

Chapter 3

God's Story

Expected Outcome: Every disciple maker will make disciples by regularly sharing God's story where they live, work, study, shop, and play.

In the previous chapter, we looked at how to tell **your story**. In this chapter, we will learn how to tell **God's story**. While there are many ways to tell God's story, it is important to help connect your story with God's story.



Group Discussion: What are some ideas of how you can transition from sharing your story into sharing God's story? Can you think of any phrases the group could use to connect your story with God's story?

Remember, the goal of sharing your story is to connect with someone in a way that they are open to hear you share God's story. After sharing your story with someone, it is a good idea to ask them about their story (or where they are on their spiritual journey). After they share their story with you, a great way to transition to God's story is to ask them, *"Would you be interested in hearing how you could have a friendship with Jesus, like me?"* or, *"Would you like to hear about how Jesus can transform your life?"*

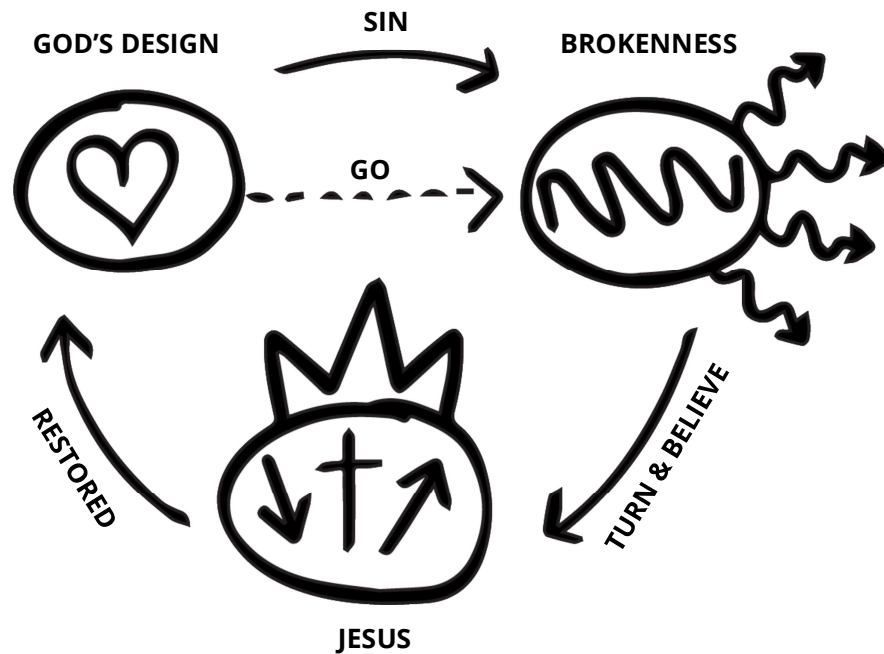
If they say yes, they are inviting you to share the Gospel!

In this chapter, we are going to equip you to effectively use a method called *3 Circles*. There are numerous variations to this approach, and you can adapt it as you see fit. The main goal is to actively and intentionally share God's story with others.



Key Principle: God loved the world so much that He sent His Son Jesus, so that those who believe in Him will receive eternal life (*John 3:16*).

Three Circles



Sharing God's story is about having a conversation that centers on the love of God and His love for others. (See usa.ttionline.org/resources/ for a demonstration of sharing God's story.) Think for a moment how often you have conversations where people share their problems or a challenge they are facing.

Using *3 Circles* can help you turn everyday conversations about the problems and challenges people are having into conversations about Jesus and the Gospel. It does not always happen this way, but God's story conversations often stem from listening to other people's stories first. **This is important because understanding and identifying where people are**

hurting or struggling is a great way to start the conversation.

There are many ways people will go about sharing their fears, anxieties, brokenness, or emptiness. As you listen, look for an opportunity to pray for them and ask them if you can show them a picture that changed your life. If they say yes, begin drawing *3 Circles*.

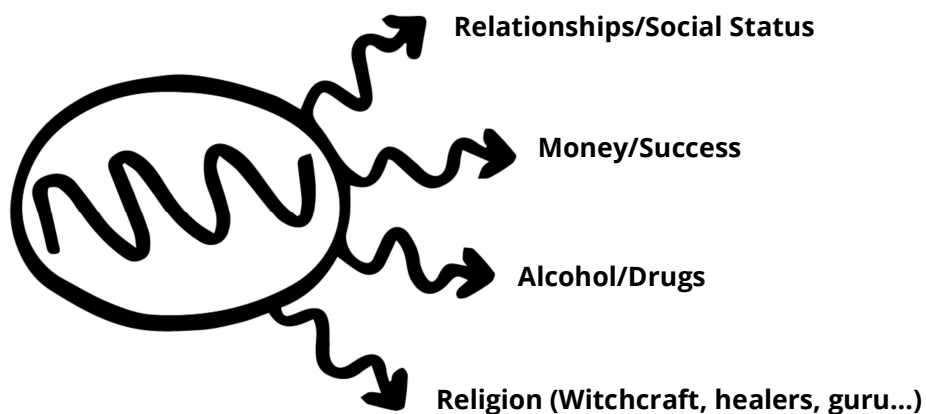


Group Discussion: Talk together about some of the ways people share their brokenness and challenges in everyday conversations. How can some of these issues be a springboard to share parts of your story or defining moments in your life?



Circle 1: Brokenness

Most people don't need to be convinced that the world is broken (*Romans 3:10*). Both personal and worldwide brokenness surrounds us. As you listen to the trials others are going through, it is important to try to identify what they have done to avoid, escape, or get relief from the problems they identified. Eventually, everything people do to avoid, escape, or find relief from their brokenness will lead back to an awareness of brokenness and emptiness (*Colossians 1:21*).



Keep in Mind: People often use relationships or substances to find healing for brokenness. They may pursue education, work, success, or money as a way to escape from life's problems. They may even try religion or modifying their behavior in an attempt to fix things.

The point here is to listen to their story and relate the circle that symbolizes brokenness to them (or you can share your story and how you tried to deal with your own brokenness).

Draw a picture based on the ways they have tried to deal with their own brokenness. This lets them know you are listening. The lines coming out of brokenness show the ways they have tried to deal with their problems in life visually. (The lines are like elastic cords; no matter how far away you try to get from brokenness, you will always end up back where you started. If they have not shared their story, you can share how you previously attempted to deal with your brokenness.)

Brokenness and emptiness are a result of sin, and any amount of sin separates us from God because He is holy. In order to have a relationship with God, we have to be perfect and without sin. **On our own, we fall short of meeting God's standard. This is why Jesus came to earth as a human: to set us free from our sins by taking the punishment we deserved.** Jesus wants us to be free and forgiven so he provided a way for humanity to be reconciled to God. Without Jesus, people have tried to deal with their brokenness and emptiness through their own efforts with no lasting success (*Romans 1:24-25*).

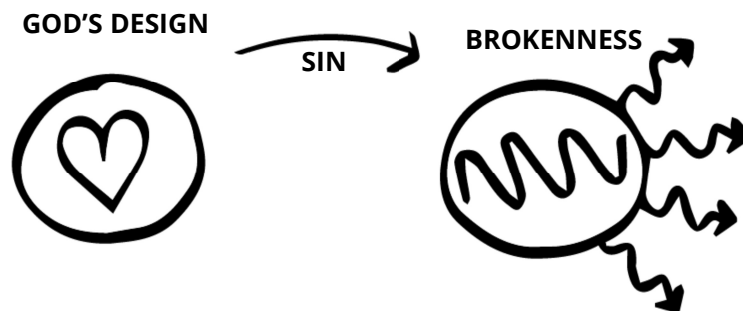


Circle 2: God's Perfect Design

The second circle to draw represents God's heart and perfect design. Brokenness was never God's heart or part of His perfect design. Ask them, *"Do you know what God's heart was?"* or *"Do you know what God's perfect design was?"* They may suggest it is changing our behaviors, going to church, trying to be good, or they may not have an answer.

God's heart for everyone is a relationship. When life was lived according to His design, it was perfect (*Genesis 1:26-27, 31*). There was no death, disease, worry, fear, or anxiety, but we were deceived into thinking that we could be like God or there was something better than God's design for us.

When we disobeyed God's commands, we abandoned God. It was at this moment that sin entered the world. Sin is anything that goes against God's perfect design. As a result of sin, we became broken and empty. (Draw a line from "God's Design" to "Brokenness" and label it "Sin.")



Bad News! This left us with no way to get back to a love relationship with God and His perfect design.

Good News! When we couldn't get back to God, God came to us.



Circle 3: Jesus

The third circle represents Jesus!



God sent His Son Jesus **down** (draw a down arrow) into our brokenness to die on a **cross** (draw a cross) for our sins (*John 3:16*). He lived a sinless life and offered His life as a sacrifice for ours. Jesus became broken, humbled Himself, and became the perfect sacrifice for our sins.



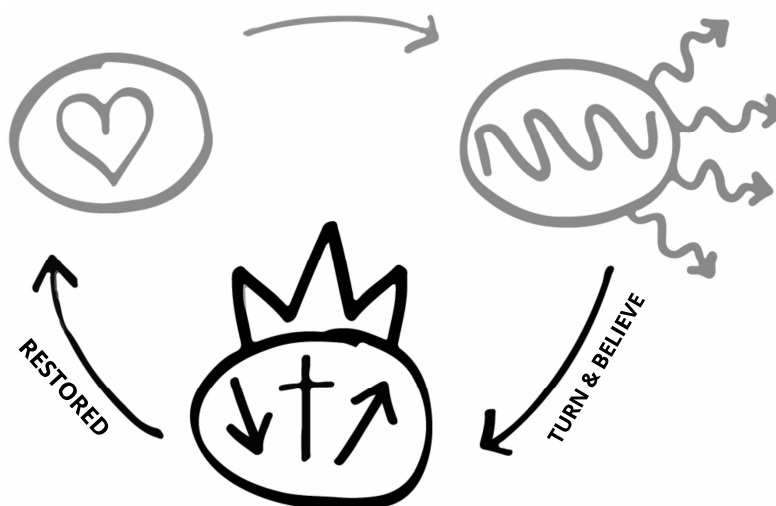
Three days later Jesus **rose** (draw an up arrow) from the dead so that we could be restored into a right relationship with God and back to His perfect design (*1 Corinthians 15:4*).

What is our response to Jesus?



Jesus tells us to do two things: **turn** (repent) from our sins and **believe** in Him as the Lord and Savior of our lives (*Romans 10:9-10*). When we turn and believe in Jesus, we submit to Him as King. (Draw a crown on the "Jesus" circle: He is the King!)

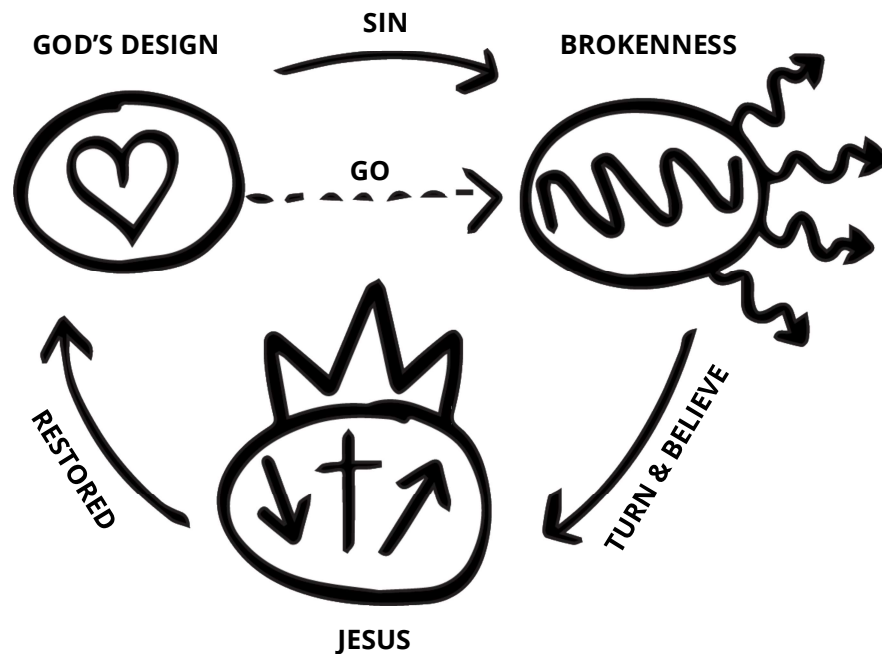
Jesus tells us to leave the sin, brokenness, and emptiness behind and promises to turn our brokenness into a new creation (*2 Corinthians 5:17*). Jesus forgives us of our sins and sets us free from our brokenness and separation from God. Sin no longer has power over our lives as we are given a new identity and receive the righteousness of God through Jesus (*2 Corinthians 5:21*). (Draw an arrow from "Brokenness" to "Jesus" and label it "Turn & Believe.")



Jesus **restored** us to a right relationship with God, so we have the opportunity to receive God's love and grow in our relationship with Him (*2 Corinthians 5:17-18*). (Draw an arrow from "Jesus" to "God's Design" and label it "Restored.")

With this in mind, Jesus tells us to GO back into a world that is broken and empty and share with others the love, hope, and healing found only in Him. By doing this, they too can turn from their sin and brokenness and enter into a love relationship with God (*Colossians 1:22-23*).

We now have the ability, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to live a life free from the bondage of sin. This is the hope we have in Jesus and the hope that others desperately need to experience for themselves. (Draw a dotted line from "God's Design" to "Brokenness" and label it "Go.")



No matter how broken our lives are, there is hope for everyone! **When you get to this point in sharing God's story, ask if there is anything that is stopping them from making Jesus the King of their life today.**

After you share your story or the Gospel in any form, you can ask, *"Would you like to make Jesus King of your life now?"* If they say yes, lead the person to the Lord immediately. You can use the simple prayer below as an example. Remember, there is nothing special about reciting the words below, it is through faith in Christ that we are saved (*Ephesians 2:8-9*).

Lord Jesus, I confess that I am a sinner. I am sorry for all the wrong things I have done in my life. I believe and place my faith in YOU, that YOU came to this world, lived a perfect life, died for my sins, and were raised to life again, and through YOU, there is forgiveness of sins.

Jesus, I accept You as my Lord and Savior now. Please come into my life. I am Yours! Thank You for accepting me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

After leading someone in this prayer, encourage them to go and share what has happened with their friends and family. It is important to remember that we are not only called to share the Gospel of forgiveness but of Kingdom-living (*Matthew 28:18-20*). Jesus is our King! We willingly give up everything we have to follow Him. This is a new way of living. Begin meeting regularly with those who make Jesus King of their life. Help them become a disciple who makes disciples.



Group Discussion: As you consider the 3 Circles presentation of the Gospel, discuss as a group the following four questions.

- Why do I need to be saved?
- Why did Jesus have to die?
- What do I need to do to be saved?
- What happens when I am saved?

Model & Practice: Sharing God's Story

Your trainer will now take time to model exactly how to share God's story, answering any questions you may have so you can confidently share as well.



Group Activity: Gather in groups of two or three and practice sharing/drawing God's story. Offer constructive feedback and make sure it is brief, clear, and easy to understand.

- Make the Gospel personal by identifying their brokenness and revealing how God speaks into their pain with the hope of His Good News.

- Remove any religious or spiritual terms that people may not understand.
- Adjust the story according to feedback until it is clear and easy to understand.

Model & Practice: Mastering Three Crucial Transitions

One of the most difficult parts of leading someone to Christ is making these three transitions:

1. Going from a regular conversation to a spiritual conversation.
2. Going from your story to God's story (Three Circles or the Bridge Illustration).
3. Going from understanding the Gospel to making Jesus the Lord of their life.

Your trainer will now take time to model how to master the three key transitions to sharing the Gospel. Write any methods, key words, or phrases under each of the following sections.

- **Starting a Spiritual Conversation**
- **Your Story to God's Story**
- **From Understanding to the Decision to Make Jesus Lord**

Now, divide into groups of two to three and practice making these transitions. Give everyone an opportunity to role-play the person sharing the Gospel and the pre-Christian hearing the message.