

## *Sharing the Gospel*

All team members should be prepared to share the gospel. Some will be called upon to share with children or a group of adults. Of course, there are many effective ways to do this. When sharing, you will want to be sure use scripture. Two great methods are The Bridge illustration and the Romans Road. The Bridge can be simplified for children or for shorter presentations. It is also illustrated well through a drawing or a printed version you can easily find online. Another option is using a wordless book, which is essentially explaining the colors of a gospel bracelet. Whatever method you select, put it into your own words and don't read directly from your notes, except for scripture. Try to look the person, or group of people, in the eyes as often as you can. Choose one of the following ways, or use these as an example to choose another way or make up your own. Use notecards to outline what you want to say or make notes you can pull up on your phone. Be sure to mention that there are only two things you need to do in order to be saved: believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and repent (turn away from) your sins.

### *The Bridge*

**God's Love:** The Bible teaches us that God is love and that He loves us. He desires that we experience an abundant life. This would include such things as love, peace, purpose, and fulfillment. Jesus, speaking about His purpose for coming to earth, said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10b). In the beginning, when God put man on earth, God and man had a relationship which produced an abundant life.

**Man's Problem:** But God did not create man like a robot who would automatically love and have fellowship with Him in return. He gave man a will and the freedom of choice. Man could keep God's commandments, or he could live his life apart from God. Man chose to go his own way. This resulted in a separation between God and man. God is completely holy and perfect, while man is sinful and imperfect. The Bible says, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). People continue to go their own way today. And this applies to all men. Each one of us is guilty. All of us have made decisions, done actions, and had thoughts that were contrary to what God desires. We have been like wandering sheep.

The result of turning away from God and doing things that are displeasing to God is spiritual death—eternal death. The Bible also says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Paul states here that the consequences or payment we receive in return for our sins is eternal death. So, you can see that on man's side we have eternal death, and on God's side there is eternal life. The last part of this verse talks about the free gift of God being eternal life, and that will become clearer as we develop this diagram. For now, we seem to be stuck on the death side.

(Next read Hebrews 9:27.) You can see as we look at this verse that each of us will die physically, and after we die physically, we will face judgment. The Bible teaches that there will be a day of judgment when God will judge the actions and thoughts of every man and woman. In Revelation 20:15 the Bible says that "If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

So, you can see that on man's side we have sinned, and the penalty of those sins is eternal death. Also, we see that the consequences of our sins are for us to face the judgment of God. This gives a dismal picture of our situation on this side of the chasm that separates us from God.

**Man's Remedy:** Human beings think they can devise their own way to obtain God's favor and blessing. They usually devise codes of conduct and requirements that need to be performed in order to please God. These include giving to charity, helping others, praying, attending church, or being baptized.

However, God's Word states that all these efforts are useless in the sight of a holy God to obtain God's salvation. (Next read Ephesians 2:8-9.) From these verses we understand that good works will never suffice to meet God's requirements, but that God's salvation is a gift that is obtained by grace alone through faith.

**God's Remedy:** In spite of the fact that we have turned our backs on God and have disobeyed Him, God still loves us and desires that we know Him personally so that He can bless us. Only one adequate bridge can cross the gulf that exists between man and God, and that bridge is through Jesus Christ and His death on the cross.

The Bible also says, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). The Bible teaches that when He died on the cross, He died in our place. He paid the penalty and took the judgment for our sins, so we could be forgiven for all our wrongdoings. The slate could be wiped clean.

## *The Bridge (Cont.)*

**Man's Response:** Christ has made it possible for us to cross over to God's side and experience the full life He wants us to have. But we are not automatically on God's side. We need to take action; we need to ask God's forgiveness and ask Jesus Christ into our lives.

"The time has come," Jesus said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15). Repentance means to reverse direction. We must give up our efforts to reach God by man's remedies and accept God's remedy for our sins.

The Bible also says, "Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). We "reach out" to God through prayer and receive the gift of eternal life.

Now let's add another verse here (Revelation 3:20) that goes right along with John 1:12. This is Jesus Christ talking. (After the verse is read, you would continue.) So, the door on which Jesus is knocking is the very center of our lives—the heart, the core, the innermost part of our lives. He is knocking and would like to come into our lives. He wants us to open the door and invite Him in.

**Summary:** Let's take a look at John 5:24. This statement of Jesus summarizes all we have talked about. "I tell you the truth, whoever hears My word [the things we have been discussing here] and believes Him who sent Me [believe means to receive, that is, to invite Christ into our lives] has eternal life [a present possession] and will not be condemned [judgment]; he has crossed over from death to life."

## *The Romans Road*

The Romans Road to salvation is a way of explaining the good news of salvation using verses from the Book of Romans. It is a simple, yet powerful method of explaining why we need salvation, how God provided salvation, how we can receive salvation, and what the results of salvation are.

The first verse on the Romans Road to salvation is Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." We have all sinned. We have all done things that are displeasing to God. There is no one who is innocent. Romans 3:10-18 gives a detailed picture of what sin looks like in our lives. The second Scripture on the Romans Road to salvation, Romans 6:23, teaches us about the consequences of sin - "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The punishment that we have earned for our sins is death. Not just physical death, but eternal death!

The third verse on the Romans Road to salvation picks up where Romans 6:23 left off, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:8 declares, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus Christ died for us! Jesus' death paid for the price of our sins. Jesus' resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' death as the payment for our sins.

The fourth stop on the Romans Road to salvation is Romans 10:9, "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Because of Jesus' death on our behalf, all we have to do is believe in Him, trusting His death as the payment for our sins – and we will be saved! Romans 10:13 says it again, "for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins and rescue us from eternal death. Salvation, the forgiveness of sins, is available to anyone who will trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The final aspect of the Romans Road to salvation is the results of salvation. Romans 5:1 has this wonderful message, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Through Jesus Christ we can have a relationship of peace with God. Romans 8:1 teaches us, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Because of Jesus' death on our behalf, we will never be condemned for our sins. Finally, we have this precious promise of God from Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."