

THE BRIDGE — FACILITATOR GUIDE

A Gospel Training & Presentation Tool

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Bridge is a gospel illustration that uses a simple drawing to show what separates people from God and how Jesus bridges that gap. This session will guide participants through the gospel visually using Romans 6:23 as the anchor verse, give them an opportunity to practice sharing it, and close with personal discovery and small group discussion through the participant handout.

These resources can be used as a gospel training to equip participants to share the gospel with others, or as a gospel lesson to help a group personally engage with and respond to the message. Both purposes are meaningful and often happen simultaneously in the same room. For example, someone who doesn't know Jesus could respond to the gospel during the presentation, while someone who does know Jesus grows in confidence to share it. The same session can serve both purposes.

NOTE TO THE FACILITATOR

Before leading this session, practice drawing and explaining The Bridge until you can do it naturally without reading word for word. You do not need to memorize the script perfectly — but you should know the flow well enough to draw and explain the illustration fluidly. This illustration has been widely used in gospel ministry for many years. For additional context and teaching ideas, read the full blog post “Start with the Gospel” at redeemedblog.com. The participant handout is available as a separate download and includes personal discovery sections and small group discussion questions.

SESSION GOALS

- 1. For Believers** — Every follower of Jesus who participates in this session will leave more confident in their ability to share the gospel message — in a one-on-one conversation, with a group, or in an everyday moment God opens up. (1 Peter 3:15)
- 2. For Those Who Don't Yet Know Jesus** — Any person who does not yet know Jesus as their Savior will leave feeling that the gospel message makes sense, that it is meant for them personally, and that they know how to respond in faith. (Romans 10:14–15)

SESSION OVERVIEW

Step 1 — Frame the Session

Before introducing the illustration, take a few minutes to share why the gospel is the starting point for everything. Help participants understand that the gospel is not just the entry point to the Christian life — it is the foundation everything else is built on. A believer who knows the gospel well and can articulate it clearly is better equipped to grow in their

own faith, disciple others, and share their story with confidence. You might say something like:

“Before we dive into any study or series, we want to make sure we are all starting from the same place — the gospel. The gospel is not just for people who don’t yet know Jesus. It is the foundation of everything we believe as followers of Christ. Today we are going to walk through it together so that we know it well enough to live it, share it, and build everything else on top of it.”

Step 2 — Introduce the Session

Gather your group and explain what you will be doing together. Tell participants you will be walking them through the gospel message using a simple illustration called The Bridge. Let them know they will follow along by drawing the illustration as you teach — so make sure everyone has a pen or pencil and their participant handout ready before you begin.

Step 3 — Teach the Visual

Using the script on the following page, draw and explain The Bridge illustration. Write out Romans 6:23 at the top of your drawing surface before you begin. As you teach each element, underline the corresponding phrase in the verse. Speak naturally and let the drawing guide the conversation. Encourage participants to draw along with you on their handout as you teach. Before you begin, review the Conversation Starters on the following page. These are simple lead-ins you can share with participants to help them know how to introduce the gospel naturally in a one-on-one conversation. Encourage participants to write down any that feel natural to them before you begin.

Step 4 — Partner Practice

Once you have finished teaching the illustration, have participants pair up with someone near them. Encourage them to open their practice time with one of the Conversation Starters and close with a question from the Continuing the Conversation section at the end of this guide. Ask each person to take a turn sharing what they remember — either by pointing to the illustration they already drew or by drawing it again from memory as they explain. Encourage partners to help each other if someone gets stuck or forgets a part. Remind them that this is practice, not a test.

Step 5 — Group Debrief

Bring everyone back together after the partner practice. Use this time to encourage your group well. You might ask:

- What went well when you practiced?
- What was hard or felt awkward?
- Did practicing even once help your confidence?
- What questions, if any, do you have?

Acknowledge that sharing the gospel can feel intimidating — but remind your group that confidence grows through practice, not perfection. Most importantly, remind them that it is only through the power of God that anyone is saved. Our job is to be faithful and willing — not flawless. (1 Corinthians 3:6–7)

Step 6 — Salvation Invitation

Before moving to the participant handout, take a brief moment to acknowledge that someone in the room may be hearing the gospel for the first time — or may have heard it many times but is ready to officially respond in faith today. Invite anyone who does not know Jesus as their Savior to talk to you or another leader before they leave that day. Do not rush this moment. It may be the most important thing that happens all night.

Step 7 — Participant Handout

Distribute the participant handout and allow participants time to work through it individually or in a small group setting. The handout guides participants through the scriptures used in the presentation, invites them to write the gospel in their own words, and then explores what salvation means — that it starts now, that it is secure, and what growing in faith and community looks like. This can be done during the session or taken home for personal reflection.

TRAINING TIPS

- **Draw slowly.** The illustration only works if participants can follow along. Pause between each element and give people time to draw before moving on.
- **Draw big.** Use a whiteboard, chalkboard, or large sheet of paper when teaching The Bridge to a group. If you are sharing one-on-one, a napkin or the back of a piece of paper works just fine.
- **Write the verse first.** Before you draw anything, write Romans 6:23 at the top of your drawing surface. As you teach each element of the illustration, underline the corresponding phrase in the verse. This connects the picture to the Word and gives your audience a visual anchor for the whole presentation.
- **Leave the references on the page.** When sharing one-on-one, write any supporting scripture references around the illustration as you go. When you finish, the person you shared with has a complete gospel presentation on one piece of paper that they can take with them.
- **Practice before you lead.** Teach the illustration to a family member, a friend, or even just to yourself in a mirror before leading the session. The first time you teach it will always feel the most awkward — make sure that first time is not in front of your group.
- **Normalize the awkward.** When you debrief after partner practice, be honest about your own experience learning to share the gospel. Vulnerability from the leader gives participants permission to struggle without shame.
- **Close with a gospel invitation.** No matter how the session goes, make sure the invitation in Step 6 is never skipped. You never know who in the room needs to hear it.

THE SCRIPT — TEACHING THE BRIDGE ILLUSTRATION

The following is a guide for teaching The Bridge gospel illustration. You do not need to memorize it word for word — but keep the flow and the key definitions intact as best you can. If you have never seen The Bridge taught before, search for examples on YouTube to help you understand how the drawing and the explanation work together before leading this session.

Before you begin, write Romans 6:23 at the top of your drawing surface:

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” — Romans 6:23 (ESV)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

One of the hardest parts of sharing the gospel is knowing how to bring it up naturally. Share these with your group before teaching the illustration and encourage them to write down any that feel natural to them.

- Can I show you a simple illustration that explains what I believe?
- I just learned something that really helped me understand the gospel — can I share it with you?
- Have you ever seen The Bridge? It’s a simple way of looking at what the Bible says about sin, death, and Jesus — can I walk you through it?
- I’d love to get your thoughts on something — can I draw something out for you real quick?

HUMANITY *(draw a short horizontal line on the left with a stick figure standing on top)*

This side of the illustration represents people — you, me, every person who has ever lived. We were created by God and made to know Him personally. But something went wrong.

Romans 3:23 · Genesis 1–2

GOD *(draw a short horizontal line on the right with “GOD” written above it, underlined, with a crown above the word)*

This side represents God — perfect, holy, and completely good. He created us to be in a relationship with Him. But there is a gap between us, and it didn’t get there by accident.

Isaiah 6:3 · 1 John 4:8

“The wages of sin is death” *(underline this phrase in Romans 6:23)*

WAGES *(draw a line going down from the left platform and a line going down from the right platform, creating the chasm between them)*

A wage is something you earn. When you work a job, your employer pays you what you are owed — what you have earned. The Bible uses that same word here. This isn't something God decided randomly. It is the natural result of something we have all done.

Romans 6:23 · Romans 3:23

SIN *(write "SIN" above the chasm)*

So what did we do? Romans 3:23 tells us:

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." — Romans 3:23 (ESV)

Sin is not just making mistakes — deep down, it is choosing to live for ourselves rather than for the God who made us. Every person has done this. And that choice has a consequence.

DEATH *(draw flames at the bottom of the chasm and write "DEATH" at the very bottom)*

The wage of sin is death — and the Bible is clear about what that means. It means physical death, yes. But more than that, it means spiritual death — an eternity separated from God in a place the Bible calls hell. God is not only loving — He is also perfectly holy and just. Sin against a holy God carries a real and serious consequence. And that consequence is more than any of us can pay on our own.

Romans 6:23 · 2 Thessalonians 1:9 · Revelation 20:14–15

BROKEN ARROWS *(draw broken arrows from the left platform reaching toward the right but falling short)*

People spend their lives trying to cross that gap on their own. Good deeds. Religion. Being a kind person. Working hard. But none of it is enough. The gap is too wide. We cannot earn our way back.

Proverbs 14:12 · Isaiah 64:6 · Ephesians 2:8–9

"But the free gift of God is eternal life" *(underline this phrase in Romans 6:23)*

THE CROSS *(draw a cross spanning the chasm, connecting both platforms)*

But God did not leave us there. Romans 5:8 says:

"but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." — Romans 5:8 (ESV)

God sent His one and only Son, Jesus, to do what none of us could do — live a perfect life on this earth. Jesus then took the full penalty for your sins by dying on the cross. And three days later, He defeated death by rising from the grave. The cross is the only bridge that spans this gap. Nothing else reaches.

ETERNAL LIFE *(draw a person crossing from the left platform over the cross to the right)*

And notice — the Bible calls this a free gift. You cannot earn it. You cannot work for it. You can only receive it. And what do you receive? Eternal life. Now, some people hear “eternal life” and think it only means heaven after you die. But listen to what Jesus Himself said in John 17:3:

“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” — John 17:3 (ESV)

Eternal life is knowing Jesus — not just someday, but right now. It starts the moment you cross.

John 17:3 · John 10:10 · 2 Corinthians 5:17

“In Christ Jesus our Lord” *(underline this phrase in Romans 6:23)*

THE CHOICE

If someone hands you a gift, you have a choice — you can receive it or you can refuse it. The same is true here. God is offering you eternal life through Jesus, but He does not force it on anyone. You have to decide what to do with it.

And here is what the Bible is clear about — that decision has real consequences. Receiving the gift means crossing from death to life, from separation into relationship with God. Refusing it means remaining on this side of the gap. Not because God stopped loving you, but because He loves you enough to let you choose.

This is not about being good enough. It is not about earning anything. It is simply about whether you are willing to receive what God is freely offering.

Notice that Romans 6:23 doesn’t just offer eternal life — it offers eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. To receive the gift is to receive all of who Jesus is — your Savior who rescues you and your Lord who now defines how you live. He becomes the center of your life, not just a part of it. So the real question is — how do you receive Him?

THE RESPONSE

Romans 10:9 tells us:

“because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” — Romans 10:9 (ESV)

You turn from living for yourself and trust Jesus — His life, His death, His resurrection — as the only way back to God. That decision changes everything. Not just where you spend eternity, but who you are and how you live today.

Romans 10:9 · Acts 2:38 · John 1:12 · 2 Corinthians 5:17

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

The following questions are tools participants can use when sharing The Bridge with someone one-on-one. Read through this list out loud with your group and encourage each person to write down one or two that feel most natural to them. Then have them practice using their chosen question with their partner to close out their sharing time.

- Have you ever heard this message before?
- Where do you think you would place yourself in this gospel illustration? Why?
- What questions do you have?
- Would you like to follow Jesus?
- Are you connected to a local church? If not, I would love to help you find one.
- How can I pray for you?