



EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

THE BRIDGE PRESENTATION

NOTES

Introduction

The Great Commission will never be accomplished until every disciple is “fishing for men.” In this lesson we will be teaching you how to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to another person. The tool we use is called the **Bridge** illustration. We use the Socratic form of evangelism in which people are given basic information and then asked specific questions based on the information. This has proven to be a very effective method of presenting the Gospel for a number of reasons:

- It creates a deductive dialogue.
- To answer the questions people must **reason** from the information given.
- The answer establishes the premises from which we continue to reason.
- People tell you what you wanted to tell them.
- People discover the truth on their own rather than by your giving them the answers.
- You have immediate feedback on what people do and don't understand.
- The truth is visualized as you write the answer into the illustration.

You are asked to memorize the following sequence of questions. You need not memorize word for word as you would memorize a Bible verse. However, if you adjust the questions, make sure that the question extracts the answer you want. A sloppy question may extract the wrong answer and hinder rather than help you. Memorize the sequence of questions in bold print. The logical answers are printed in script. Both are printed together so you can see the flow of thought for the dialogue.

Gospel Presentation

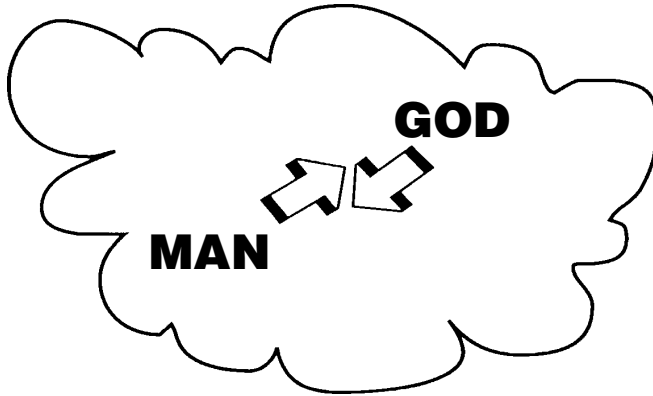
A person must understand three things to become a Child of God or, in other words, a Christian. With your permission, I would like to show you from the Bible what these three things are.

Okay, if it doesn't take too long, I have a few minutes.

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The First Thing

The Bible records that God made Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden with clear instructions about the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. They lived in perfect harmony with God and had fellowship with Him.



One day however, something happened in the Garden that caused a barrier to be erected between them and their Creator so that they could no longer have fellowship with Him.

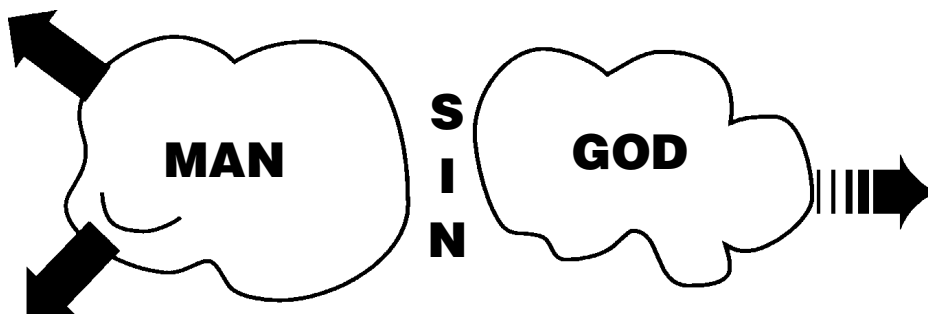
Can you tell me what that was?

Was this when they ate the fruit and disobeyed God?

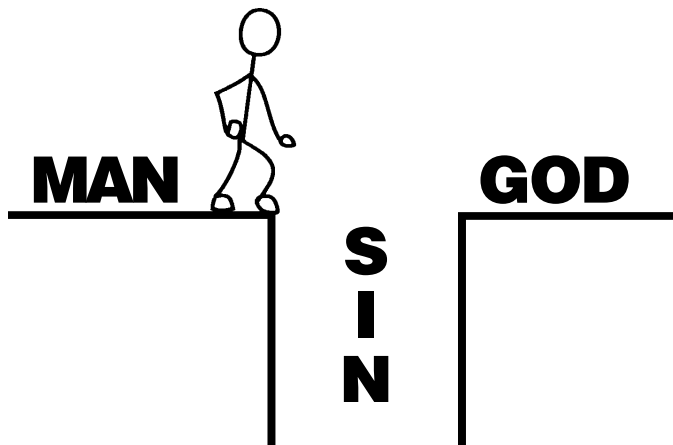
Yes, Adam and Eve chose to listen to the serpent's reasoning rather than God's command. There is a special word the Bible uses for this disobedience. Do you know what the Bible calls it?

Was it sin?

That's right-~~it~~ was sin.



We could illustrate this another way; we could put man standing on one side of a cliff, God on the other side and SIN in between, separating them.



The Bible talks about this in Romans 3:23.

Would you please read this passage to me?

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

According to this passage, how many have sinned?

It says “all.”

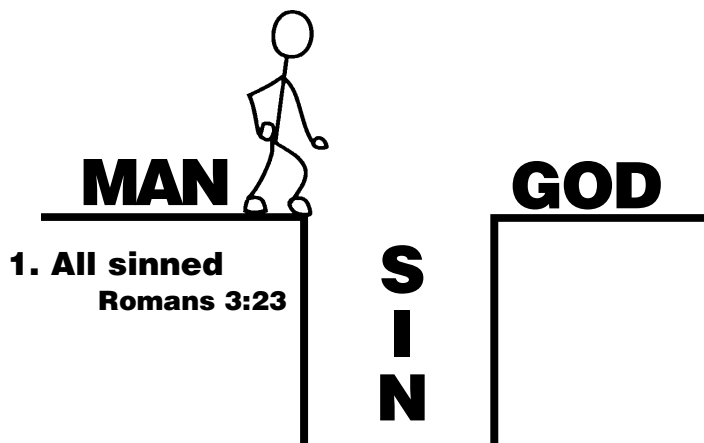
Does this mean I have sinned?

It says “all,” so I guess that means you.

Does it mean that you, too, have sinned?

Yes, it means that I, too, have sinned.

Now that’s the first thing a man must understand to become a Christian. Let’s write that down.



The Second Thing

The second thing that a man must understand to become a Christian is found in Romans 6:23. Here the author draws a conclusion to this matter of sin.

Would you please read this passage to me?

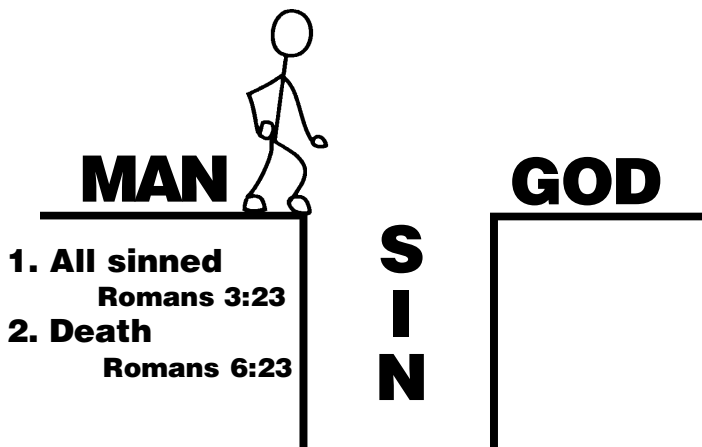
“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

God does not expect us to labor and make this world a better place to live without paying us a wage. God fully intends to pay us a wage for all that we have ever done.

However, here God says that the wage for our sin is *what*?

It says “death.”

This is the second thing that a man must understand to become a Christian, so let’s write that down.



We could say many things about death. But if we reduce it to its simplest form, it is mere separation. Several years ago, my father-in-law died. Now he is in one place and I am in another; death has separated us. When Adam and his wife sinned, they died spiritually and were separated from God.

The Third Thing

The third thing that a man must understand to become a Christian is found in Hebrews 9:27.

Would you please read this verse to me?

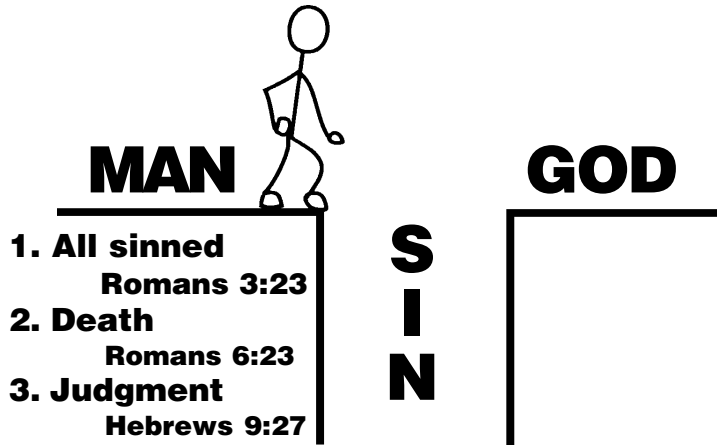
“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”

According to this verse, when a man dies he has an appointment with God, for what?

Judgment.

Since that is the third thing that a man must understand to become a Christian, let’s write it down.

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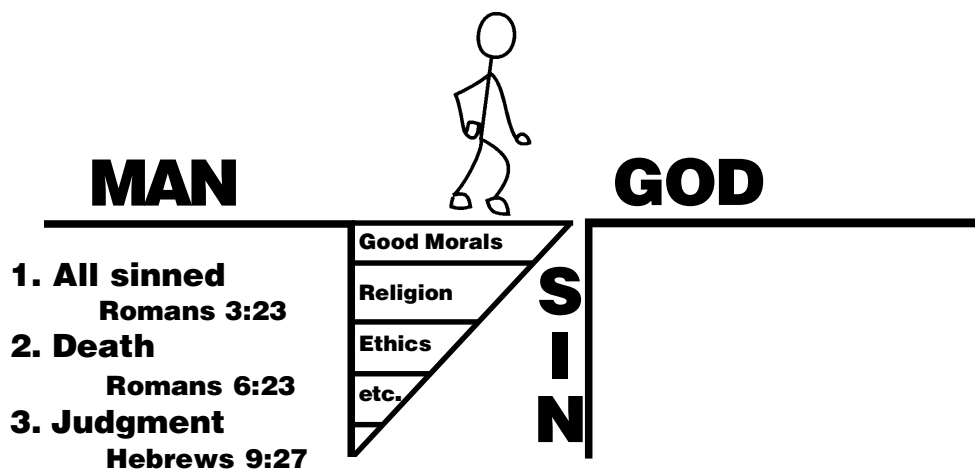
Now if it is true that all men have sinned, and that the penalty for sin is death and separation from God, and that the day is coming when man will be judged. This does not paint a very bright picture, does it?

No, it certainly does not.

Down through the ages, man has understood this and has tried to make his way back to God.

What are some ways *you* think men try to make their way back to God?

By living a good moral life? Being religious? Helping his fellow man?



You are right—this is how men try to make or work their way back to God. However, we learned in Romans 3:23 that all our efforts fall short of what God requires. In John 5:24, God reveals what is required. Here we learn three very interesting things that are relevant to what we have already learned.

I wonder if you would read this verse to me?

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me **has** everlasting life, and **shall** not come into judgment, but has **passed** from death into life.”

Who’s speaking?

I guess it’s Jesus.

That’s right—Jesus says that if you will hear His Words...

Are these my words or Jesus’?

Jesus’.

And believe in Him who sent me...

Who sent Jesus?

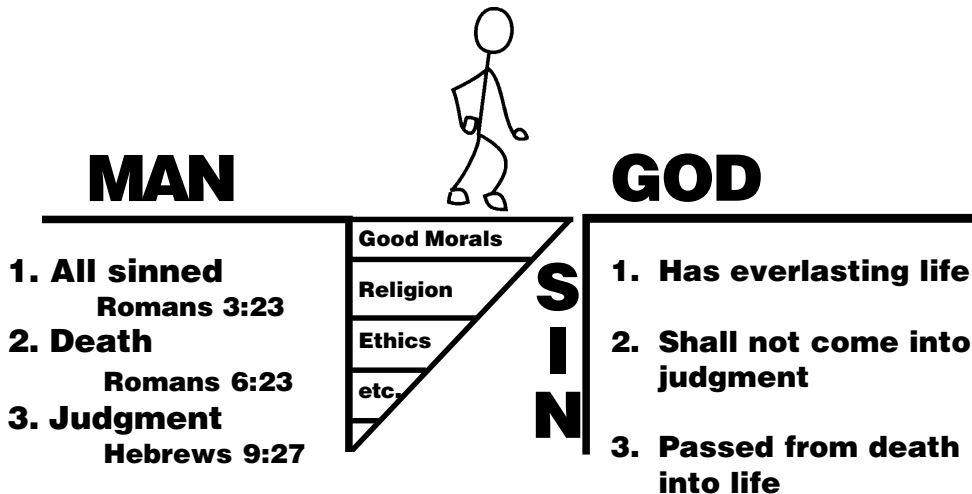
God.

Three things would happen.

What are they?

- *Has everlasting life*
- *Shall not face judgment*
- *Passed from death to life*

So let’s write those down on the other side of the ravine.



Notice the tenses of the verbs in each of the above phrases.

In what tense is “has”—past, future, or present?

Present tense.

What does the present tense in this statement mean?

It means that right now, in the present, I can have eternal life.

That's right. Now in what tense is "shall not" - present, past or future?

Future tense.

So what does this phrase mean?

I will not be judged at some future date.

That's right. Now in what tense is "passed" - future, present or past?

Past tense.

And what does this phrase mean?

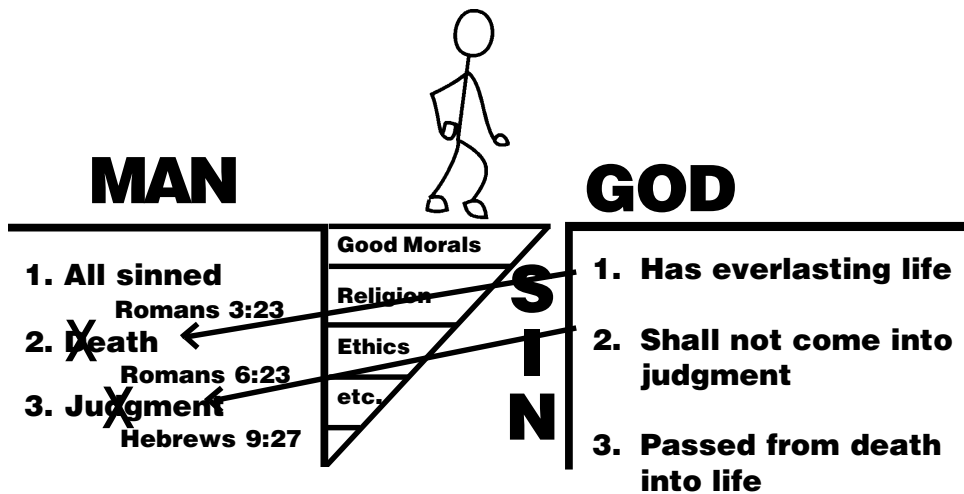
I have already passed from death into life.

That's right. It is important that you understand this because if you now have everlasting life, what does that do to death?

It crosses out death.

If you shall not be judged, what does that do to judgment?

It cancels judgment.



When I hear God calling and believe, that means:

- Intellectually I understand the facts of the Gospel;
- Emotionally I know and want to act on what I have heard;

- **Volitionally** I turn from man's side to God's side and place my faith in Jesus' finished work on the Cross for my sin.

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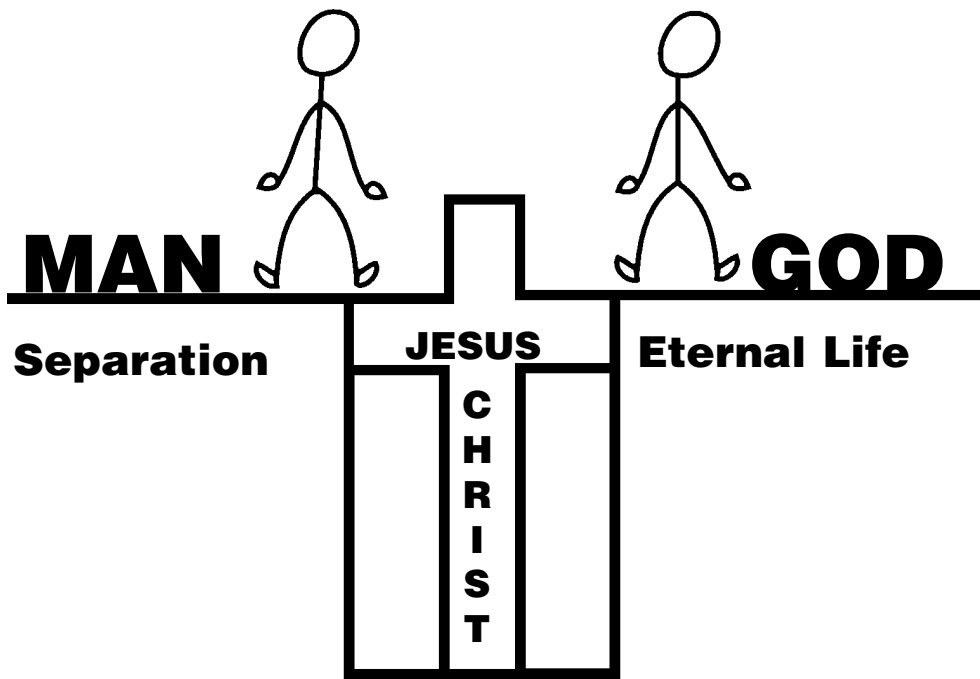
This allows me to pass over to God's side. The Bible says:

God is on one side and all the people on the other; Jesus, Himself man, is between them to bring them together, by giving His life for all mankind.

1 Timothy 2:5 (LB)

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures...

1 Corinthians 15:3,4



If you were to place yourself into this illustration, where would you draw yourself?

I would place myself on man's side.

Is that where you want to be?

No.

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Where do you want to be?

Over on God's side.

Do you know how to get there?

I'm not sure.

Let's look at John 1:12.

Will you read this verse to me?

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name."

What must a man do to become a Child of God?

He must receive "Him."

Must receive whom?

Jesus Christ.

Do you know how to receive Him?

I'm not sure.

Let's look at another verse in Revelation 3:20.

Will you read this to me?

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."

Who is speaking?

Jesus.

What is He doing?

He is knocking at the door.

What door?

The door to man's heart and life.

Why is He knocking?

Because He wants to come in.

The way to receive Christ is to open the door of your heart and life and let Him in. To get from man's side to God's side, all you must do when we pray is repent of your sins, and ask God to do three things:

- **Forgive you for your sins.**
- **Come into your life and help you to become the kind of person He created you to be.**
- **Give you the gift of eternal life so that you might be with Him forever.**

I am going to ask you to pray these three things loud enough so that when you have finished I can say a prayer to God for you. Let's pray.