



Annie Pajcic

RIDING TANDEM FOR GIRLS • Leaning into the Leading of God

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Let me begin by saying THANK YOU for purchasing Riding Tandem for GIRLS and being a part of our study together!

Riding Tandem for GIRLS is a 12-week Bible study filled with art, fun, and surprises! Riding Tandem follows the acronym **T-A-N-D-E-M**.—T-ime for Takeoff. A-lignment. N-ecessary Stops. D-on't Stop Pedaling. E-njoy the Ride. M-ark the Moments. Each lesson begins with **Ice Breaker Questions** and is followed by a review time for **Journal Questions**. Next, you will dive into the main lesson, **It's Time to Ride** and close with **Prayer Requests**. **Journal Questions** are included after each lesson intended for girls to develop a deeper one-on-one relationship with Jesus. And of course, there is a FUN surprise—either an art project, recipe, memory cards, or service idea following most chapters. I believe the purpose of a small group is to have fellowship with one another, laugh, and grow in the knowledge of God's Word. After leading small groups for years, here are some TIPS:

1. Keep track of TIME.

Decide ahead of time how long your group sessions will be. Begin with the ice breaker and journal questions then study the group lesson together. Leave time if you choose to participate in the art project, recipe, memory cards, or service idea. Remember to always look at your watch and keep the conversation going. If you have time at the end, you can always go back to look at a question. Close with taking prayer requests.

2. Keep conversation on TOPIC.

Girls can be easily distracted and quickly get off course. Your job is to keep everyone on track. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you gentleness as you steer the conversation back on topic.

3. Keep TALKY people to a minimum.

Not everyone wants to share in a small group. Try to allow a chance for girls to participate and be careful that no one person dominates the conversation. Be sensitive to the needs of others and ask God for wisdom.

4. Allow TIME to prepare.

As a leader, be prepared to facilitate your small group. You can't lead if you haven't taken time to sit with the Lord and study Riding Tandem.

5. TAKE time to PRAY with and for your small group.

This is one of the most important aspects of your group. I would encourage you to take prayer requests at the end of each discussion time and emphasize the confidentiality of the group. Prayers and discussions are personal and should not be taken outside your small group.

This is not a complete list of “how-to” lead a small group by any means, but hopefully it hit on a few good points! Remember to be real. Be yourself. Be inviting. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you as you have the privilege to lead your small group. And, if you ever have any questions, please e-mail me at apajcic@thouartexalted.com.

We are praying for you!

Have you ever ridden a tandem bicycle?

Growing up, our family had a tan and white striped Schwinn Tandem. Oh, the beauty of a bicycle built for two! Yet because our family was built for six, seats were limited. At the age of seven I could barely reach the pedals AND hold on to the handle bars at the same time. If by chance I did get to score a seat (on the back), I would find myself lowering my body just enough to reach the pedals. I found out early on that it was easier to let one of my sisters take the front seat and do **all** the work. I was along for the ride and glad for it.

Honestly, my family had good reason not to trust my biking abilities. While I would not describe Jacksonville as a “hilly” town, there is one place where you can feel the slight downhill tilt of the road. The combination of this hill, a parked car, my distraction, and the front end of my banana seat bicycle was not good. BOOM. You can only imagine.

Fortunately, **Riding Tandem** is not about how many accidents we have had. It is not about climbing the ranks of the seating chart, reaching for the pedals, or navigating parked cars. **Riding Tandem** is about an authentic, everyday, one-on-one relationship with God. It's about learning our position on the back of the bike and trusting God with the front steering. Our personal relationship with God is built for two. He is the Captain, so we must learn to lean into His leading, pedal forward, and trust Him with the directions. **Riding Tandem** will teach us that while our final destination is heaven, our destiny on earth has purpose. We are not just along for the ride. We are **a part** of the ride. God wants us to live an abundant life completely surrendered to His leading. **Riding Tandem** with Jesus is letting go of the handlebars and experiencing His power as we pedal. Everyday.

Where is God taking you today? Are you equipped for the ride? He promises never to leave your side as the Captain of your life. Do you trust His leading? Are you willing to let go of the handlebars? Allow me to pray this prayer as we begin the journey of **Riding Tandem**.

*Dear Lord, today I choose to hop on the back seat of the tandem. I choose to let You steer the story of my life and teach me the lessons ahead. Life is Your classroom, and I am Your student. I will take the time to sit, listen, study hard, and do my work. I will pedal hard and learn to trust in Your teaching. While I can't see the road ahead, You can. I know that You go before me. You are my lead. You are my guide. I know there will be times when I am afraid and want to clutch on to my handlebars and take control. Please remind me that You are right there with me. You will never leave me. At times, I might want You to speed things up, and at other times, slow life down. Remind me that Your timing and pace are perfect. We are in this ride **together**. With You as my Captain, I can press on, be patient, and persevere with joy. Climb on sweet Lord! Balance the bike for me so I can take the position as Your co-captain. Lead me in the way everlasting so that I may soar in Your presence. It's time to ride. Amen.*

It's a beautiful day for a bike ride!
Lots of love and grace,

Annie

Week ONE: TIME FOR TAKEOFF

ICE BREAKER Questions



- 1. What do you remember about your FIRST bike? What color was it? Did you have a basket? If so, what did you carry in it?
- 2. When did you first learn how to ride a bike? Do you have a funny story to tell?

IT'S A TIME TO RIDE: Group Lesson

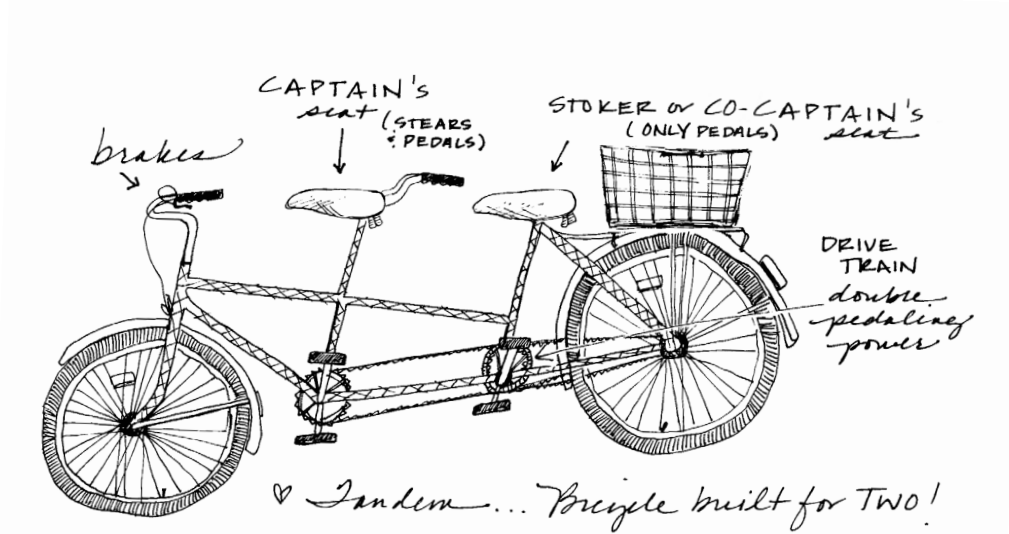
Imagine a tandem bicycle has just arrived at your back door. Immediately you notice the note tied to the front handlebar.

Welcome! Let Me introduce myself. My name is Captain, and I am overjoyed that you chose Me to ride with you through life. We are going to take amazing adventures together. As your Captain, I know the direction we will be taking. There's no need to be distracted by all the latest gadgets and gizmos because I have all the equipment you will need. I have plenty of water and be assured, the rest stops are well planned in advance. If you ever feel tired, insecure, or winded, just stop pedaling and coast. I have you in the palm of my hand. If you ever get scared, worried, or doubt My leading, just lean in and trust that I am steering you in the right direction. Make sure to mark the special moments we will have together and always remember to enjoy the ride. Life can get tricky sometimes, but if you trust Me, I will give you eyes to see from My perspective—the right perspective. Do not worry. As your Captain, I am in full control. Before you climb aboard, please read My instructions and know your seating assignment. It is very important to know our takeoff procedures before we ride together on this tandem bicycle.

With everlasting love,
Your Captain

It's T-ime for Takeoff. For the next twelve weeks, our transportation of choice is the tandem bicycle, and **Riding Tandem** begins with being confident of **takeoff procedures**. As we take a closer look at takeoff protocol, we will become more familiar with who our Captain is and how our choice in seating position prepares us for our day.

The tandem bicycle will be our visual focus for **Riding Tandem**. Take a look at this illustration and soak in the imagery.



T-ime for Takeoff begins with **seating positions**. It is very clear this bicycle is built for **two**. The front rider is called the captain while the back rider is called the co-captain or stoker. The captain's job is to steer the bike **and** pedal. The co-captain is **only** to pedal. Carefully look at the words **AND** and **ONLY**.

Why does **AND** and **ONLY** make a difference in seating positions? In your life, who do you see on the front and back seat? Where do you prefer to ride?

Look up the following verses and write ways Jesus would make the **BEST** Captain.

• **Philippians 2:9-11**

- John 14:6

- John 13:12-17

- Colossians 1:15-20

We can see with clarity that Jesus is best suited for the job as our front seat driver. Our Captain is the Lord Jesus. Every knee will bow one day to recognize this powerful truth. He is the way, the truth, and the life. He is our Teacher. He is Lord. His name alone is a title of honor, respect, and reverence. He is also a humble servant. He is the image of the invisible God, and **all** of God's fullness dwells in Him. He is the Creator and Sustainer. He is the beginning of all things, holds everything together, and made peace for all things through his blood shed on the cross (Colossians 1:15-20).

Now that we have established who the Captain is, where is our seating position on the tandem bike? You guessed it. On the back.

It is important to note again that the back rider, called the co-captain or stoker, **only** pedals. We are not called to steer. I know this is tough news for some of us, or maybe all of us. It's not easy hopping on the back. Why? We want to be in charge. We want the control seat where we can make the calls and call the shots. But in God's economy, this is **not** our position. Our position is on the back.

Look up the following verses and take note of the repeating word that prepares us to be co-captains and stokers with Jesus as our Captain. What is God's response when we take this position?

Repeating Word/ God's Response

- 1 Peter 5:5-7

- Psalm 25:9

- **Matthew 23:12**

Humility. When we are humble enough to move to the rear, God guides and teaches us what is **right**. When we clothe ourselves in humility, God responds with **grace**. When we humble ourselves, God **lifts us up**. Humility is the opposite of pride. The position of pride wants the power and prestige of the Captain's seat. But God's Word makes it clear that "pride goes before destruction" (Proverbs 16:18). Humility will always instruct us how to lean into the Captain's leading. No more backseat driving, girls. Keep pedaling and **leave the steering to God**.

Where in your life is it hard to give up control and humbly trust God with the front seat? Write down your answer and share with your group if you feel comfortable.

Below, write a prayer to your Captain. How are you going to hop on the back and trust Him to lead?

Dear Captain,



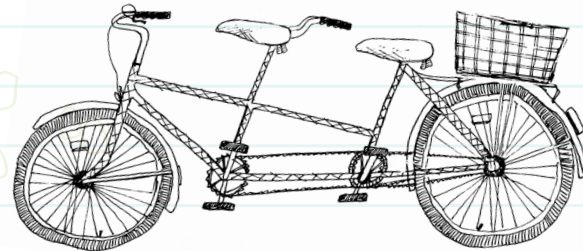
With love.

With love,

1. Look up and write down 2 Timothy 1:6-7.

* What are some specific gifts God has given you?

I RIDE
for PRAYER
REQUESTS



JOURNAL QUESTIONS

2. Read 2 Timothy 1:6-7 in your Bible and in the margin.

“And that special gift you received. . . keep that ablaze! God doesn’t want us to be shy with his gifts, but bold and loving and sensible.”

2 TIMOTHY 1:6-7
(ICB)

* The International Children’s Bible translation of 2 Timothy 1:7 reminds us to keep the special gifts of ministry that God has given us **ablaze!**

Paul is reminding young Timothy, and us, to stir up or fan into flames the gifts God has given. Did you notice that the co-captain is also called a “stoker?” A stoker was in charge of fueling a furnace. As we learn our position on the back, **as stokers**, we are in charge of *tending the furnace* that generates **power** for us to pedal. This power comes not from pride or our own personal efforts to pedal, but from our **humility** as we learn to trust in the Lord. Tending the furnace is taking the time to spend with God, building a one-on-one relationship, spreading His Word, and serving Him with our gifts. This is preparation for **T-ime for Takeoff** at its core.

* How are you going to “tend the furnace” and spend time with God serving Him with your gifts?

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

3. Read Jeremiah 17:7-8.

* What happens when you place your trust in the Captain?

* What are your fears?

* What are your worries?

* Did you know the Bible calls you a tree? When your confidence is in the Captain, your tree will always bear fruit. The fruit you produce are the gifts you are fanning into flames for God! What kind of tree are you? What kind of fruit are you producing. Why?

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

4. Read Psalm 9:10. What do you think it means to KNOW Jesus?

“Those who know
the Lord trust
him. He will not
leave those who
come to him.”

PSALM 9:10
(ICB)

* Why can you place your trust in the Captain?

* The word for “not leave” can also be translated **never forsaken or never leave**. How does this give you comfort when you are going through a difficult situation?

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

5. Read Matthew 16:13-17. What is the first question Jesus asks the disciples?

* What is Peter’s response?

* Who revealed this mystery to Peter?

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

6. Read Romans 10:9-10.

* What two things are needed to believe in Jesus according to Romans 10:9-10?

“If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and if you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from death, then you will be saved. We believe with our hearts, and so we are made right with God. And we declare with our mouths to say that we believe, and so we are saved.”

ROMANS 10:9-10
(ICB)

* Have you ever made a declaration that Jesus is Lord? What is the promise when you believe that Jesus is the Captain of your life? Write down when you first believed and give a shout out to your Captain!

What a great week! Let's close in prayer:

Dear Lord, thank You that You are my Captain. I pray that I would continue to fan into flames the gifts You have given me to glorify Christ. Help me dig my roots deep and be confident that YOU are leading me! You have my life on a perfect path, a perfect timeline, and going the perfect speed. Thank You for steering me and allowing me to pedal forward. I believe in You and love you. Amen.

ART PROJECT:

TIRES on Fire!

Art Supplies:

- Hula Hoop
- Elmers Glue
- Glue Gun (Optional)
- Colored Fabric
- Scissors
- Old Color T-shirts
- Wooden Clothes Pins
- Scrapbook Paper

Art Instructions:

1. Take your fabric and cut 8 strips measuring 2 inches x 3 feet. (Tip: I like to tear my fabric.)
2. Take your first strip and tie it onto your hula hoop. Start wrapping your fabric around the hoop leaving about 5 inches to tie to the next strip of fabric. Add a little Elmer's glue (or hot glue) to keep fabric in place. Keep wrapping until your entire hoop is covered in fabric.
3. Take an old T-shirt and starting at the bottom, cut strips of fabric about 1.5 wide. Cut through front and back so you will end up with a circle of fabric.
4. Stretch the fabric around your hula hoop and pulling to make the T-shirt as tight as you can, make a knot at end to secure.
5. For your final touch, cover some clothes pins with scrapbook paper and clip pictures, notes, Scriptures, and more onto your TIRE on FIRE. Hang in your room to remind you to FAN INTO FLAMES the gifts that God has given to you!



Week TWO: TIME FOR TAKE-OFF (part 2)

ICE BREAKER Questions



- 1. Do you have a rare talent you can share with the group? Hint: Maybe you have a double jointed finger or can wiggle your ears.
- 2. What is the bravest thing you have ever done?

JOURNAL review

STOP and take five to ten minutes to discuss your journal time. How did these Scriptures help you to ride tandem with God this week?

IT'S TIME TO RIDE: Group Lesson

T-time for Takeoff is about developing a personal relationship with our Captain.

As girls with busy lives, and I am sure you have one, we need to make TIME to grow **deeper** in our relationship with the Lord. But how do we do this? As BUSYNESS tends to drive our lives, we need an authentic connection with our Captain. I believe our first step towards building a deeper relationship with Jesus is **knowing** who He is and **why** we believe in Him. We need to be 100% confident in His position as our Captain.

We have learned our position on the back seat and the truth that knowing Him personally opens the door to confident belief and trust. Today, we will look at why it's important to prepare our hearts **before** we ride with God through our day. **We need eyes to see and ears to hear in order to lean into His leading.** We must prepare our hearts by addressing Him with reverence every morning.

Slowly read Isaiah 50:4 in the margin. Why should we spend time with God **every** morning?

According to Isaiah 50:4, when we acknowledge that our Captain is Sovereign Lord, we are given words to say that **strengthen the weary**. We are also given an **eager** alarm clock to wake us up morning by morning with a listening ear and teachable heart.

Does this describe your relationship with God?

“The Sovereign Lord has taught me what to say, so that I can strengthen the weary. Every morning he makes me eager to hear what he is going to teach me.”

ISAIAH 50:4 (GW)

What can you do to make time in your day to spend with the Lord? What words do you need to hear to encourage those around you? Who will you encourage today?

T-time for Takeoff takes action. It's the daily morning by morning discipline of getting up and sitting with the Lord. I am not talking about casually communicating with our Captain on an every-now-and-then basis but really **knowing Him** on a deeper level, like a **best friend**. We can't expect the blessing unless we are willing to build the relationship. We need the ears to hear and the hearts ready to be taught. We don't want to miss Jesus in the morning. If we do, we might miss telling about Him during the day.

Read the following verses about Jesus waking up to spend time with His Captain. What were the results of His prayers?

• Mark 1:35-39

• Luke 4:42-44

I love this exercise! Jesus never slept in! He was disciplined in His T-IME for Takeoff. Notice what happened after His time of prayer. **He was eager and inspired to preach and spread the good news!** When we, too, take the time to spend our mornings with Jesus, our ears are opened to hear the Word. Our lips become a source for healing, and our hearts are open to go and preach the good news of the Kingdom of God. Amen!

God is going to teach us, inspire us, and lead us, but we have to be **still** enough to listen. We have to have teachable and eager hearts to learn. If we are going to have a one-on-one personal relationship with our Captain, the best preparation for the ride is to get to **KNOW Him**.

Let's make it our **goal** to wake up morning by morning, read the Word of God, and sit so we can soar into our day. Think of it like riding a bike with no hands!

Ah, the freedom.

I drove by a sign last night that said, "What you look at is not necessarily what you see." Think about this for a minute. Time spent with our Master in the morning is **essential** to our takeoff preparation for the day. It's essential because our **first glance** at something might not be what God wants us to see. Sometimes to really see something, we have to spend T-I-M-E looking at it.

Read Psalm 119:18. Why does God want to open our eyes? What does He want us to see?

Psalm 119:18 emphasizes that God wants to open our eyes because He wants to show us the **wonderful truths** about Him. The word for wonderful means: **marvelous, wonderful, be beyond's one power, be difficult to do.**¹ This is amazing! When we take time to spend with God morning by morning, He gives us eyes to see things which only He can accomplish in our lives. We are seeing from a new perspective. His perspective. A godly perspective. Our Captain, the Sovereign Lord, has lots to teach us when we wake up morning by morning. Wipe out the sleepy seeds and **set the alarm**. No snoozing allowed!

Today, we are going to answer another question:

Where is God leading us anyway?

While we may not always see it, we must **remember** that we are asking God to OPEN our eyes to see the wonderful truths in His instructions.

Look up the following verses and write down where God is leading. What is our role? I'll start us off.

• **Read Psalm 27:11**

God is leading us on a straight path. The New Living Translation says that God is leading (us) along the path of honesty. Our part is to have a **teachable heart** and **follow God's leading**. Honesty is always the best policy even when it's easier to cover up the truth. This verse also reveals that there are enemies waiting for Christians to fall. Follow God's lead and you will not stumble. Now it's your turn!

"Teach me how to live, O LORD. Lead me along the path of honesty, for my enemies are waiting for me to fall."

PSALM 27:11 (NLT)

Where is God leading?/ What is our Role?

• **Psalm 23:1-4**

• **Psalm 139:23-24**

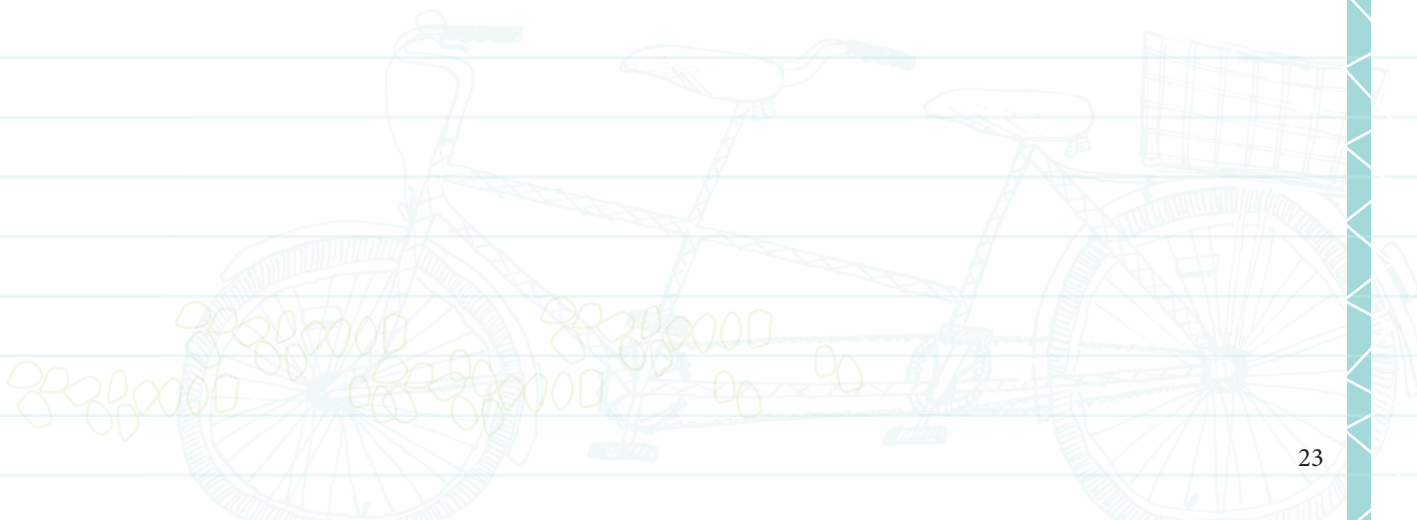
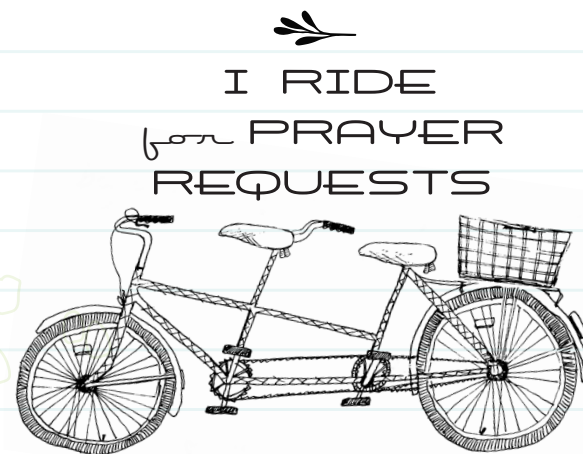
God leads. Our job is to ask, to call, to cry, to remember, to search, and to try. **This is our part**. We have to do our work. We cannot expect God to wave a wand and place us on the yellow brick road. Life is certain to have its share of lions, tigers, and bears. But we have a guide, a teacher, and a loving Father who will protect us along the way. When our hearts grow faint, He is there. When we are overwhelmed, He will lead us to the rock of safety. When we are anxious, He will **lead us**. **He is our Captain**.

Great job today! In closing, write a prayer to your Captain. Tell Him what you would like to learn from Riding Tandem as you ride into eternity together. Try not to clutch on to the handlebars too tightly. Let go and learn to lean into His leading.

1. Look up and write down Ecclesiastes 3:11.

* What has been PLANTED in your heart?

* What do you think this verse means?



JOURNAL QUESTIONS

2. Look up and write down John 3:16.

* What is the same word that you saw in Ecclesiastes 3:11? Why do you think this is significant?

Yes! **Eternity**. Last time I looked, that meant **forever**. Just as an acorn has the DNA to grow into a beautiful oak tree, we, too, have eternity planted in our hearts. Whether we acknowledge it or not, there is an emptiness in us that ONLY God can fill. We long for this relationship. Notice Scripture does not say that God has planted power, position, and prosperity in our hearts. No. Our Creator, who made us His masterpiece, has planted **eternity** into our hearts. The seed of everlasting life is planted in our souls. **Belief in Jesus activates the seed and inflames the passion to stoke the fire within us.** Life here and now will never satisfy our deep inner longings because we were not made to live on a temporal earth. We were made to live in an eternal heaven.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

3. What are some of the things we try to place in our hearts instead of God to bring us satisfaction?

* Will they completely satisfy you? Why not?

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

4. What do you think ETERNAL LIFE looks like?

5. What can you learn about Eternal Life from these verses?

* John 17:1-5

* What is significant about John 17:3 and KNOWING Jesus? What have we learned this week about getting to KNOW Him?

* John 5:24

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

* Romans 6:22-23

* Matthew 6:19-21. What is the difference between an earthly treasure and a heavenly one?

Eternal life is given to all who hear God's Word, believe in Jesus, and **know Him** as their Sovereign Lord. Confession in Christ, the Son of the Living God, saves us from death and ushers us into a life forever in the presence of a Holy God. When we ask God to be our leader, our Captain, He is leading us in lessons that not only prepare us for today, but prepare us for the ride tomorrow—and forever. **Everlasting life.** This is why our decisions for today are so important. Our opportunities for today can and will affect our tomorrow. Our choices for today have future implications. Our prayers for today have lasting effects for years to come. Are you getting this picture? God is preparing us for **eternity** while He is preparing us for **today**.

Matthew 6:19-21 calls us to store up treasures in heaven. What is the difference between an earthly treasure and a heavenly one? I am quite confident God is not talking about how many friends follow you on Instagram, how athletic you are, your latest haircut, and if you have a Snapchat account. God treasures open hearts and open hands. When we follow Him to serve the poor, help those in need, give up worry, smile with thankful hearts, obey His teachings, live with humility, love unconditionally, hope expectantly, and believe confidently . . . we are storing up treasures in heaven! If we are leaning into the leading of God and allowing Him to steer our tandem bike into everlasting life, then we are storing up treasures in heaven.

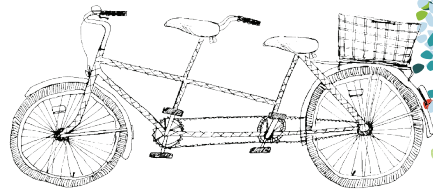
Eternity is our final destination.

MEMORY cards:

To get to KNOW Jesus, we **MUST KNOW** His Word! Color copy these verses and place them in your room, on your locker at school, or in your backpack. Find a friend and challenge each other to memorize them! (Ask your leader to provide a **FUN SURPRISE** if you memorize all FIVE!)

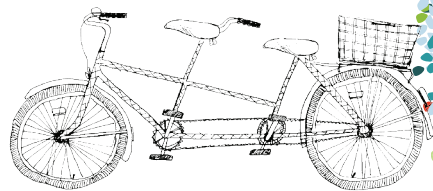
"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

JOHN 14:6 (NASB)



"And that special gift you received. . . keep that ablaze! God doesn't want us to be shy with his gifts, but bold and loving and sensible."

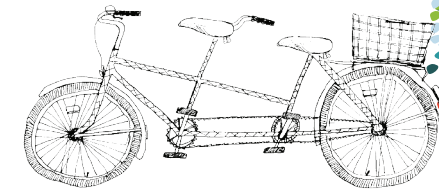
PSALM 9:20 (ICB)



MEMORY cards:

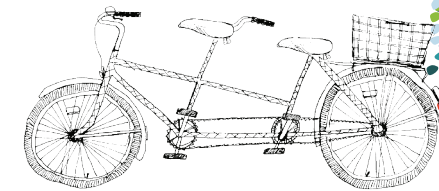
"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

1 PETER 5:6-7 (NIV)



"The Sovereign Lord has taught me what to say, so that I can strengthen the weary. Every morning he makes me eager to hear what he is going to teach me."

ISAIAH 50:4 (GW)



"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."

PSALM 119:18 (NIV)

