



# DECISION MOMENTS

## BRIDGE DOC



CANADIAN  
BAPTISTS  
of Ontario  
and Quebec

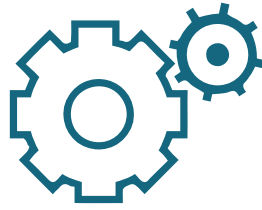


# DECISION MOMENTS

Followers of Jesus all come to moments when we are challenged by the Holy Spirit. For some, it was that initial recognition of who he is. For others, it was a pinnacle moment when they understood their place in relation to Christ's and recognized their sinfulness juxtaposed with Jesus' salvific gift.

This Bridge Doc aims to help youth leaders journey with students (in a group or individually) through the decision-making process—that is, their decision whether or not to follow Christ. While you may not be in a formal mentoring relationship with a youth, as the ministry worker you are one of the key influencers to help them process what God is revealing to them.

Sometimes those decision moments can be anticipated (or at least explicitly presented). Other times, they come unexpectedly. Ultimately, our aim is to be as sensitive as we can to God's leading and our (as individuals) response to him.



# HOW TO USE THIS DOC

Read through the material.

**Identify:** The key to this workbook is to identify the ways God is inviting us to engage with him. Be attentive to both past and present moments.

**Pray.** While this workbook is designed to help facilitate what God is showing a youth, the process cannot be done without prayer. As Paul encourages us, pray continuously...pray without ceasing.

## THE FLOW OF THIS WORKBOOK

1. Learn their story
2. Knowing and sharing your story
3. Noticing God moments
4. Review God intersections from the past
5. Using common projects/ activities to find God moments
6. Decision-making moments
7. Follow up
8. Celebrate and Affirm





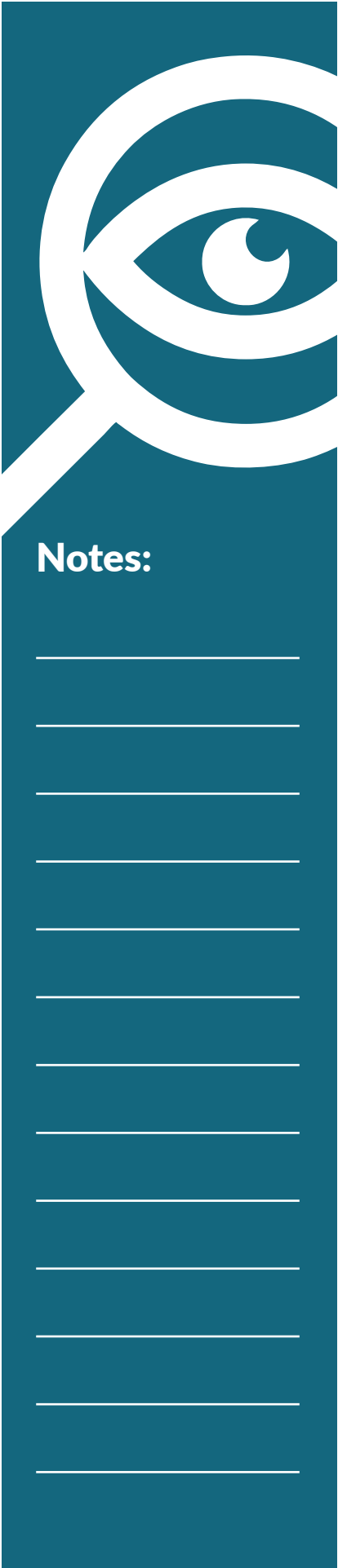












# REVIEW GOD INTERSECTIONS FROM THE PAST

Similar to “Share Your Story”, encourage students to record those God moments (in a journal, a video blog, memes, etc.) You can use similar questions that are listed in “Knowing and Sharing Your Story.”

This is a longer process than “Notice God Moments” because you’re helping them dig deeper and potentially connect what seem to be random events into a cohesive narrative that God has been leading them through. “Share Your Story” can be done as a group or individually.

Some questions that could help facilitate sharing discussions:

## When was your first encounter with Jesus?

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## Looking at your responses, what similarities do you notice in those events?

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**Notes:**

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**What was a moment when a situation turned out differently than you anticipated?**

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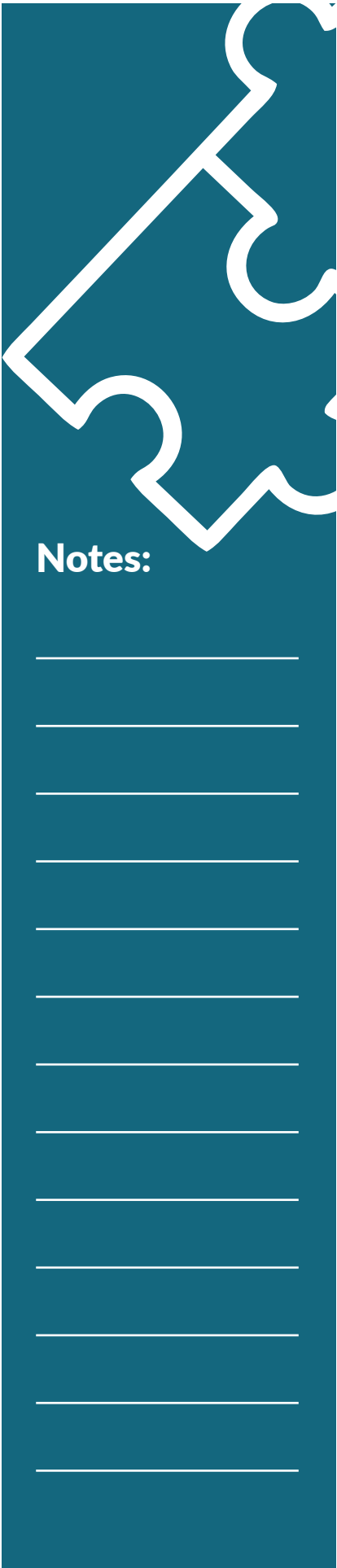
**When was a time when you decided or behaved in a way that was different than what was “usual” for you?**

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# COMMON GROUND

## EXPERIENCES

Common experiences provide your group with opportunities to seek Jesus together. While each person may have a different perspective on the same event, it's important to notice the experiences they have in common about what God might be saying or doing.

Some examples of common experiences:

- Mission trip / service project in the community
- Hosting a cooking session at someone's house
- Special celebrations (e.g. Christmas)
- Fun outings / social events
- Bible studies

Essentially any time a group is together can be common experience. The key is utilizing "Notice God Moments," whether in a formal way or informally, to see what Jesus might be doing/communicating at that moment.

Something to note: Experiences in and of themselves are not the primary driver in understanding life. It's worthwhile to check these experiences with moments exemplified in Scripture and to notice how God worked through Biblical figures to transform their lives.

## TERMINOLOGY

As this becomes part of your group's culture, you'll notice certain terminology becomes part of the group's vernacular. It's helpful to periodically define those terms again, especially for people who are new to the group.

One way to clarify terms is to establish an understanding of reading the Bible. Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart's

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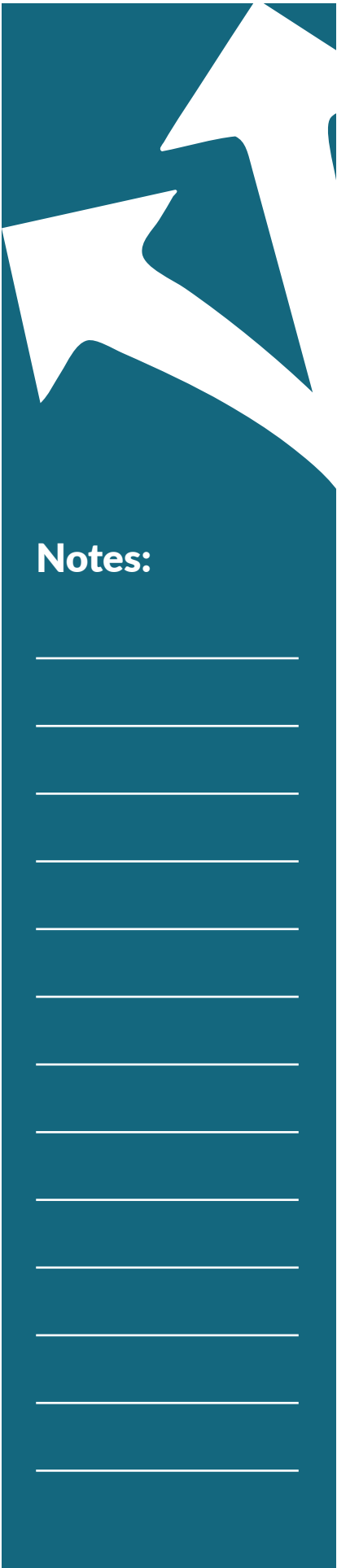
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book *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* is a great tool in establishing that understanding. [https://www.amazon.ca/How-Read-Bible-All-Worth/dp/0310517826/ref=pd\\_lpo\\_sbs\\_14\\_t\\_0?\\_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=2VJKXPF2KG2P1H3ZF5AS](https://www.amazon.ca/How-Read-Bible-All-Worth/dp/0310517826/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_t_0?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=2VJKXPF2KG2P1H3ZF5AS)

 **Note:** As new people join the group, it's beneficial to regularly define certain terms.



**Notes:**

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# DECISION-MAKING MOMENTS

Periodically God challenges us to make a decision: some are profound, others more trivial. The objective is to provide a space for students to hear God’s voice and consider what he has in store for them. There may be a series of decisions:

- Do you think God exists at all?
- If God exists, do you want to pay attention to him?
- Jesus calls you to follow him; are you willing to do that?
- Jesus forgives and redeems you with his death and resurrection; are you willing to embrace/accept that?
- Jesus is asking for you to surrender this particular area of your life; will you?



Notice these questions challenge students to turn one direction or another. Depending on where they are in their journey, there may be decisions you revisit.

- One key question that Jesus regularly challenges us with is: “Will you follow me?” Jesus’ call to follow him is to allow him to lead your life; are you willing to do that?

This is a fundamental question that shapes our trajectory in life and eternity.

**Matt Wilkinson further explains this:**

*Decision Moments are recognizing our need for Jesus’s redemptive work in our life, not just to embrace him as Saviour and our need for forgiveness from sin, but that there is a much bigger decision which is to commit to having him as LORD and surrendering the leadership of our lives to joining Jesus on mission in the redemptive*

*work of all of creation. Decision Moments are critical and teens need to be intentionally invited into those moments. However, they need to be aware that the decision is not a magical prayer or a crossing of the line but instead another step in and ongoing redemptive work in our lives as we drawn closer in relationships with Jesus, be more obedient to the calling of the Father, and more intentional in the submission to the moving of the Holy Spirit as we fully give our lives to following the person and message of Jesus.*

One way to summarize these decision-making moments is:

Accepting that I am not perfect and need to turn away from ways that are not honouring to God

Believing that Jesus died and rose again for the forgiveness of my sins and in doing that has called me into surrender the leadership of my life to his leading

Commit to join God on mission in His redemptive work in our world.

Realize that following Jesus is not only surrendering to God for forgiveness of sins, but also that these things need to be dealt with so you can more clearly hear the leading of the Holy Spirit. Are you willing to listen to hear how the Holy Spirit is asking for you to join Him on mission, which includes a specific way God is calling you to bring about His redemptive work in your community, family, world?

Sometimes God asks this question in very private moments. Other times, it's not, for example at a retreat. (This assumes you understand what Jesus' invitation entails. If you're not sure, discuss this with your pastor or your church leaders to ensure you're on the same page.)

Whether in a more informal setting or in an established setting, a few reminders:

Be calm. Don't get overly excited or overly concerned

Asking clarifying questions. Have students paraphrase in their own words what they understand this invitation to be. You may need to help correct their understanding. If that's the case, provide an opportunity for them to reconsider.

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The responses may be emotional; allow the emotions to flow naturally. An emotional experience is not bad or manipulative. God often uses emotion (as he created them within us) to draw us near to Him, to experience him, to emotionally connect with him. Emotional experiences can be very real and honest times that are most helpful to welcome in the supernatural work of God to be revealed not just to our head but to our heart/soul. The students may be dealing with some very substantial issues. Whether there is great joy or deep pain that needs to be worked through, that emotion needs an outlet. The key in this is to be present. Don't worry about what to say; be the presence of Christ with the Holy Spirit.

That being said, the decision cannot be solely emotionally driven. The decision to follow Jesus is both an emotional and cerebral response. Be sure to check back shortly after to clarify if the student understands what they are committing to. Some may be swept up in an emotional experience but realize afterwards they are not ready to make such a commitment. This does not negate their experience with God, but they need to be aware of the commitment they're making when the emotions are no longer heightened. Some questions to consider:

### **What led to that emotion you felt?**

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### **What's the best way to follow up after you've experienced this?**

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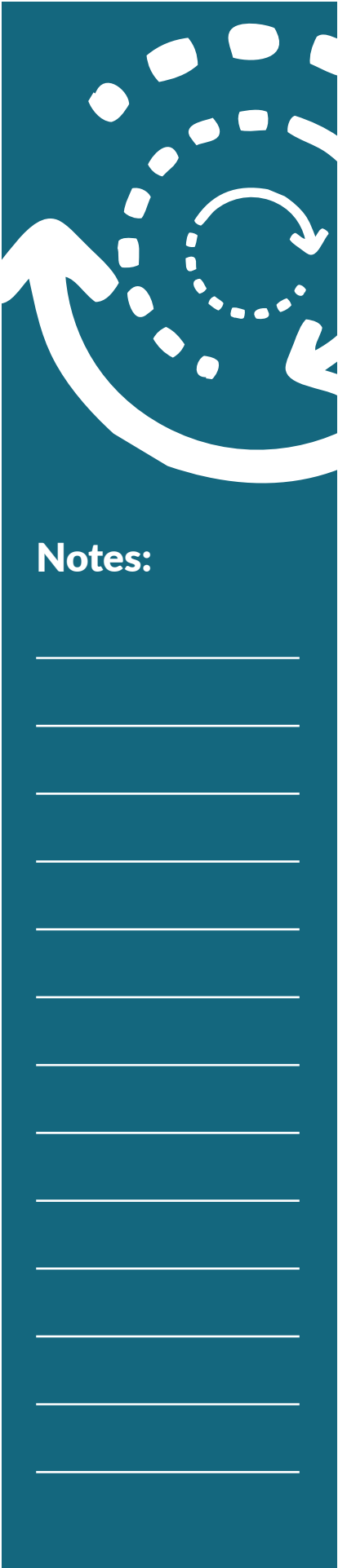
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# FOLLOW UP

Remember that while this moment may be a milestone in their faith journey, it is one moment. Its profoundness and significance are between that individual and Jesus. It's important to meet a few days after (2-7 days). Give time for the decision to settle in. This meeting is an opportunity to see if this person understands and continues to desire that commitment made. You may need to revisit what exactly that commitment is and the possible (positive and negative) consequences of it. Some questions to consider:

## Since that time, what's different?

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## Who have you talked to about this? What's been their reaction?

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## Based on what you know now, does that decision stand?

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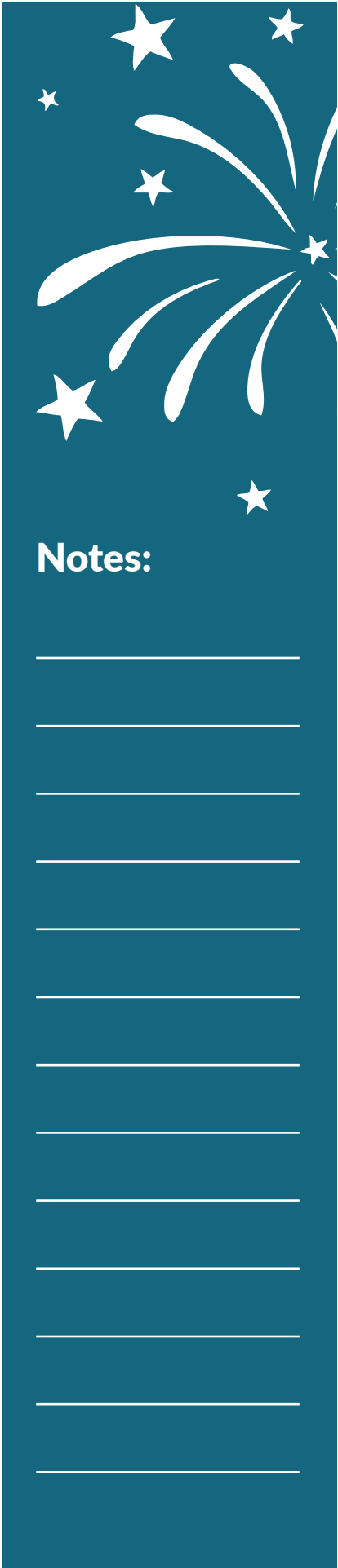
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Remind that person God will continue to engage with them and draw them closer into that friendship and intimacy with Jesus.





# CELEBRATION

Jesus reminds us that, when one person is willing to follow Jesus, heaven rejoices (Luke 15:10)! We should celebrate milestones that students make in their journey with God. Which milestones? Whichever ones that are significant to that individual. One church places a red balloon at the front of the sanctuary when a person repents and follows. Another might give a Bible inscribe with that significant date. Maybe you throw a big party. The key is to celebrate what God continues to do in drawing us closer to himself.

Also realize that celebrations aren't just for "salvation" moments; it's a core element throughout this process (at those God moments) when that person is recognizing God's intersections. Some of these may have been in the past, but when they're recognized, celebrate them!

Some are not ready to make that step. That's okay. Remind them that Jesus' invitation is still available, in fact, always available. The important thing is those individuals are present when they could be anywhere else. God is continuing to seek them. Encourage them to reflect on why they are present and what God might be saying to them. Encourage them to ask questions, to express doubts and fears. This is part of noticing God moments.



## CONTACT US

Alvin Lau, Youth Ministries Associate

Website: [cboqyouth.ca](http://cboqyouth.ca)

 [facebook.com/cboqyouth](https://facebook.com/cboqyouth) |  [@CBOQYouth](https://twitter.com/CBOQYouth) |  [@cboqyouth](https://instagram.com/cboqyouth)

Email: [alau@baptist.ca](mailto:alau@baptist.ca) | Phone: 416-620-2946

5 International Blvd,

Etobicoke, ON, M9W 6H3

Phone: 416-622-8600 | Fax: 416-622-2308



**CANADIAN  
BAPTISTS**  
of Ontario  
and Quebec