

God's Story of Redemption

For further study, please refer to chapter 7 of Bill Hybels' *Just Walk Across the Room: Simple Steps Pointing People to Faith*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

The *gospel* and the *good news* are words that most people have heard before. They are words that are talked about all the time in church and some people devote their lives to sharing this stuff. But what actually is the good news?

In its simplest form, the good news is the message that Jesus died for us and that we can be reconciled to God and live in a relationship with him.

In the book *Just Walk Across the Room*, author and pastor Bill Hybels suggests that a young child can be successful at communicating the gospel as long as he or she has a heart to share this message and cares about people.

Bill uses the following three illustrations in his book to equip people with gospel sharing strategies.

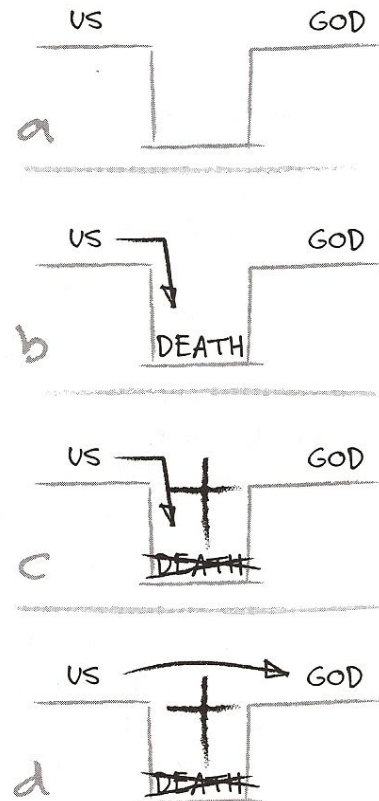
The Bridge

On one side of the bridge is God. On the other side are people. Between God and people is a great chasm, a division that exists because of people's inclination to rebel against God's way and go their own way instead. This is what the Bible calls "sin."

The dilemma that people face is that we want to get to God, but we know that we can't simply leap over the chasm. So we try using human effort to get a bridge built until we finally realize that all the human effort in the world will never be enough to get us to the other side.

Thankfully, God sympathized with our dilemma and because he loves us so much, he intervened so that we can have a means of getting close to him. His solution was to choose Jesus to serve as a bridge.

This illustration is based upon the words of Jesus in John 5:24: "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life" (NIV).



Do Versus Done

Many people carry the perception that religion is all about doing – it boils down to whether or not you do enough right things to earn God’s favour.

But the good news of the Bible is spelled “D-O-N-E.” What Christ did on the cross is enough. Jesus satisfied God’s requirement for a perfect sacrifice to take care of our past, present, and future sin. People who choose to believe and accept this gift are able to receive God’s favour right away, and their lives are made brand new.



Do

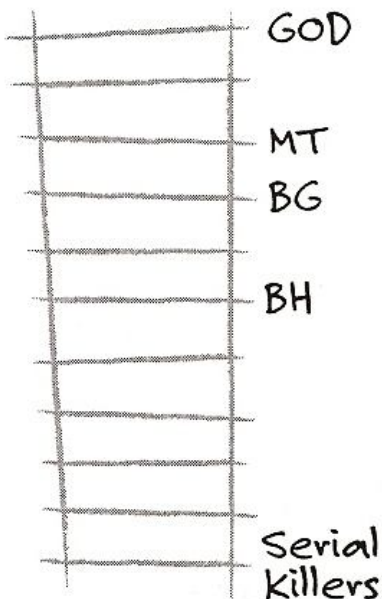
DONE

The Morality Ladder

This illustration is especially helpful for people who don’t think that they have any real use for God.

If we were to envision morality as escalating rungs on a ladder, we would put God at the very top — because he is perfectly moral — and really evil people at the bottom. The rest of humanity is somewhere in-between.

Ask a person to place a mark somewhere on the ladder that represents where they think they rate on the morality scale. This is how Bill Hybels uses this exercise:



“Mother Teresa,’ I say, ‘would probably qualify for a rung about three-fourths of the way up. And just as a guess, Billy Graham probably falls right below her. As far as I’m concerned, I guarantee I land lower than those two.’ I place the initials of the three of us on the ladder, leaving an honourable amount of space between BG (Billy Graham) and BH (me). I know my place.

Then I hand over the pen. Inevitably, the person I’m in conversation with writes his or her initials just south of me.

‘Okay,’ I say. ‘Here’s my only question: What is your plan to make up your gap? Mother Teresa had a plan for her morality gap. It was the cross of Jesus Christ. Billy Graham has a plan for closing the gap between his level of morality and God’s standard of perfection. It’s the cross of Jesus Christ. So what is your plan?’”