the beauty of creation.

A few key threads run through this week's personal study on God's design:

1. God's plan is truly good.
2. God Himself is holy and good.
3. Although sin marred God's creation, it couldn't thwart His plans. He will prevail. When God wins, we win too. Part of the perfection of God's plan is the forgiveness of human sins and the access forgiven people have to a restored relationship with our Creator.

Human sin marred God's perfect design for creation. Life on mission can't be lived without an understanding of both God's undeniable goodness and of humanity's overwhelming brokenness. Jesus' sacrifice wasn't a desperate plan B to fix what went wrong in creation. It was God's perfect plan to declare His perfect goodness against all odds.

As people saved by God's grace, we long for the completion of God's perfect plan and the unfolding of His original design of perfect relationship with His creation. Longing for the restoration of God's original design means being part of His redemptive plan. It means pointing others to it as well.

DAY 1

IT WAS GOOD

Genesis 1 shows us the way God's creation was originally intended to function.

Read Genesis 1:27-31. What part of creation most clearly speaks to you about God's perfect design?

People were created in the image of God. Therefore, His handiwork could be seen most vividly through the humans who bore his likeness. The earth was theirs to own and rule. All vegetation was theirs for substance and provision. Everything worked, and everything worked together. God took a careful survey of it all and declared it good (see v. 31).

There's no way to deny that God's creation is good. In spite of sin, people are still made in the image of a loving Creator. Long after sin entered the world, David wrote that the skies and heavens reveal God's glory and pronounce His fame:

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky proclaims the work of His hands.

PSALM 19:1

Even in a world corrupted by sin, God makes Himself and His ways known.

Describe what perfect communion with God would be like.

In what ways is creation out of sync with God's original design?

Read Psalm 33:11.

The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
the plans of His heart from generation to generation.

PSALM 33:11

What does this verse indicate about God's design?

What does Psalm 33:11 mean for a follower of Jesus?

God's design not only speaks to believers but can also benefit unbelievers. Creation points to the goodness of God and to His reality as the Creator of life. God's good creation points unbelievers to His love and power.

Creation, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can also lead an unbeliever to conviction. God's Word and God's people serve as lights to an unbelieving world when they live a life that gives evidence of His plan.

When an unbeliever denies God because of the current brokenness of the world, you can redirect the conversation toward God's good design and toward His ultimate goal to restore creation. That's a necessary step in faith sharing. Without an understanding of brokenness, people don't comprehend sin. Without an understanding of God's design, people can't imagine salvation.

When you encounter brokenness in the world this week, look for ways to expose the beauty of God's design.

DAY 2

HIGHLIGHTING GOD'S CHARACTER

Part of recognizing and celebrating God's good design is acknowledging the greatness, majesty, and wisdom of God Himself. He has told us:

"My thoughts are not your thoughts,
and your ways are not My ways."
This is the LORD's declaration.
"For as heaven is higher than earth,
so My ways are higher than your ways,
and My thoughts than your thoughts.
For just as rain and snow fall from heaven
and do not return there
without saturating the earth
and making it germinate and sprout,
and providing seed to sow
and food to eat,
so My word that comes from My mouth
will not return to Me empty,
but it will accomplish what I please
and will prosper in what I send it to do."

ISAIAH 55:8-11

God's attributes are endless. He's completely supreme yet personal and intimate. He's wholly beyond us and impossible for us to completely comprehend, yet He reveals Himself to us and makes Himself knowable. He's never early or late but always exactly on time. He's complete love yet justifiable in His holy wrath.

List as many of God's attributes as you can name.

Which of these attributes do you need most right now?

Describe a time when you learned to trust God more because of one of His particular character traits.

As you prepare to invest your life in unbelievers, focus on attributes of God that you can share. The following activities will help you expand your personal testimony and develop conversation points.

Read 1 John 4:7-10. Describe a time when God personally revealed His love to you.

Read James 1:17. Provide an example of God's ongoing generosity in your life.

Review Isaiah 55:8-11. Describe a time when God's plans were better than your plans.

How can sharing one or more of these experiences help you influence someone for Christ?

When you consider God's character, you discover a treasure trove of opportunities to share stories of His faithfulness in your life. You can communicate to unbelievers how He has shown you love or care, how He has illustrated His sovereignty and demonstrated His power, and how He has proved His plans and provided daily resources. These are all testimonies you can tell and opportunities you can seize to show someone the nature of God and His good design for relating to all who open their hearts to Him.

Review the list you composed of God's attributes. Begin to consider the personal ways He has offered you those parts of His character. Develop an inventory of stories you can share to point others to God's goodness in your life.

DAY 3

WHAT HAPPENED?

What happened to God's perfect world? As the account of Adam and Eve shows, life doesn't work when we ignore God and His original design for our lives. We selfishly insist on doing things our own way. The Bible calls this sin. We all sin and distort the original design:

They exchanged the truth of God for a lie,
and worshiped and served something created
instead of the Creator, who is praised forever.

ROMANS 1:25

Human beings represent a vibrant array of human differences, all highlighting God's overwhelming creativity in the world. Yet we have one dark commonality: sin. Sin is universal when it comes to describing humankind:

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

ROMANS 3:23

Simply put, sin is going our own way. It includes words, thoughts, actions, and attitudes that separate us from Holy God. It's the natural tendency of people to sin because our very nature is sinful. The consequence of our sin is separation from God—in this life and for all eternity.

Sin is also the most necessary component of a theological understanding of grace and salvation. Without comprehending sin, people can't recognize a need for grace. Without admitting sin, there's no opportunity for salvation. Sin keeps us from God; it's the reason we need Jesus:

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God
is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 6:23

Read 1 John 1:8,10. How did you first realize that you were a sinner?

Why is recognizing sin such an important component of grasping the goodness of God's salvation?

Identify people in your life who refuse to believe in human sinfulness.

What do you perceive as the barriers between these people and an accurate picture of their sin?

Having a conversation about sin without pointing fingers is a challenge. Avoiding that conversation for fear of alienating or offending someone is understandable, but it isn't the most compassionate course. If the effort to keep peace limits the acceptance of an essential spiritual truth, we're faced with a risk worth taking. The apostle Paul admonishes us to speak "the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). When we attempt to do that in the context of a relationship we've invested ourselves in, we earn the right to be heard and lessen the potential of alienating the person.

If we genuinely care about someone's eternal destiny, we can't bypass the danger of sin. It's because of sin's dark curse that we can truly revel in God's great gift. It's a tough topic but one that must be addressed. The goal isn't to condemn but to reveal God's plan for our redemption. Recognizing sin emphasizes the good news of a God who has made a way for us to experience the joy of His salvation.

Ask God to equip you with a Spirit-filled gentleness when talking about sin so that the people in your life who need salvation will be drawn closer to Jesus.

DAY 4

RELATIONSHIP

When Jesus went to Zacchaeus's home, it was scandalous (see Luke 19:1-10). To share a meal in someone's home indicated intimacy. It illustrated relationship. Everyone knew a tax collector had no business being seen with the Savior.

What they didn't understand was the hope available to sinners. Jesus may have been too good for Zacchaeus, but Zacchaeus wasn't too bad for Jesus. Zacchaeus could have never worked his way into God's favor. But his sin didn't mean he was in no position to receive it. That's why we call grace God's unmerited favor.

Did you ever consider your lostness beyond God's grasp or Christ's love? Why or why not?

How have you personally experienced hospitality and communion with Christ?

Identify types of people who parallel the tax collector in this account.

How can you emulate the actions of Christ when relating to the tax collectors of the world?

What will your willingness to be hospitable toward fellow sinners communicate to them about a restored relationship with God through Jesus?

As the apostle Paul wrote, our ability to enter a relationship with God through the gospel has nothing to do with our works and everything to do with God's grace. God gives grace so that we can be in a relationship with Him. It's part of His divine design-restoration plan:

Don't be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord,
or of me His prisoner. Instead, share in suffering
for the gospel, relying on the power of God.
He has saved us and called us
with a holy calling,
not according to our works,
but according to His own purpose and grace,
which was given to us in Christ Jesus
before time began.

2 TIMOTHY 1:8-9

How is the willingness to suffer for the sake of the gospel (see v. 8) evidence of a relationship with Christ?

Describe a time when you suffered for the sake of communicating the gospel. Did you feel closer to Christ in that moment or farther away?

How can your willingness to share in Christ's suffering clear up any confusion about what it means to follow Him?

Rather than seeing God's power as a "Get out of suffering free" card, we should perceive it as a "Get through suffering" guarantee card. Although getting through suffering doesn't come without pain and consequences, it yields a testimony of either God's rescue or God's sustaining. Ultimately, walking through pain and rejection helps us identify with Jesus' passionate sacrifice. You're among those whom Christ came to seek and save. And He suffered immensely for it.

Seize moments to speak of your relationship with God in your interactions with others. Show them firsthand how God reached out to you and how a relationship with Him has affected your life.

DAY 5

GOD'S DESIGN RESTORED

No one knows exactly what heaven and the afterlife will really be like, but Scripture offers us several certainties:

1. Believers will be with Christ.
2. Not everyone will enter.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:

Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it. Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord!" will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven.

MATTHEW 7:13-14,21

When it comes to eternity, it's easy to confess among a group of like-minded Christians your understanding of who will spend eternity with God. After all, like you, they believe in Jesus. The only requirement is belief. God designed an eternity package full of rich covenant blessings, and the part of the equation you bring to the table is belief. Try having that conversation with someone who doesn't believe, and you're suddenly labeled an intolerant subhuman. Instinctively, you might be tempted to back down from your convictions about what God's Word really says.

How can we make sure we're true believers? Paul gave us this clue:

If you have been raised with the Messiah, seek what is above, where the Messiah is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on what is above, not on what is on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with the Messiah in God. When the Messiah, who is your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4

Paul could have written that the Messiah is your Savior. Instead, he said the Messiah is your life. That's because the kind of belief Scripture requires is total, life-changing belief. According to James 2:19, even demons believe. The problem is that their belief doesn't lead them to submit to the authority of God and trust Him only. It's not a life-changing belief. In Matthew 7 Jesus said the gate is narrow. Not everyone who professes to believe in Him will experience His perfect eternity. Why? Theirs isn't a life-changing belief.

How would you describe life-changing belief as opposed to simple acknowledgment of who Jesus is?

What indicator does Jesus give at the end of Matthew 7:21 to show us what life-changing belief looks like?

In John 14:1-4 Jesus told His disciples that He would ascend into heaven, where He's now busy preparing a place for us and all believers. In other words, Jesus is restoring God's design. Ultimately, Jesus will bring about the perfect, permanent communal relationship between God and His children.

How does knowing your ultimate destiny motivate your life-on-mission efforts?

Think about heaven this week. Let God's promise to restore His relational design between Himself and His creation motivate you to reach out to others who need to know Him. Be willing to enter conversations in which you might be required to stand by the conviction that only believers will experience that restored eternity. Also make certain your relationship with Christ aligns with what Scripture teaches about life-changing belief. Simple acknowledgment of Jesus isn't enough.

SESSION 2

START

Start the group session by having everyone respond to one of the following questions.

What's the greatest experience of your life?

OR

What's the most beautiful place you've ever been?

After everyone has had a chance to respond, follow up by asking this question.

What made that experience or place so amazing?

Transition to the video with the following thought.

We all have moments when things feel right and good. Something inside us recognizes that there's more to life than our ordinary experience. In today's session we'll discuss God's original design and intention for our lives.

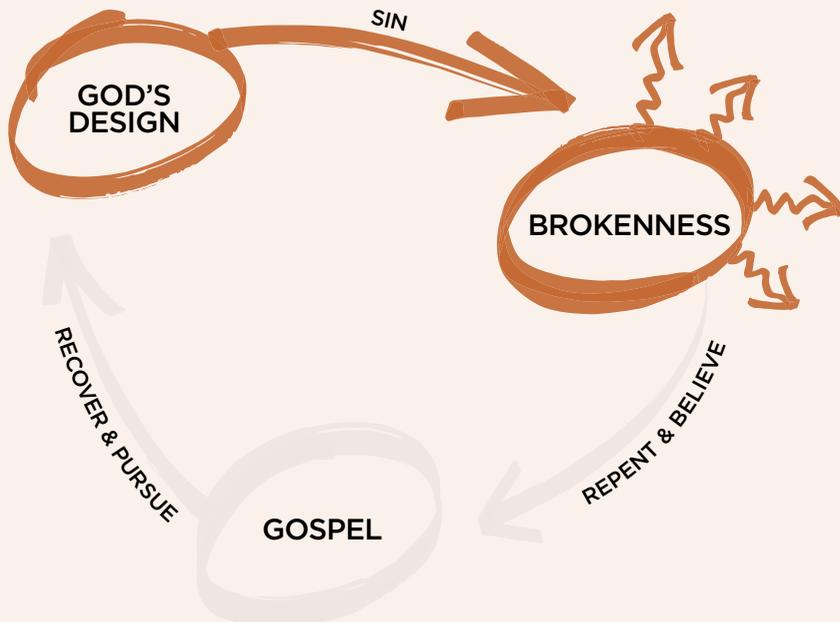
GOD'S DESIGN

WATCH

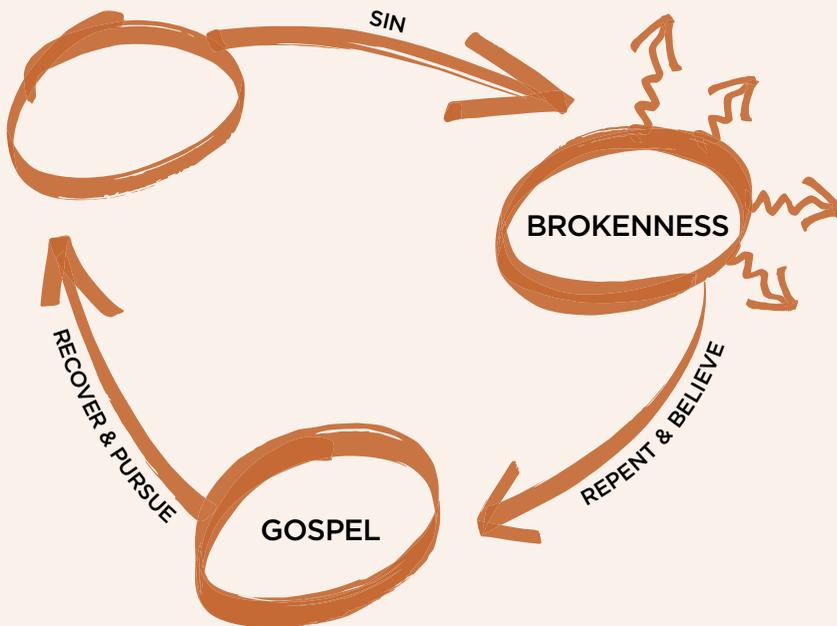
Follow the notes below as you watch this week's video featuring Ellis Prince.

- God's design is birthed out of relationship.
- Jesus died so we could be a family.
- God's design is selflessness. The world is selfish.
- You represent a family. The end result of the gospel is an expanded family.
- When you live your life on display, people are going to initiate the conversation with you. When they initiate it, they're ready to hear what you have to say.
- Ask God's Spirit who, when, and how to begin to talk to people.
- If you do not share a personal story of interaction with God, your evangelism is going to fall short.

Scripture references: Genesis 3:8; John 13:35; 1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 3:5-14; Galatians 5:19-23; Luke 15:4-6



RESPOND



Begin the response time by filling in the missing words above. (The diagram in each session will build on the previous one.) Ask a volunteer to share the answer.

Ask two people to read aloud Genesis 1:31 and Psalm 19:1. (See day 1.)

How would you describe God's design for all creation?

Ask three people to read aloud John 13:35; Colossians 3:12-14; Galatians 5:22-23.

What is God's design for us?

In the video Ellis said, "God's design is birthed out of relationship," and we "represent a family." What does that mean? (See days 4-5.)

How would you briefly explain the meaning of the first circle representing God's design?

GOD'S DESIGN

How would you introduce a discussion about God's design in a conversation? What could you point to in nature or in daily life to direct the conversation toward God and His design?

If God's design was perfect, what happened? Why isn't perfection our daily experience? (See day 3.)

Conversations often start with brokenness—hardship, pain, and suffering. In the next session we'll learn how to make the transition from relating to someone's experience of brokenness to sharing the hope of God's perfect design.

How would you contrast the beauty of God's design with the current brokenness of the fallen world?

In what ways do you see people longing for God's design but not necessarily recognizing that hunger?

Finally, in the video Ellis emphasized the need to share our experiences.

How did you come to understand God's design for your life?

How can the church—all God's people—experience more of God by fully embracing His design for life on mission? (See day 2.)

Wrap up the session with any final questions or observations before closing with prayer. Thank God for His glorious design. Ask God's Spirit who, when, and how to begin talking to people who need to know God's perfect plan for them.

Use the next page to record ideas, questions, or prayers.

Complete the personal study in "Brokenness" before the next group session.