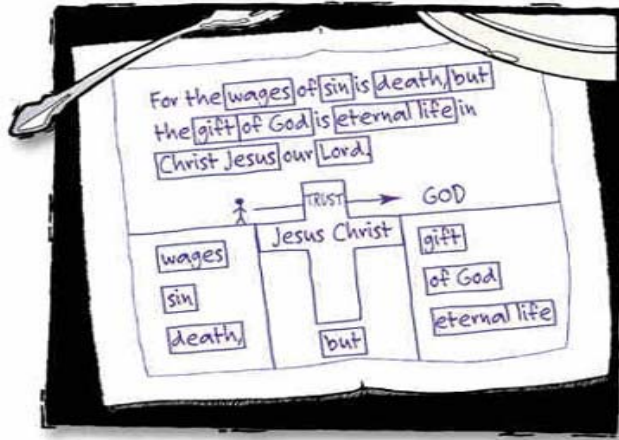


The Bridge (adapted from the Navigators)



To start, you can lead in by asking, "Do you want to know the one-verse that sums up the one point God was trying to make in the whole Bible?" Who can say no to a question like that! Open to Rom 6:23 and have your friend read it to you as you write it down at the top of the page. Then say, "There's an illustration that goes with this verse which describes God's relationship with people." "Let's go through and define all the important words - excluding 'the' and 'of', etc."

This is an interactive illustration. Basically, what you'll be doing is circle each word in the verse and write them down, one at a time. (See picture above.) The illustration has 'wages', 'sin' and 'death' on the left side, and 'gift', 'God' and 'eternal life' on the right side.

"So the 1st word is 'wages'. Do you know what a wage is? (It's something you earn for the work you do.) How would you feel if you worked a whole week and didn't receive your salary?"

"The 2nd word is 'sin'. What comes to mind when you think of the word sin?" (He may not be able to answer this question but that's ok, just ask, "What are some examples of sin?") Give him a chance to answer and then you can reiterate and highlight what's true. Affirm his examples of sin - lying, stealing, etc. And then define the word by saying, "It's missing the mark" (I use the bullseye example for this: we're all aiming for the center but we often miss, and that's a sin mark away from the center). "The 'center' we're aiming for is the standard God has set. (Rom 3:23)

"The next word is 'death'. How would you define death? There are 2 kinds of death – physical: when your heart & brain stops, and spiritual: when you are separated from God. Have you ever felt distant from God?"

At this point, re-read the verse by plugging in our definitions... "For what we've earned for missing the mark is separation from God..." (Now draw in the lines that make the cliffs representing man on one side and God on the other, showing the separation.)

And then, "The next word is 'BUT' - which identifies that there is a sharp contrast in thought coming. (The word 'BUT' is placed at the bottom in between the 2 sides of the cliff.)

Now on the right side...

"The next word is 'gift'. What is a gift? How is it different than a wage? If you gave me a watch, and I gave you money for it, is it still a gift? No, a gift must be free. But someone had to purchase it. Another thing -- if I give you my pen (give it to him), at which point is it yours? When you take it. So a gift must be received.

"Next word: 'God'. Who is God? So many answers can be put here, but let's narrow it down to three: God is Holy, Love & Just. 'Holy' means He's without sin, 'love' we know, and 'just' means He's fair.

"Next word: 'eternal life' - what is eternal life? Living forever in paradise with God. WHY is that wonderful? Because God is all that is good (He is Love, etc)..."

At this point, plug in the definitions to the verse again... "So for what we earn from missing the mark is eternal separation from God, BUT because God is Love, He wants to give us the free gift of living forever with Him in paradise..."

"But you see, there's a problem. Man is on one side because he's a sinner, and God is on the other side because He is holy (no sin). (I use the poison in water analogy here: even one tiny blot of poison will make a whole container of water undrinkable.) And because God is also just, He can't just let us slide into heaven without punishment for our crimes (it wouldn't be 'fair'). (I use the judge and criminal analogy here: a judge would not be deemed a good/fair judge if he let his guilty son go free without having to pay some sort of penalty.) BUT because He is Love, He really wants us to be with Him forever. So what did He do?"

(If you think it's necessary, you can do the "good works" and "religions" blocks showing that man has tried different methods of reaching God but it never works because no matter what, there is still a separation since we are still sinners!!).

Now circle 'Jesus' and put his name as the bridge between the gap. Share that Jesus = 1. God's Son, 2. lived a sinless life 3. died on cross for our penalty 4. rose again proving who He was, thus able to bridge the gap.

At this point, you can ask, "Where are you in this?" and then, "Do you want to be on God's side?"

Hopefully, if your friend will say yes (and even if no, you can still say, "here's how")...

Circle the word 'Lord' and define that Lord = "master", meaning full ownership. (You must trust Him as your friend and ask Him to be Lord.) To go from man's side to God's side, you have to trust Jesus and walk across the bridge. You have to ask him to be your Lord.

How do you ask Him to be Lord? Pray ABC:

A = Admit & confess to God that you are a sinner and have sinned against Him. That you...

B = Believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins. And want to...

C = Commit and surrender your life to Him.

Pray with your friend if ready. If not, ask if any questions. Let your friend keep the paper.