

Commands of Christ

Short-Term Discipleship

Bay Leaf Baptist Church

Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Command 1:** Repent & Believe
- 3. Command 2:** Be Baptized
- 4. Command 3:** Pray
- 5. Command 4:** Love
- 6. Command 5:** Worship Through Perseverance
- 7. Command 6:** Give
- 8. Command 7:** Lord's Supper
- 9. Command 8:** Go & Make Disciples
- 10. Command 9:** Gather
- 11. Gospel Conversation Training**

Introduction

Every day that we walk with Jesus we learn more and more about what it means to truly follow after Him. The primary calling that we have received as Christians is to make much of Jesus in our thoughts, words, and actions. When we live in such a way, we will have countless opportunities to declare to others the hope of the gospel. We know the Lord is the One who saves. So, the question is: What happens when someone says “yes” to following Jesus? Should we bring them to church with us? Should we ask the pastor or our teacher to mentor them? These aren’t bad answers, but they aren’t the best answer. When you were saved, you were given the gift of the Holy Spirit. You are called to be a disciple-maker. The best thing to do with a new believer is to teach them how to obey Jesus’ commands. By teaching a brand-new believer these Commands of Christ, you will be helping them begin their journey of walking with Jesus on a daily basis. As you work through each of these commands, you will use a method called SWORD to dissect the passage. By utilizing these three primary questions, you can implement a reproducible way to read, study, and apply the Scriptures into the life of a brand-new believer. The goal of this study is to equip you with the tools you will need to disciple a brand-new believer or baby believer in a short-term way.

SWORD BIBLE STUDY METHOD

THREE SIMPLE QUESTIONS
TO ASK AFTER READING
SCRIPTURE TO HELP YOU
STUDY THE BIBLE AND
APPLY IT TO YOUR LIFE.

■ HEBREWS 4:12

For the word of God is alive and active.
Sharper than any double edged sword,
it penetrates even to dividing soul and
spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the
thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

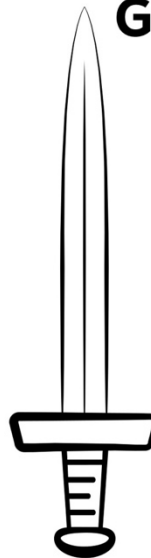
1. WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT

GOD?

3. WHAT DO WE NEED TO

OBEY?

SINS TO AVOID?
PROMISES TO CLAIM?
EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW?
COMMANDS TO OBEY?



2. WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT

PEOPLE?

Command 1: Repent & Believe

Command: Mark 1:15

Key Text: Luke 7:36-50

Look Back: Share with someone how Jesus has changed your life.

Question: In your own words, what does repent mean? What does believe mean?

Jesus proclaimed the message of “repent and believe” in every town he traveled to. This is the same message that his disciples would proclaim after Jesus’ death and resurrection. Jesus commands that if anyone would follow after him, they must repent and believe. Repentance isn’t simply putting a stop to “bad” choices or lifestyles. Repentance is a turning away from sin towards someone better: Jesus. Belief is an act of faith. To believe in Jesus is to place your entire trust in Him. He alone can save you from sin and death.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- **Why should we repent and believe?**
 - Romans 3:23 – *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
 - Romans 6:23 – *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - Romans 10:9 – *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.*
- Everyone is called to repent and believe, not just the really bad people. When you do repent of your sins and believe in Jesus as your Savior, you can be assured that your salvation is secure. Jesus promises in John 10:28, *“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.”*

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Is repenting and believing in Jesus a one-time thing or something that we continue to do throughout the Christian life? Why?
2. In what ways do we act like the Pharisee when it comes to examining our own sin? How can a small view of sin impact our view of God?

Application For This Week

- Repent and believe in Jesus if you have never done so before.
- Repent of sin that you are living in right now.
- Ask God to help you keep on repenting and believing in Him on a daily basis.
- Proclaim this good news to someone else this week.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 2: Be Baptized

Command: Matthew 28:19

Key Text: Acts 8:26-39

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command to repent and believe?

Question: If you've been baptized by immersion after conversion, recall your baptism story. Why did you make the decision to be baptized? What made it a significant moment for you in your spiritual journey. If you've never been baptized, what questions do you have?

After a person repents and believes, the next command that we see in Scripture is to be baptized by immersion. The Bible explains the what, the why, the who, and the how of baptism.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- **WHAT is baptism?** – Romans 6:3-4
 - Baptism is an act of faith and a testimony to the gospel fact that we have died to our old life and have been raised to a new life in Jesus.
 - Baptism is not an act that saves you from sin. Baptism is a response to being saved from sin.
- **WHY should we be baptized?** – Matthew 3:13-15
 - Jesus received baptism, and so should we. Receiving baptism by immersion means we have identified with Jesus who is both Lord and Savior.
- **WHO should be baptized?** – Acts 2:37-38
 - Everyone who repents and believes should be baptized. Baptism comes after your salvation, not before.
- **HOW should we be baptized?** – Matthew 3:16a
 - By immersion. The act of going under the water represents being buried with Christ and coming out of the water represents the resurrected life we have in Christ.

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Where do you see the WHAT, WHY, WHO, And HOW of baptism in this story?
2. How does this passage summarize and illustrate the command found in Matthew 28:19?
3. How is the practice of baptism a source of celebration and edification in the life of a local church?

Application For This Week

- Be baptized by immersion following your conversion.
- Think of someone who would say that they are too far from the reach of God's grace and salvation. Share this story of hope with them.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 3: Pray

Command: Matthew 6:9-13

Key Text: Luke 11:5-12

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command to be baptized?

Question: Who in your life has modeled to you regular rhythms of faithful and consistent prayer? Why can praying consistently be a struggle for you?

Early in the Christian life, we are taught to pray and converse with God. This is something we know should be a part of our regular rhythms in life, but we often struggle to pray with consistency. After watching Jesus pray, the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. This is the simple first step of obedience in developing a life of prayer.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- Jesus teaches us how to model our prayers thorough the Lord's Prayer:
 - Acknowledge God as Father
 - Ask God to glorify Himself through your life
 - Surrender to God's kingdom and his will being done in and through your life
 - Ask for your needs
 - Ask for forgiveness of sin
 - Pray for deliverance when you face temptation

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. According to the main passage, what is the purpose of prayer? Do you more often pray in order to receive something from God or in order to know God more fully?
2. Which part of the Lord's prayer is easy to overlook? How can this outline of praying help you develop a consistent pattern of prayer?

Application For This Week

- Begin to pray. Use the Lord's prayer as a guide.
- Ask someone how you can pray for them. Pray for them in that moment.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 4: Love

Command: Matthew 22:37-39

Key Text: Luke 10:25-37

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command of praying?

Question: Who is someone that has modeled to you a life of loving God and loving others? What stood out to you about the way they lived their lives?

Jesus says that the greatest commandments for the Christian are both centered around love. We are to love God and love others. These actions are visible evidences of a transformed life.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- Love is sacrificial. Jesus teaches in John 15:13 that “love is to lay down his life for his friends.”
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 – Love is patient, kind, content, humble, generous, forgiving, rejoices in the truth, supportive, and faithful.

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. What are things in this world that can steal your affection and love away from Jesus?
2. Jesus says that if you love Him you will obey His commands. Why does Jesus tie together love and obedience? Why can loving others be difficult?

Application For This Week

- How can you grow in your love for the Lord this week? Consider your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- How can you practically love your neighbor this week?
- Is there someone you need to reconcile with that you have failed to love? Go and ask for forgiveness and reconcile with that person.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 5: Worship Through Perseverance

Command: Matthew 4:10

Key Text: Acts 16:25-34

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command to love God and love others?

Question: Why is God deserving of our worship? What are other things that we give our worship to that aren't deserving?

Believers are called to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. We fulfill these two callings through worship. We worship congregationally when the people of God gather on a weekly basis and individually throughout the week. Even in the hardest moment of life, we are called to choose joyful worship rather than choosing complaint.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- Consider Nehemiah 8. The people worship corporately, in small groups, and in the home. Worship doesn't just take place on Sunday mornings inside of a church building. Worship is a lifestyle of every moment decisions to glorify God with our words, actions, and thoughts.

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Why is it hard to worship in difficult times? When we choose to worship in these moments, how does this encourage others in their pursuit of Jesus?
2. Paul and Silas worship God through prayer and singing. What other ways can we worship God together as God's people?
3. What are some ways you can begin to build rhythms of everyday worship in your individual and family life?

Application For This Week

- Begin worshiping God on a daily basis through the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible reading, and Scripture memory.
- Begin leading your family in worship at home through Scripture reading, prayer, and singing.
- Commit to make corporate worship each Sunday a priority for you and your family.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 6: Give

Command: Matthew 6:1-4

Key Text: Mark 12:41-44

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command of worshiping through perseverance?

Question: Who is someone in your life who has modeled generosity in a faithful way? How have you practiced giving in your own life?

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it belongs to Him. Our time, talents, and treasures have been entrusted to us by God to use for His glory and to advance His kingdom. We are commanded not to store up treasures on earth, but to store up eternal treasures in heaven. Followers of Jesus are to be generous givers.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- 2 Corinthians 8:9 – *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.*
- Jesus had every privilege in heaven, but chose to lay those things aside to come and dwell among us. He then laid his life down so that we could receive the gift of abundant and eternal life. His example of generosity lays the groundwork for our generosity. Jesus held nothing back from us; therefore, we are to hold nothing back from him.

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. The poor widow understood all that she had belonged to God. Why can it be difficult for us to come to this same conclusion?
2. Consider your time, talents (spiritual gifts), and treasures. How could you use each of these to advance God's kingdom?
3. How does Jesus embody generosity? In what ways has Christ made us spiritually rich?

Application For This Week

- How can you begin giving generously of your time, talents, and treasures?
- Are you saving or spending in a way that is preventing you from giving generously? What needs to change so that you can give freely and generously?
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 7: Lord's Supper

Command: Matthew 26:26-28

Key Text: Luke 22:7-20

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command of giving?

Question: Do you remember the first time you took the Lord's Supper? What was your experience like and how was it explained to you? How would you explain the Supper to someone who has never seen it take place or haven't taken it themselves?

The Lord's Supper is one of the two ordinances we practice in the Baptist church. Jesus shared the first Lord's Supper at his final meal with the disciples. As believers, we are commanded to regularly gather around the table to remember Christ's death and look forward to his second coming.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- Jesus is the Perfect, spotless Passover Lamb. Each of us are in need of a sacrificial lamb who will cover and pay the debt for our sins. Jesus is preparing his followers for his impending death by providing for them a tangible way to consistently remember his sacrifice.
- While we take the Lord's Supper there are 5 viewpoints we should consider:
 - **Look Back in Remembrance** – the Supper helps us to remember Christ's sacrificial death. Through his death we can be forgiven of sin.
 - **Look Around in Fellowship** – the Supper should be taken as a family of believers. This means it should be an encouraging, edifying, and uniting time.
 - **Look Ahead in Anticipation** – the Supper helps us to look forward to the return of Christ and consider the wedding feast that we will partake of in heaven.
 - **Look Within in Self-Examination** – Confession and reconciliation with our neighbors should proceed the taking of the Supper.
 - **Look Up in Expectation** – the Spirit is present in the taking of the Supper and blesses obedience.

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Which of the above viewpoints do you most overlook when taking the Supper? How can incorporating each of these viewpoints into the taking of the Supper enhance the depth and meaningfulness of this ordinance?
2. How do we proclaim the good news of Jesus' death through the taking of the Supper? How should that increase the significance of the Supper and our expectation for participating in it?

Application For This Week

- Prepare yourself through confession of sin and reconciliation to your neighbor before you take the Supper.
- Partake in the Supper joyfully and expectantly.
- Share why Jesus' death is good news with someone this week.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 8: Go & Make Disciples

Command: Matthew 28:18-20

Key Text: Luke 5:27-32

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command of taking the Lord's Supper?

Question: In your own words, how would you explain what a disciple is?

The final words of Jesus are a commission to go and make disciple of all nations. He reminds His followers of His authority, of their mission, and of His promised presence. The command is for every believer, not just specific individuals. In Christ, we are new creations and ambassadors sent out to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- A disciple is a *transformed follower* of Jesus who joins in his *mission* by means of the Spirit and the Word. These three aspects of discipleship are key in fulfilling the Great Commission.
 - **Transformation:** When Jesus calls his disciples, their hearts and lives are completely changed.
 - **Follower:** When Jesus calls his disciples, he invites them into a relationship that shapes them into his image. Following is to know Christ and become like him.
 - **Mission:** When Jesus calls his disciples, he intends to send them out.

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. What things have changed about you now that you are a new creation in Christ? How can you fulfill your calling as an ambassador for Jesus in your everyday life?
2. What are roadblocks in your life that keep you from fulfilling the call to be a disciple who makes disciples? How can you work through these roadblocks with the help of the Spirit and the Word?
3. Who are some people in your life who are far from God that you could begin introducing to Jesus?

Application For This Week

- Assess your own obedience of the Great Commission. Are you living out the calling God has given to you to make disciples of all nations?
- Who can you share Jesus with this week? Who could you begin meeting with to study the Commands of Christ?
- Talk with your family about how to obey this commandment together as a family.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Command 9: Gather

Command: Hebrews 10:24-25

Key Text: Acts 2:36-47

Look Back: How did you obey last week's command to go and make disciples?

Question: In your own words, how would you explain to a new believer: What is the church? Why is the church important?

Every believer is saved into a community. We were created to live in relationship with other people, not in isolation. Gathering with other believers on a regular basis is essential for growth in the Christian life and to fulfill the multiple “one-another” commands throughout the New Testament.

SWORD Questions

1. What do we learn about God in this passage?
2. What do we learn about people in this passage?
3. What do we need to obey?
 - What sins should we avoid?
 - What promises should we claim?
 - What examples should we follow?
 - What command should we obey?

Teaching Notes

- **What is the church?** – Acts 2:42, 1 Peter 2:5, 1 Timothy 3:1-13
 - The church is a fellowship of God's people, Christ's pure bride, and living stones. The church exists both locally and universally. The primary use of the word ekklesia (assembly) in Scripture points to a local gathering of believers.
- **Why is the church important?** – Matthew 16:18
 - The local church is the primary means God uses to reach people with the gospel.
- **Why do you need the church?** – Revelation 7:9-10
 - If you are a follower of Christ, you are a member of the universal church and you are also accountable to a local church. This is a protection for you and a gift. The local gathering of the church gives us a taste of what it will be like to live as people under the Lordship of Jesus Christ for eternity.

Additional Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. In this passage, what type of people make up the body of Christ, the church?
2. According to this passage, what is a healthy church committed to and how often are they doing these things?
3. What are the benefits of being a member of a local church?

Application For This Week

- Join a local church that is committed to Jesus and the faithful preaching and teaching of God's word.
- Commit to making corporate worship a priority.
- Embrace accountable relationships in your life.
- Invite someone to church with you this week.
- Begin teaching this command to another person.

Gospel Conversation Training

You've completed the Commands of Christ. You have been equipped with a tool to help a new believer or baby believer grow in their walk with Jesus. This question remains: have you started using this tool? It can seem overwhelming to share the gospel with millions of people around the world who have never heard of Jesus. This final session is geared towards helping you begin thinking about who you can share with, how to start the conversation, and how to share the gospel news.

Who should I share with?

In John 17:21, Jesus prays for all who would believe in Him through the faithful gospel proclamation of the 12 disciples. If you're reading this and you're a follower of Jesus, this means that God was praying for you. God has strategically placed you in specific places for kingdom advancement.

Begin compiling a list of people you know who are far from or places you often frequent where you could meet someone far from God.

Family Members

Neighbors

Co-Workers/Classmates

Frequently Visited Places (Where do you go every week?)

How to start the conversation?

Turning an everyday conversation into a gospel conversation can seem daunting and awkward, but something that is actually easier than it sounds. People love to talk about themselves and they either share about the good things in their life or the difficult things. The best way to start a gospel conversation is to ask good questions.

What are some questions you could ask someone to get them sharing about their life?

When you ask good questions and listen, it allows for a person to share openly and feel cared for. It also provides you an opportunity to understand what they believe, why they believe it, and how they formed that worldview.

Now you have an opportunity to share about your worldview and beliefs, but you want to do this in a natural and free-flowing way.

How to share the gospel?

Tool 1

The first tool that we will practice is a **15 Second Testimony**. A testimony is the story of my life before Christ, how Christ changed me, and what my life is like now. There will be times where we can share this story in a lengthy way, but more often than not we have a very short window to share. This tool helps us share our story in a succinct way.

First, consider your life before Christ. Think of two words or phrases that describe your life before Jesus saved you.

- 1.
- 2.

Second, think of two words or phrases that describe how Jesus got your attention/saved you.

- 1.
- 2.

Third, think of two words or phrases that describe your life now as a follower of Jesus.

- 1.
- 2.

You will now string together these words and phrases to share your story in 15 seconds. For example...

There was a time in my life when I was confused and unsatisfied with life. Then Jesus got my attention and I realized that God wanted my whole life, not just a part of it. I surrendered my life to Jesus and now I am satisfied and filled with purpose. Do you have a story like this?

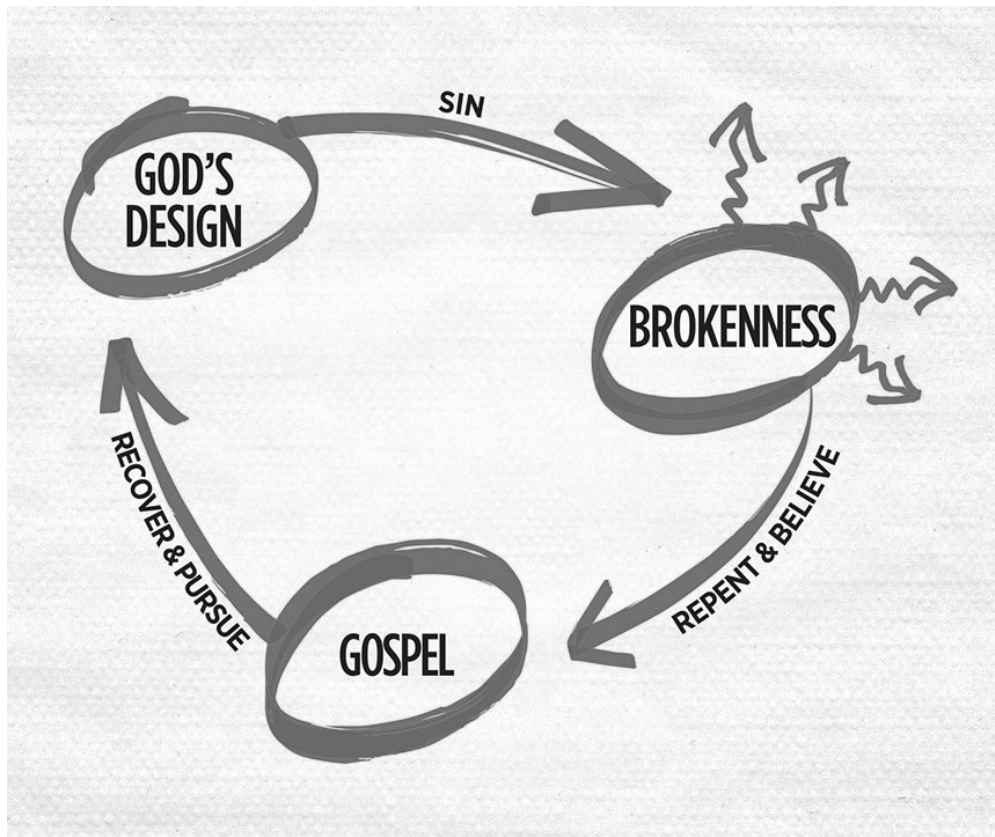
There was a time in my life...

Do you have a story like this?

Practice sharing your story with a partner.

Tool 2

The second tool is called **3 Circles**. This is a more detailed way to share the story of the Bible from creation to restoration.



Circle 1: God's Design

Share how God created the world as a perfect place and that the best part of his creation was people. He had perfect relationship with them.

Reference Verses: Genesis 1:1; 1:27

Arrow 1: Sin

The people God created chose to reject his commands and disobey. Their decision to sin severed the relationship that people had with God. The consequences of sin result in the world of brokenness we experience today. We deserve death for our sins because God is holy.

Reference Verses: Genesis 3:6; Romans 3:10; 3:23, 6:23

Circle 2: Brokenness

Our world today is full of brokenness. We experience suffering, pain, and affliction. This is a result of sin. Brokenness exists externally in the world around us and internally within us. Sin has distorted us and everything surrounding us. To escape brokenness, we seek after earthly things and relationships to satisfy, but they fall short due to their temporary nature and inability to meet our deepest need.

Reference Verses: Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 8:22

Circle 3: Gospel

God doesn't leave us in our brokenness, but instead has provided a way for every person to be saved. Jesus, the Son of God, fully God and fully man, came and dwelt among us. Jesus lived the perfect life that we couldn't live. He died the death we deserved because of our sin. He rose from the dead showing that He alone has power over sin and death.

Reference Verses: Ephesians 2:4-5

Arrow 2: Repent & Believe

The way for us to truly be set free from brokenness and sin is to repent and believe in Jesus as the only One who can truly save us and satisfy us. Repent means to turn away from sin and turn towards Jesus. Believe means to place your full trust in Jesus.

Reference Verses: Acts 2:37-38

Arrow 3: Recover & Pursue

Once you are saved by Jesus, you are called to recover and pursue God's design for the world. You have been made a new creation and an ambassador for Christ. You have been given the Holy Spirit to guide you and help you grow and you are sent out to tell others about Jesus. One day Jesus is returning to restore all things and those who are in right relationship with Him will spend eternity with Him in heaven and those who are not will spend eternity eternally separated from Him in hell.

Reference Verses: 2 Corinthians 5:10, 17-21; Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 21:3-4

Practice sharing the gospel with a partner.