



# Turning Everyday Conversations into Gospel Conversations

by Jimmy Scroggins and Steve Wright

*We live in a broken world*

And the gospel is how God puts broken people back together gain. Once we repent and believe in Jesus, God's Spirit helps us recover and pursue His design. God is the one who created the world and every human being in it.

Authors Jimmy Scroggins and Steve Wright outline a reproducible method of sharing the gospel that has been tested in the real world. *Turning Everyday Conversations Into Gospel Conversations* is a simple strategy to train new and seasoned believers to join God in His reconciliation work.

*Turning Everyday Conversations Into Gospel Conversations* equips believers to use the innovative "3 Circles," a user-friendly evangelistic tool for a new generation. Scroggins and Wright train readers to incorporate the biblical metanarrative, as well as their own personal stories, to tell the good news that Jesus has made a way out of the broken places we find ourselves.

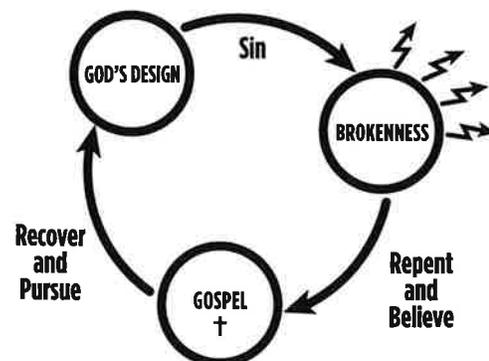
Churches around the world are training people to share the gospel using this method. It has proven appeal across generations and cultures. They've heard stories about an eight-year-old boy leading his twenty-six-year-old cousin to repent and believe in Jesus and a seventy-plus-year-old church member, who had never before shared his faith, leading his Spanish-speaking neighbor to Christ. It's been used to train the Mixtec in Mexico, Maasai Warriors in Kenya, and prisoners in America. It's been presented on napkins, in concrete, in the sand, and using tortillas. The 3 Circles works, and this book will train you and your church members to use it.

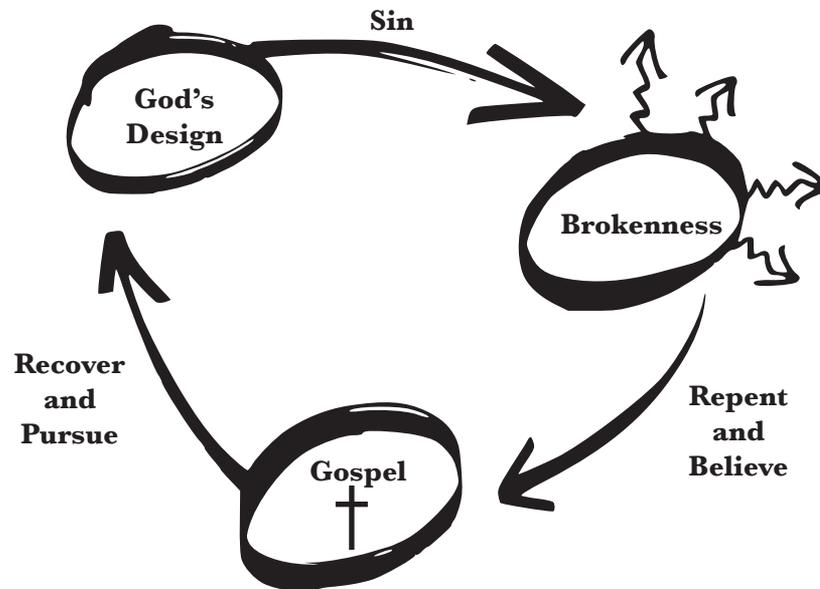
It doesn't matter if you have been a Christian for decades or days, you can learn to do what God asks us to do to make His appeal to others through us (2 Corinthians 5:20). This short training manual will empower and inspire millions of Christians to turn hundreds of millions of everyday conversations into gospel conversations.

- ▶ The book: *Turning Everyday Conversation into Gospel Conversations*, and a pamphlet: "Life – 3 Circles: Life Conversation Guide" can be ordered from Lifeway Resources.
- ▶ Check out "3 Circles in 3 Minutes" YouTube video, published by NCL (The Normal Christian Life).
- ▶ Check out the videos of the EPC 42nd General Assembly and the EPC Church Health presentation by Jimmy Scroggins and Todd Thomas on Tuesday, June 21, during the Leadership Institute. Also see Tuesday's lunch presentation, "The State of Evangelism in the Nation and Our Churches."

## "The 3 Circles"

The 3 Circles is *really* simple. It involves three circles connected to three arrows.





### **God's Design**

The Bible tells us that God has a design for our lives, and that He cares for every aspect of our lives. That includes our choices, our finances, our relationships—everything. If we live according to God's design, then we can live under God's blessing. The problem is that all of us tend to depart from God's design.

### **Sin**

The Bible has a word for when we depart from God's design—that word is "sin." And when we sin—when we leave His design—we land in a place of brokenness.

### **Brokenness**

We see brokenness all around us—just read today's headlines. If we're honest, we also see it in our own lives. Emptiness, guilt, shame, regret. And we always try to fix it, don't we? We try a different relationship, a different job, or maybe we try to be more religious. Whatever we do, we are trying to fix or escape the brokenness. But brokenness is not a bad thing. In fact, it helps us understand that we need change in our lives.

The bad news is that the change we need cannot come from within ourselves. The good news is that the Bible tells us where the change we need comes from.



**The Gospel**

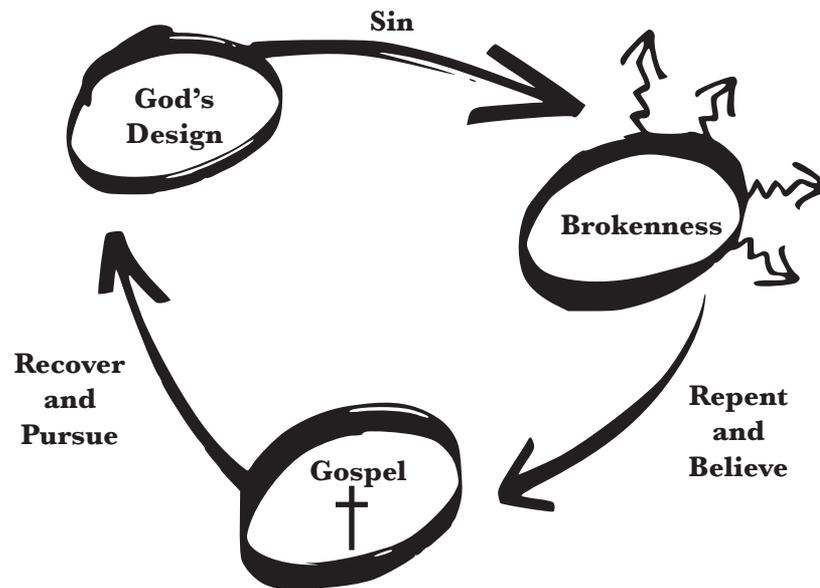
The change we need comes from what the Bible calls the gospel, which means “good news.” The gospel is the story of Jesus. Jesus is the son of God, who came to earth and never departed from God’s design. The Bible says He lived a perfect life. But Jesus was crucified on the cross. The Bible says Jesus died on the cross “for the sins of the world.” That includes mine and yours. When Jesus was on the cross, God put the sins of the world—mine, yours, everyone who has ever lived or will ever live—on Jesus. And Jesus received the punishment for those sins, which the Bible says is death. After He died, He was buried but rose from the dead three days later. The Bible says Jesus was raised from the dead to prove that He was who He said He was—the son of God who can forgive our sins because He paid the price for them. When He forgives sin, He heals the broken places in our lives.

**Repent and Believe**

But just hearing it is not enough. We must act on it by admitting our sinful brokenness. We must ask God to forgive us. We do this by turning away from sin and trusting in Jesus. This is what it means to repent and believe. Repent means to change our mind; change our direction. By believing in the gospel story that Jesus was crucified for our sins and was raised from the dead. When we believe, we receive new life through Jesus. The Bible says that when we repent and believe, God will come into our lives, forgive our sins, and begin to heal our inner brokenness.

**Recover and Pursue**

When we repent and believe, God gives us opportunity to recover and pursue His design for our lives. The best part is that He lets us do that from wherever we are. There’s no need to go back and fix anything. It’s not necessary to “get better first.” We can start recovering and pursuing that perfect design from we are right now.



# The Posture of Neighborhood Exegesis

(At our last General Assembly for the EPC, a presentation was given on loving our neighbor)

How does our congregation relate to our neighboring community?

Fortress: in the community	Savior: <u>to/for</u> the community	Partner: <u>with</u> the community
Hide: "What if they...?"	Fix: "How do we...?"	Listen: "Where is God already...?"

There needs to be our posture of humility and love as we reach our neighbors:

Remember these three aspects: **LISTEN, ENGAGE, BEAR WITH**

**LISTEN** - Jesus' interactions with people are fascinating. On 25 occasions, Jesus was asked a direct question that required a simple answer. He only gave a direct response to four of these inquiries. The other 21 times, he replied, not with a statement, but with a question of his own. **Jesus seemed more interested in genuine conversation** than giving an authoritative answer. (from <https://evangelism.intervarsity.org>)

**ENGAGE** - How does our perspective and even method of evangelism need to change in the "New Normal"? (adapted from Will H. McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, p. 166)

Past	New Normal
Single encounter	Relationship building
Monologue	Dialogue/discussion
Gospel presentation	Story (personal/biblical)
Giving lots of information	Asking good questions
Presentation (apologetics)	Demonstration (embodied apologetic)
Individualistic	Community-centered
Being the expert	Being a fellow journeyer
Argumentation	Consideration
Ticket sales	Guided tours
Eternal benefits	Earthly impact and mission
Isolation/binary (us vs. them)	Community integration (we)

**BEAR WITH** – Colossians 3:12-13 - Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Christ-honoring fellowship is only possible when believers bear with others in a spirit of love. The word for "bear" in the original Greek means "to endure something unpleasant or difficult." Bearing with one another implies willingness to endure with others, despite differences and frustrations. We are to live in a spirit of humility and treat one another with patience and compassion.