

## The Bridge Illustration of the Gospel

It is important that we be prepared, if given the opportunity, to present the gospel in such a way that a person can understand it and know how to respond if they want to.

The Bridge Illustration is one way. Its strengths are:

- a) **It's Personal** – you draw it out with the person
- b) **It's Visual** – it helps the person visualize what Jesus has done to bring us to God. It also helps the person to clarify or visualize where they stand with God.
- c) **It Uses Questions** – to find out where the person is – their understanding – so you can make sure the gospel is being communicated – tailor your presentation to the listener.
- d) It gets the person to actually **look at the Bible themselves**.

It should be noted that this method does require:

- at least 15 minutes,
- a Bible,
- paper and pen
- the permission of the listener for you to show it to him or her.

It does take some time to learn the plan also. I personally have found it beneficial to more or less memorize it. This actually makes you more able to be flexible and sensitive to the other person rather than less, because you have a direction you know you're heading so that you can be more attentive to the other person's concerns, etc.

### **Here is a Sample Way of Presenting it:**

OPENER: *(Whenever it seems appropriate to present the gospel by this illustration you need to gain the person's permission)*


"I have an illustration that I find helpful in understanding what the Bible says of how we can know God personally. It takes about 15 minutes to show. Would you be willing for me to show it to you right now?"

*(If the person agrees – then you carry on.)*

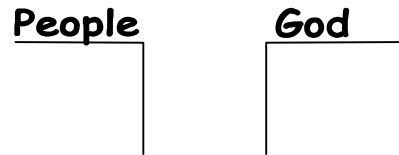
**I** Draw the first part of the illustration: **People ← → God**

"Do you see what I've drawn here? 'People' and 'God' with a two-way arrow in between? The reason I've drawn that is because the Bible says the reason God created people was not so much that he wanted agents to do His bidding, but rather He wanted beings to love. He created us because He wanted us to be His

friends, so the Bible says God created us in His own image. As you can see it's a two way arrow because God's desire was that not only would He know and love us but that we in turn would know and love Him. For it to be a real love, God gave us the freedom of choice, the ability to respond in love to Him or not. His desire was that we would have an intimate love relationship, not just for seventy years, but for all eternity. God give us this choice, though what happened for each one of us individually and for all humanity in general was that we chose to ignore God, to say 'I want to be my own boss, to run my own life, to do what I want where I want and when I want to do it'. What that did was cause a great wall or gap between us

**People** ←  → **God**  
**rebellion** and God. (*Draw the Wall in*) I'm going to label the wall rebellion because it was we who blocked out God, not the other way around."

**II** "That's what this illustration is about – it's about the problem that all humanity has of there being a great gap between us and God."  
*(Draw the two cliffs – people on one side and God on the other, a great chasm – canyon between them. Point that out.)*



**III** "Now let me ask you a few questions of your opinion:

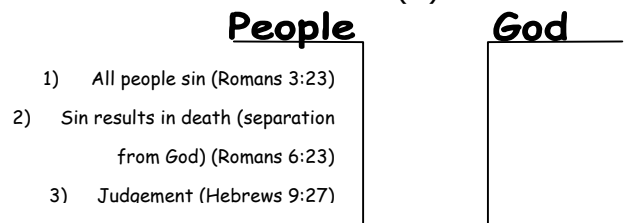
1) Would you agree that all people are guilty of sin?"

*(If the person says yes – say "that's what the Bible says – no matter how good we are and may seem to be in comparison to other people – we all have fallen short of God's standard. God's glory – Write in 'All People Sin (Romans 3:23)'  
 If the person disagrees look at both Romans 3:23 and also Isaiah 53:6 which helps describe the nature of sin.)*

2) "Do you know what the Bible says the result of sin is in a person's life?"

*(Help them look up Romans 6:23 – Ask 'What does it say sin results in in our lives?'  
 Answer: death. Point out that means not only death – biological but more importantly – That part of us which can know God – communicate with Him and experience His love is killed as a results of Sin – so that death is really separation from God.) Write in 'Sin results in death (separation from God) Romans 6:23*

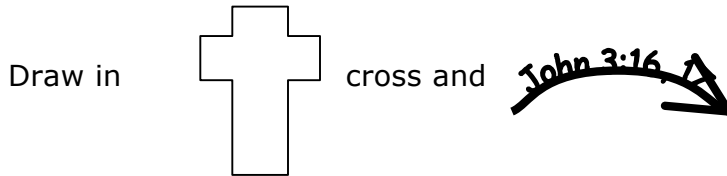
"Ultimately, in Hebrews 9:27 says that we all have an appointment with death – and at that point we come before God and are judged – held accountable for our life – well I think you can see that this is bad news for all of us because (1) all sin and (2) sin leads to death so for each one of us if judged by our lives are



judged guilty and separated from God forever.

Write in **Judgement (Hebrews 9:27)**

**IV** "That's why God sent Jesus – Because God recognized that all of us were in a tail-spin, we were incapable of coming out of it without Him intervening."



Turn to John 3:16, 17. Get person to read to self the ask some questions concerning these verses.

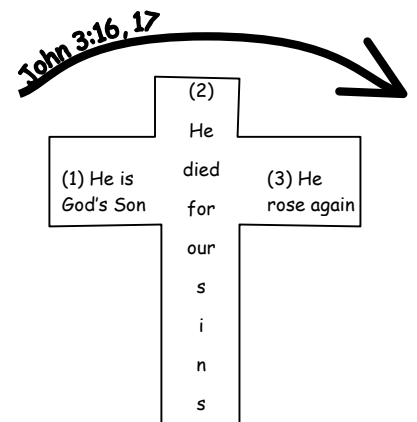
- "What does it say about how Jesus feels about you and me and all people? (Answer: He loves us. He cares. He doesn't want us to experience death – judgement.)
- "What does He want us to have or experience?" (Answer: (1) ETERNAL LIFE (write it in below 'God'). Explain what eternal life is: life with God forever, fullness and joy.)
- "What is the one thing the verses say we need to do to receive eternal life." (cross the bridge) (Answer: BELIEVE – write it in above 'God')

"In a minute we'll talk about what Believe means but first we should say the Bible is clear that Jesus is the only one qualified to be the bridge to bring us to God (John 14:6) because (1) He is God's Son and (2) He died for our sins (1 Peter 3:18) and (3) He rose again; He's alive. He won the battle." Write it inside the cross.

**V** "Now what do you think it means to believe? How would you define it?" – clarify both in head and heart – TRUST (Write it after Believe)  
e.g. – chair or the tight rope walker – Blondin

**VI**

- "The question is then how can a person entrust themselves to Christ and climb (as it were) on the Bridge?"
- "What does Jesus say He's doing?" Answer: knocking
- "What does He say He wants us to do?" Answer: open the door (write it down above Believe)
- "If we do, what does He promise?" (Answer: 2) JESUS COMES INTO OUR LIFE and 3) WE BECOME HIS FRIENDS FOREVER. Write in in below 'eternal life')



Point out 1) 2) 3) is exactly what God created us for in the first place.

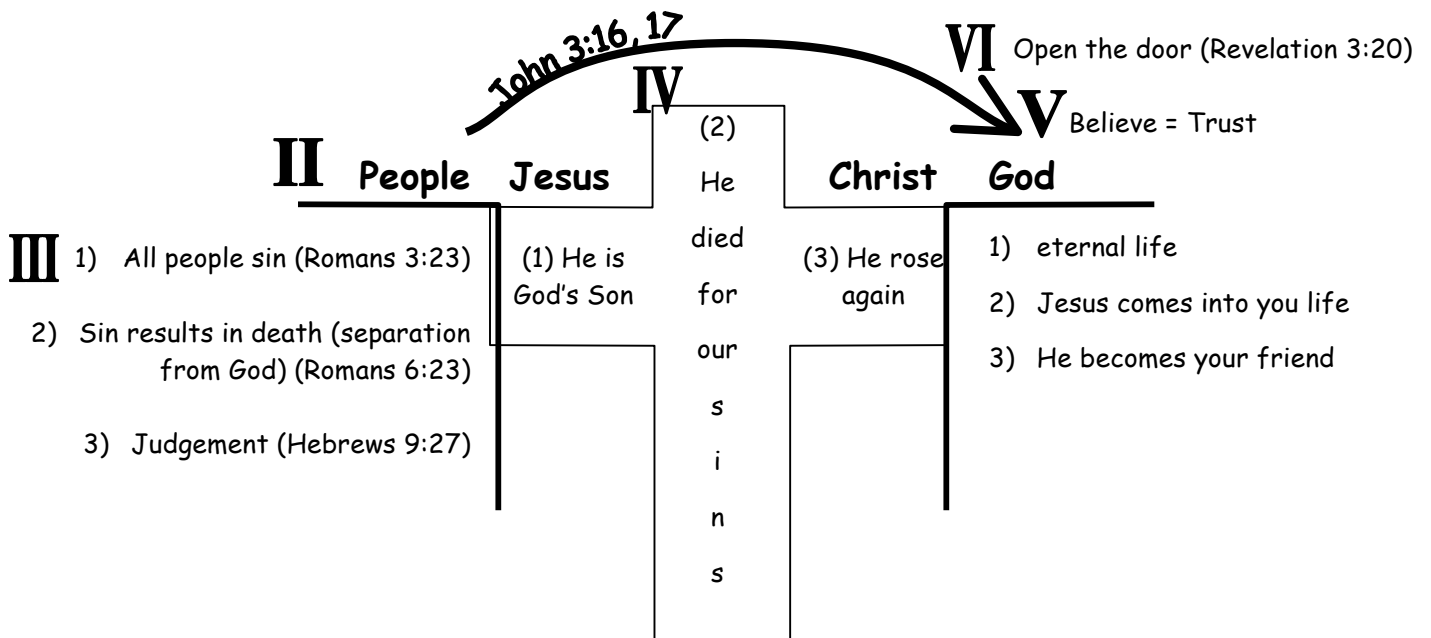
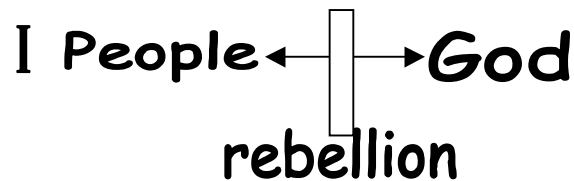
“How do we open the door?” Answer – say ‘Come in’

PRAYER TO JESUS – no formula

- repentance
- faith
- He promises
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Clarifying questions: That’s the illustration.

- (a) Does it make sense?
- (b) Is there anything you disagree with?
- (c) Where would you put yourself on the diagram
- (d) Would you know how to cross if you wanted to? (Point out only two places.)
- (e) Anything stopping you?
- (f) Would you like to receive Jesus?



**VII** Prayer to Jesus

Lord Jesus:

- (1) I'm sorry I've hurt you by my sin
- (2) Please come into my life right now
- (3) I want to be yours forever