DISCOVER GOD - LEADER GUIDE

KEY DISCOVERIES FROM THE BIBLE

"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 all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:9-20

We pray that this tool will help you make disciples who make disciples!

DON'T HAVE A BIBLE?

- You can download the ESV Bible for free on most phones from the app store.

HOW TO USE THIS MATERIAL?

- This material is flexible.
- You can use it one-on-one or with a group study.
- You can use it online or in-person (in-person is better but not necessary).
- Finishing the first 4 lessons will cover the basics of the gospel.
- If you don't know a Christian to go through this study with, it can be used as a self-guided study.
- Follow the steps in the Study Overview. On step 4 you will use the Key Discoveries section.
- If time is short, it is better to divide the study into two sessions than to rush through.

SUGGESTIONS?

- We want to continue improving this material. If you have suggestions, please submit your feedback HERE.
- (You don't need to fill in every section of the form, only where you have a suggestion.)

SHARING?

- This material is free to share and reproduce in all formats.
- Download here: https://global.liveglobal.org/resource/discover-god

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TRANSLATIONS?

- If you translate this into another language, please send us a copy so we can share it with others.
- Please have 2 native speakers proofread the translation first.
- To simplify the process, you can copy and paste from this Google Docs into your own Google Docs file. This will transfer all the formatting.
- Once finished, simply click the share button and copy the link into an email to: andrew@liveglobal.org and copy taylor@liveglobal.org
- In the subject line type: Discover God - *name of translation language*

DISCOVER GOD 1

1. God Creates	2. Man Rebels	3. God Makes a Way Back	4. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)
God Creates All Things Genesis 1:1–25 **God Creates People** Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7-25	**People Disobey God** Genesis 3:1–13, Revelation 20:2 **God Responds to People's Disobedience** Genesis 3:14–24; 5:5 **God Gives 10 Commandments** Exodus 20:1-21 **All Have Turned Away From God** Romans 3:9-12, 23	**God Provides Sacrifices for Sin** Leviticus 1:1-15 **God Promises a Coming Messiah** Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-2, 6-7; 52:13 - 53:12 **Jesus is Born** Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20 **Lamb of God** John 1:29-34	**Jesus Dies on a Cross** Luke 23:32-49 **Jesus Rises from the Dead** Luke 23:50-24:12 **Becoming a Child of God** John 3:1–21

DISCOVER GOD 2

Move on to Discover God 2 after completing all lessons in Discover God 1

5. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)	6. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)	7. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)	8. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)
God Makes Promise to All Creation After Worldwide Flood Genesis 6:5-14; 9:1-19 **God Makes Promise to Abraham** Genesis 11:31-12:8; 15:1-6; 17:1-8 **The Offering of Isaac** Genesis 22:1-18	**Moses' Call to Leadership** Exodus 1:1-14; 3:1-17 **The Plagues and Passover** Exodus 12:1-13, 21-23 **The Bronze Serpent** Numbers 21:4-9	**Jesus Teaches about Hell** Luke 16:19-31 **Jesus Has Authority Over Death** John 11:1-45 **Jesus Claims to be One with God** John 5:16-18; 8:48-59; 10:22-33	**Jesus Dies and is Buried** John 19:28-42 **Jesus Meets Disciples After His Resurrection** Luke 24:13-35 **Becoming a Child of God** John 1:1-18; 3:14-18

STUDY OVERVIEW

1. Connect

How have you been doing?

What has God been teaching you or doing in your life since we last met?

2. Read The Passage

(Have everyone use the same translation.)

Pray briefly: Ask God to teach you from His Word.

Read the Bible passages out loud.
Do steps 2-4 for each passage, then do step 5 at the end.

Ask if there are any words that they do not understand. Define confusing words.

If time is limited, save some of the passages for the following lesson (don't skip step 5).

3. Understand God's Word

What does this passage teach us about…
...God?
...people?
…sin (disobeying God's command)?

Always identify where the truth is taught in the Bible to understand where the answer came from.

4. Key Discoveries

It is ok to repeat Key Discoveries already discussed in the previous step to highlight them.

When looking at Key Discoveries, read the verses again to understand where the answer came from.

God's Word is the authority, not this study tool.

5. Apply God's Word

- What truth is your main takeaway?
- What makes this important to you?
- How does this affect what you believe?

Pray:
1. For each other's needs
2. That God will help us understand and believe His Word.

When should we meet again?

Group Rules

1. Everyone shares in sentences, not paragraphs.
2. Focus only on what this passage is saying, not other passages.
3. Share the time. Allow others to give input.

Leader Rules

1. **Remember that asking questions is a form of teaching.** The questions teach people how to study and discover answers instead of just telling them the information. If they are struggling, point out in the passage where the answer is found. Teach them to fish, don't just give them a fish.
2. Keep the session on schedule and try to complete all 5 sections for each passage. If necessary, save a passage for a following session.
3. Prepare before by studying the passage and Key Discoveries to look for main ideas.
4. Respond to questions by asking, "What in the passage helps us answer that question?"
5. Every comment needs to be backed up by the Bible, which is our authority. Respond to opinion comments by asking, "Where is that found in this passage?"
6. Respond to "strange" answers by asking, "Help us understand what you are thinking."
7. If someone trusts in Jesus as their savior, let them co-lead the last 2 lessons with your help. This will give them practice leading someone else through this study.

DISCOVER GOD 1 - KEY DISCOVERIES

1. God Creates

God Creates All Things
Genesis 1:1–25

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ How many gods are there? (vs. 1)
  One.
- ❏ Who created God? (vs. 1, see Psalm 90:2)
  No one.

God Creates People
Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7-25

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ How long did God take to create the world? (vs. 31)
  6 days
- ❏ Were people created or did they evolve? (vs. 27)
  They were created as man & woman.
- ❏ How was mankind different from the other creatures? (vs. 27)
  They were made in God's own image.
- ❏ What role did God give man? (vs. 28)
  To rule over creation.
- ❏ How did God create Adam? (vs. 7)
  From the dust of the ground and breathed life into him.
- ❏ What did God tell Adam not to do? (vs. 17)
  Eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- ❏ What was the punishment for not obeying God? (vs. 17)
  Death

2. Man Rebels

People Disobey God
Genesis 3:1–13

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ Who was the serpent in Genesis 3?
  Satan (See also Revelation 20:2)
- ❏ What part of Satan's answer is a lie? (vs. 4)
  He lied by saying "you will not surely die".
- ❏ Did Adam & Eve obey or disobey God? (vs. 6)
  They disobeyed his command.
- ❏ What showed that they had been separated from God? (spiritual death) (vs. 7, 8, 11)
  They tried to cover their bodies and in their guilt hid from God.

God Responds to People's Disobedience
Genesis 3:14–24; 5:5

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What promise does God make about a future offspring (seed) of the woman? (vs. 15)
  He will bruise (crush) the head of the serpent (Satan).
- ❏ How would the offspring of the woman be injured? (vs. 15)
  His heel would be bruised.
- ❏ What is different about these two injuries?
  Crushing the head defeats the serpent. Bruising the heel injures the offspring, but he can recover.
- ❏ What was different about how Adam & Eve covered themselves and how God covered them? (vs. 7, 21)
  Fig leaves (man) animal skins (God).
- ❏ What had to happen for God to make coverings from an animal skin? (vs. 21)
  The death of an animal, the shedding of its blood.
- ❏ God had said "in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die". Why did Adam and Eve not die on that day?
  They died spiritually (they were separated from God). Their bodies began to die.
- ❏ Why did God send man out of the garden of Eden? (vs. 22)
  So that he could not eat the tree of life and live forever.
- ❏ What other penalty did Adam have? (vs. 5:5)
  Physical death in the future.

God Gives 10 Commandments
Exodus 20:1-21

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What do these 10 laws teach us about God?
  God is holy and just.
- ❏ What is sin? (vs. 20)
  Disobeying God's law.
- ❏ How many laws would a person need to disobey to be guilty of sin?
  One. Adam and Eve disobeyed one law.

All Have Turned Away From God
Romans 3:9-12, 23

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ Does anyone perfectly obey God's law? (vs. 23)
  No. All are guilty of sin by disobeying God's law.

3. God Makes a Way Back

God Provides Sacrifices for Sin
Leviticus 1:1-15

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What kind of animals could be sacrificed? (vs. 3, 10, 14)
  Bulls, goats, lambs or birds.
- ❏ If the offering was a bull, goat or lamb, what should it be? (vs. 3, 10)
  A male without blemish.
- ❏ What did laying their hands on the animal mean? (vs. 4)
  They were placing their sin on it. The animal died in their place to make atonement for them. God accepted the sacrifice in their place so they did not have to die for their sin.
- ❏ What do sacrifices teach us about the punishment for sin? (vs. 5, 11, 15)
  The punishment for sin is death.

God Promises a Coming Messiah
Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-2, 6-7; 52:13 - 53:12

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What is similar about the promises in Isaiah 7:14 and Genesis 3:15?

1. *The descendant would be male. ("He" - Genesis) ("bear a son" - Isaiah)*
2. *The descendant came from the woman, not man. (There is no mention of a father: "her offspring" - Genesis) ("the virgin shall conceive" - Isaiah)*

- ❏ Where would the Messiah come from? (vs. 9:1)
  The area of Galilee
- ❏ What would this Messiah child be called? (vs. 9:6)
  Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace
- ❏ Whose throne would the Messiah rule from? (vs. 9:7)
  King David's
- ❏ Whose sins would this Messiah carry? His or ours? (vs. 53:4-6, 12)
  He would be killed for our sins, not his own.
- ❏ What kind of animal is the Messiah compared to? (vs. 53:7)
  A lamb.
- ❏ *What is the result of the Messiah's death? (vs. 53:10, 11)*

1. *He paid the penalty of death.*
2. *He would make many to be counted as righteous.*

Jesus is Born
Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ Would the child have a human father? (vs. 1:34-35)
  No. He would be born of a virgin.
- ❏ What area was Mary from? (vs. 1:26)
  Galilee.
- ❏ Through Mary, who would this child be a descendant of? (vs. 1:32)
  King David.
- ❏ How was Jesus described by the angel? (vs. 2:11)
  "A savior, who is Christ the Lord"

Lamb of God
John 1:29-34

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What does John the Baptist call Jesus? (vs. 29)

"The Lamb of God"

- ❏ What would the Lamb of God do? (vs. 29)
  "Take away the sin of the world"
- ❏ Who is Jesus' father? (vs. 34)
  God. ("this is the Son of God")

4. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)

Jesus Dies on a Cross
Luke 23:32-49

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What do we learn about the second thief?

1. *He feared God (vs. 40)*
2. *He confessed he was a sinner (vs. 41)*
3. *He confessed that his punishment was just (vs. 41)*
4. *He believed that Jesus was innocent and without sin (vs. 41)*
5. *He believed that there was life after physical death (vs. 42)*
6. *He believed that Jesus had the power to bring him into the kingdom (vs. 42)*
7. *He was not trusting in his good works to save him. He had no time to do any. (vs. 42)*
8. *He was trusting only in Jesus to save him.*

- ❏ What does Jesus promise? (vs. 43)
  "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise"
- ❏ What did the Roman centurion say after Jesus died? (vs. 47)
  "Certainly this man was innocent!"

Jesus Rises from the Dead
Luke 23:50-24:12

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What showed that Jesus was not in the tomb?

1. *The stone that covered the entrance to the tomb was rolled away. (vs. 24:2)*
2. *The women entered the tomb but did not find the body of Jesus. (vs. 24:3)*
3. *Two angels told the women "he is not here, but has risen". (vs. 24:6)*
4. *The angels reminded the women that Jesus told them he would die but would rise again on the third day. (vs. 24:6-7)*
5. *Peter looked in the tomb but only found the burial cloths Jesus had been wrapped in. (vs. 24:12)*

Becoming a Child of God
John 3:1–21

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ How can someone enter the kingdom of God? (vs. 3)
  By being born again.
- ❏ Is being born again a physical birth or a spiritual birth? (vs. 5)
  Spiritual. ("water and the Spirit")
- ❏ Why did God give his Son? (vs. 16)
  Love for the world.
- ❏ How does someone escape punishment and receive eternal life? (vs. 16)
  Believe in Jesus.
- ❏ What did God send his Son to do? (vs. 17)
  To save the world.
- ❏ What happens to those who believe in the Son? (vs. 18)
  They are not condemned.
- ❏ What happens to those who do not believe in the Son? (vs. 18)
  They are already condemned.
- ❏ Is belief a work that we do? (vs. 15)
  No. Like the thief on the cross, belief is trusting in the power of Jesus to save us, not our own power or good works.
- ❏ Are you one who "believes" or one who "does not believe"?
- ❏ If your answer was one who does not believe, is that where you want to be?
  If no, I would encourage you with the following:

  If God is leading you to believe:

  - Talk to God today. (Pray)
  - Confess your sins to Him.
  - Trust (believe) in the death of Jesus to pay for your sins, (not any of your good works).
  - See Jesus' promise: John 11:25-26

- Remember that the act of praying a prayer does not save us. It is by faith in the power of Jesus to save us. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."* Ephesians 2:8-9
- Get connected to a local church that teaches the Bible

If you are still not sure:

- Keep praying. Ask God to help you understand.
- Find a Christian that can help explain more of the Bible to you.
- Continue reading the Bible and go through "Discover God 2".
- Watch this 3-minute video (or read "THE BRIDGE" on page 11): https://farran.abwe.org/hope.html

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DISCOVER GOD 2 - KEY DISCOVERIES

5. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)

God Makes Promise to All Creation After Worldwide Flood
Genesis 6:5-14; 9:1-19

Key Discoveries:

❏ Why did God cause the flood?

1. *The wickedness of man was great (vs. 6:5)*
2. *Every thought and desire of man was evil (vs. 6:5)*

❏ How was Noah different from other people? (vs. 6:9)
Noah was righteous, blameless and walked with God (obeyed God's commandments)

❏ How large was the flood? (vs. 9:11, 15)
It destroyed the earth and every living thing.

❏ What was the sign of God's covenant to not flood the whole earth again? (vs. 9:12-16)
The rainbow.

God Makes Promise to Abraham
Genesis 11:31-12:8; 15:1-6; 17:1-8

Key Discoveries:

❏ What did God promise Abraham that could affect us today? (vs. 12:3)
"in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed"

❏ What needed to happen to fulfill this promise? (vs. 5:4)
Abraham needed to have a child.

❏ Why did God count Abraham as righteous? (vs. 15:6)
Because he believed that God would keep his promise.

❏ What other promises did God give Abraham about his descendants?

1. *They would multiply greatly (vs. 17:2)*
2. *He would be a father of nations (vs. 17:4-6)*
3. *They would possess the land of Canaan (vs. 17:8)*
4. *That God would be their God (vs. 17:8)*

Offering of Isaac
Genesis 22:1-18

Key Discoveries:

❏ What did God's test prove about Abraham? (vs. 12)
That Abraham feared God.

❏ What did Abraham believe would happen, even if he sacrificed Isaac?

1. *Abraham still believed that God would keep his promise to give him many descendants through Isaac. (vs. 5)*
2. *Abraham believed that he and Isaac would return. (vs. 5)*
3. *Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead. (see Hebrews 11:17-19)*

6. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)

Moses' Call to Leadership
Exodus 1:1-14; 3:1-17

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ How did the people of Israel, Abraham's descendants, grow? (vs. 1:7)
  They multiplied and filled the land
- ❏ What happened to the people of Israel? (vs. 1:11-14)
  The Egyptians made them slaves
- ❏ What did God ask Moses to do? (vs. 3:10)
  To bring the people of Israel out of Egypt.
- ❏ What did God call the people of Israel? (vs 3:7,10)
  "My people".
- ❏ What does God's name reveal about himself? (vs. 3:14)
  He is eternal & self-existent (See also Genesis 1:1, Psalm 90:2)

The Plagues and Passover
Exodus 12:1-13, 21-23

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What kind of animal was to be sacrificed? (vs. 12:5)
  A male lamb, without blemish & one year old.
- ❏ What were they supposed to do with the blood? (vs. 12:7, 22)
  Put it on both sides of the door and above the door.
- ❏ What sign caused God to pass over a home without a plague? (vs. 12:12-13, 23)
  The blood of a lamb.
- ❏ When a person obeyed God and put blood around their door, what did it prove that they believed about God?

1. *That God was the true God (not the gods of the Egyptians).*
2. *That God made a way to avoid judgement.*
3. *That God can be trusted.*
4. *That God will save those who trust in him.*
5. *That God was more powerful than the gods of the Egyptians.*

The Bronze Serpent
Numbers 21:4-9

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ How did the people sin against God? (vs. 4-5)
  They were impatient with God and complained against him.
- ❏ What was the punishment? (vs. 6)
  God sent deadly serpents (snakes) to bite them.
- ❏ If they were bitten, how could they be saved from death? (vs. 9)
  By looking at the bronze serpent.
- ❏ When a person looked at the bronze serpent, what did it prove that they believed about God?

1. *That they had sinned against God.*
2. *That they were going to die as punishment.*
3. *That God alone could save them (not anything they could do).*
4. *They had faith in God's way of salvation.*

7. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)

Jesus Teaches about Hell
Luke 16:19-31

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ How did Jesus describe Hell? (vs. 23-25, 28)
  It is a place of pain and suffering.
- ❏ Can people escape Hell? (vs. 26)
  No. (See also Matthew 25:41)
- ❏ How can people avoid going to Hell? (vs. 29-30)
  Repent before they die.

Jesus Has Authority Over Death
John 11:1-45

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ Why did God allow Lazarus to become sick? (vs. 4)
  To show the glory of God.

- ❏ How long had Lazarus been dead when Jesus arrived? (vs. 17)
  4 days
- ❏ What did Jesus teach about those who believe in him? (vs. 25-26)
  Even if their body dies, their spirit will live forever.
- ❏ What did Martha believe about Jesus?

1. *She believed he had the power to give eternal life. (vs. 27)*
2. *She believed that he was "the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." (vs. 27)*

- ❏ How did many people respond?
  They believed in Jesus. (vs. 45)

Jesus Claims to be One with God
John 5:16-18; 8:48-59; 10:22-33

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What did Jesus claim in John 5:18?

1. *That God was his Father.*
2. *That Jesus was equal with God.*

- ❏ What name does Jesus refer to himself by? (vs. 8:58)
  "I am" (See also Exodus 3:14)
- ❏ Why did the Jews (another name for the people of Israel) want to stone Jesus to death? (vs. 30, 33)
  Because he claimed to be God.

8. God Makes a Way Back (Continued)

Jesus Dies and is Buried
John 19:28-42

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ What does the phrase "to fulfill the Scripture" mean? (vs. 28. See also vs. 36-37)
  It means that what happened to Jesus had been foretold in the Bible hundreds of years before.
- ❏ Why was it important that Jesus "fulfill the Scripture"?
  Because it proved that he was the promised one from God, the Savior of the world.
- ❏ Why were there so many prophecies about the promised Savior?
  To remove doubt about who the Savior was. The many prophecies about the city where the savior would be born, who he would descend from and the way he would die were all fulfilled. It would be impossible for one person to fake all the prophecies because many of the events are outside of our control as humans (example: we can't control where we are born).
- ❏ How was Jesus' death like the passover lamb in Exodus 12:46? (vs. 36)
  None of his bones were broken.

Jesus Meets Disciples After His Resurrection
Luke 24:13-35

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ Why did the two disciples not recognize Jesus at first? (vs. 16)
  Because Jesus did not let them recognize him.
- ❏ What did Jesus say about his death? (vs. 26)
  It was necessary for him to suffer, die, and enter into glory.
- ❏ How did Jesus explain the reason he died?
  He used the prophecies in Scriptures (the Bible) starting with Moses' writings (Genesis to Deuteronomy) and all the Prophets (Isaiah - Malachi).
- ❏ Why is it important that Jesus used Bible prophecies to reveal who he was and his reason for dying?
  Because people of all times have the same proof in the Bible. We don't have to see Jesus personally to believe; he is revealed in the Bible.

Becoming a Child of God
John 1:1-18; 3:14-18

Key Discoveries:

- ❏ Who is the "Word"? (vs. 1, 17)
  Jesus
- ❏ What do we learn about the Word?

1. *He was one with God the Father. (vs. 1)*
2. *He was in the beginning (not created). (vs. 2)*
3. *All things were made through him. (vs.s 3, 10)*

4. *He was the source of life. (vs. 4)*
5. *He is the true light. (vs.s 4-5, 9)*
6. *Many people rejected him. (vs. 11)*
7. *For everyone who received him and believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (vs. 12)*
8. *The Word became flesh. (God became man) (vs. 14)*
9. *The Word (Jesus) made God the Father known. (vs. 18)*

❏ How was the Son of Man (Jesus) like the serpent in the wilderness? (John 3:14-15)

1. *Both were lifted up on a pole/cross. (John 3:14, Numbers 21:8)*
2. *People were going to die. The people of Israel were going to die physically because they were bitten by deadly serpents (snakes). All people are going to physically die in their body and their soul will be punished in hell (which the Bible calls "the second death"). This is because we are filled with sin.*
3. *Everyone that looked to the serpent or Jesus would be saved from death. (John 3:15, Numbers 21:9)*
4. *The act of looking did not save them, but believing in their heart that God alone could save them saved them. (John 3:15)*

❏ How does someone escape punishment and receive eternal life? (vs. 3:16)
Believe in Jesus.

❏ Are you one who "believes" or one who "does not believe"?

❏ If your answer was one who does not believe, is that where you want to be?

If no, I would encourage you with the following:

If God is leading you to believe:

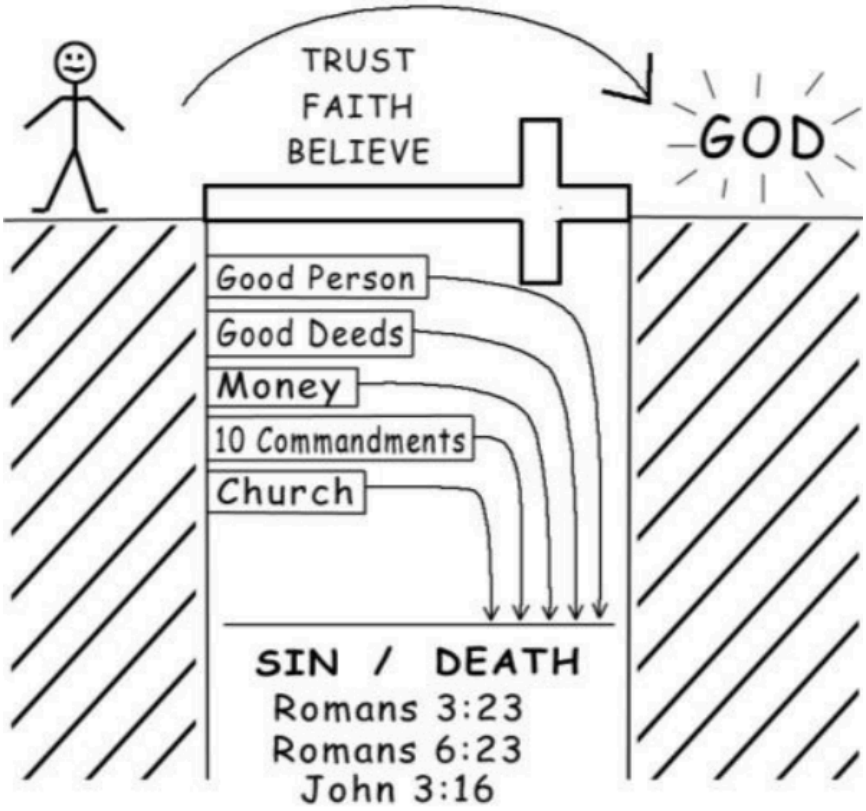
- Talk to God today. (Pray)
- Confess your sins to Him.
- Trust (believe) in the death of Jesus to pay for your sins, (not any of your good works).
- See Jesus' promise: John 11:25-26
- Remember that the act of praying a prayer does not save us. It is by faith in the power of Jesus to save us. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."* Ephesians 2:8-9
- Get connected to a local church that teaches the Bible

If you are still not sure:

- Keep praying. Ask God to help you understand.
- Find a Christian that can help explain more of the Bible to you.
- Continue studying the Bible using the discovery questions.
- Watch this 3-minute video (or read "THE BRIDGE" on page 11): https://farran.abwe.org/hope.html

THE BRIDGE

There are many ways to share God's good news with someone. The Bridge illustration is one way. This is the method used in the video link.



WHAT TO SAY WHEN DRAWING OUT OR SHARING THE BRIDGE:
(adapted from https://www.loganchristianfellowship.com/uploads/3/8/9/7/38975341/bridge_illustration.pdf)

This is us and God. Most of us feel that there is a space, a distance, a gap between us and God. That's because we're not born to naturally or automatically know God or this world would be a very different place. There's a name for this distance between us and God… the word the Bible actually calls it is 'sin'. There's a verse in the Bible in Romans 3:23 and it says 'for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'. There's one thing that you and I have in common, in fact, one thing that every person on this planet shares in common… and that is, we're all sinners! We all do things that are wrong from time to time. We all have said wrong things. We all have had wrong thoughts. We make bad choices and mistakes. The Bible says we're all in the same boat… 'for all have sinned'. We've all fallen short of God's expectations for us. There's another verse in the same book of Romans in chapter 6:23 and it says 'for the wages of sin is death'. What is a wage? A wage is something you earn, right? It's something that you are entitled to, or something that you deserve. The Bible tells us that because of sin, because of our bad choices in life, we deserve to die. This more than just physically dying, because everyone dies eventually. It refers to being eternally separated from God… what a tragic and scary thought. Imagine never being able to cross this chasm… ever!

Most people have this sense that they want to know God, and want to feel connected to this higher power, and have a need for eternal life. So they try to cross this gap by doing things like (i) being a good person; (ii) doing good deeds; (iii) giving money in the offering plate; (iv) follow the ten commandments; (v) going to church, etc. We try to do all these religious type things in order to cross over the gap, but the problem is that the Bible tells us that 'we all fall short of the glory of God'. We can never go to church enough, we can never follow the ten commandments faithfully enough, we can never give enough money, we can never do enough good deeds, we can never be a good enough person to cross the gap. No matter how hard we try, you can't be good enough to make your way into heaven and know God.

Now, this is where the story gets good! The way to cross over this chasm, in fact, the only way to cross over is through… Jesus Christ. You see, when Jesus died on the cross, He died to bridge that gap between us and the Heavenly Father. He knew there was no other way that we could do it. When Jesus died on the cross, He died for my sins... He died for your sins and it bridges that gap. The most well-known verse in all of the Bible is John 3:16, "For God so loved the world (for God so loved YOU) that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life". So the way to cross over that bridge is by… we'll use the word in that verse… by believing in Jesus Christ. Or you can use the word, faith. Or you can use the word, trust. We cross over when we trust… not in our own goodness, not in our good deeds, not in these religious things we try to do because that stuff is not good enough… but when we trust in Jesus and what he did for us on the cross for me. Through that I get forgiveness of my sins, through that I get eternal life. By faith I receive that free gift from God. I can't earn it... I certainly don't deserve it... but I can receive it by trusting Him to come into my life when I ask Him.

Where would you position yourself on this picture in regards to where you stand with God?