

COMMENCEMENT SUNDAY #2**The Gospel Bridge**

Use this lesson whenever you begin a new class. This lesson presents an excellent opportunity for you to spend a class period strictly on the subject of salvation.

When you begin a new class, you have many things to do to get acquainted with your students. You need get the children's names, addresses, phone numbers and maybe their birthdays, but most of all you need to know their spiritual condition. You need to know which ones are saved and know it, and which ones are not saved or are not sure of it. The purpose of **The Gospel Bridge** lesson is to give them a clear plan of salvation and allow them the opportunity to be saved. This will help you to discover their spiritual condition, which you can use in teaching the other lessons during the year.

Lesson Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

KEY (for Attention): Bridges are very important to us and save us a great deal of time as we travel. Can anyone tell me why we use bridges? (We use bridges to cross streams and rivers, to cross lakes and swamps, to cross highways and railroad tracks, to cross from one cliff to another.)

Sometimes bridges get damaged and break apart. If that happens when someone is using the bridge, they will often fall through the open part of the bridge and be killed. Therefore, it is important that those who build bridges do a good job and make them as safe as possible. It is also important to have people check bridges after they have been used for a long time to be sure they are still safe. If bridges become unsafe, they need to be closed and repaired or else they need to be torn down. We need to do our best to keep our bridges safe. But even when we are so very careful, some bridges are broken by accidents, by floods and by earthquakes. It is impossible for us to build a bridge that cannot be broken. But today we are going to talk about a "Bridge" that was given to us by God and it will never be broken and made unsafe to use. It is the most important "Bridge" in the entire world. It is the only "Bridge" that takes us to Heaven. Have you heard about this "Bridge" that God has given to us? We call it the Gospel Bridge.

HE (for Authority): Although our memory verse does not speak of a bridge, it does tell us about God's "Bridge." Listen to this verse as I read it from the whiteboard and look for a rather long word that begins with the letter "m." This word refers us to a "bridge" that allows us to go to God. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:5). What is the word? (It is "mediator.") A mediator is a person who acts like a bridge between two persons who have a problem with each other. In this verse God has a serious problem with us because we have sinned against Him. He could send us to Hell, but He loves us; so He sent Jesus to solve the problem and make it possible for us to come to God. So Jesus is the mediator between God and us. He is God's "Bridge." Jesus Christ is the only "Bridge" that can take us to God in Heaven. He is able and willing to take anyone to God who wants to go to Him, but they must hate their sins and fully trust in Him to do remove their sins before He does it.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

This lesson will show how Jesus is God's "Bridge" to bring us to God in Heaven. **The Gospel Bridge** is a tract that is the basis for teaching this lesson. It was written for Bible Light Lessons and its contents are found at the end of these notes. Study the verses and be ready to explain them to your class. The children's lessons also have it. (This tract is available from Bible Light Lessons as long as supplies last.)

Background: Our sins separate us from God so that we cannot go to Him in Heaven, but He has given us a Bridge that will allow us to come to Him. Without this Bridge we would go to Hell when we die, so it is very important to know about this Bridge. This "Bridge" is Jesus Christ. When He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins, He became a "Bridge" for us to go to Heaven. Jesus Christ is the only "Bridge" to heaven, but He is the very best "Bridge" possible (Jn 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12). So listen carefully as I explain each picture in **The Gospel Bridge**. (Give each child a lesson worksheet so they can follow your explanation of each major step in **The Gospel Bridge**.)

1. I Have Sinned – Romans 3:23; 6:23a

You and I have sinned (Rom 3:23) and the result of our sin is death (Rom 6:23). When we die we will leave our bodies and go either to Heaven to be with God or to Hell to be with Satan. If we have sins on our record, we cannot go to Heaven and be with God, because He is holy and full of glory. This is very bad news. Is there any way that we can get rid of our sins and be with God in Heaven?

LESSON PLAN

WE: No matter how many good things we have done, they will never take away our sins. Even if we sin only once and do good works the rest of our lives, our good works will not make a bridge to God. One sin will destroy our bridge to Heaven and we will plunge into Hell. We must admit we cannot build a bridge to Heaven by our good works. Is there any bridge for us to get to Heaven?

2. Christ Died for my Sins – Romans 5:8

There is a Bridge to Heaven that will bring us to God, but few people take it. God sent His Son from Heaven to make a Bridge to Heaven. He had to die on the cross for our sins to make that Bridge. You may not understand how Jesus' death on the cross makes a Bridge for you, but God does not think like you do. His thoughts are higher than yours (Isa 55:8-9). God loves you (Rom 5:8) and He found a way for you to be with Him. His way was to have Jesus die for your sins. Are you ready to learn more?

WE: Maybe we do not know why God loved us so much, when we were his enemies, that He had His Son die for us, but that is what He tells us in the Bible (1 Jn 4:19). I hope you believe Him?

3. Christ Can Be my Bridge (Mediator) – I Timothy 2:5-6a

Jesus made a Bridge for you so you can get to Heaven. It cost Him His life. He had to die on the cross for your sins to make this Bridge. He paid the penalty as a "ransom" for your sins so you could be free from sin and death. Then He arose from the dead and went to Heaven, so He could bring you to God. Jesus is the only mediator ("Bridge") between you and God (Jn 14:6).

WE: We must agree with Jesus that He is only way to Heaven to be with God. It is not true that there are many ways to Heaven. Jesus is the only "Bridge" that will bring us to God.

3. God Offers me Eternal Life through Christ – Romans 6:23

God offers you the gift of eternal life by believing the work that Jesus did on the cross to pay for your sins. When you believe what Jesus did for you, you are near the Bridge, but there is more for you to do. It is not enough to know all about God's Bridge and to know what Jesus did to save you from Hell. There is one more step that you must take to cross the Bridge and be one of God's children.

WE: We can learn the facts about the Gospel Bridge and believe those facts, but that is not enough to be saved from Hell. For example, if we examine a bridge and believe it is a good bridge, but never use the bridge, it will do us no good. Likewise, we must use the God's Bridge to get to Heaven and be with Him.

5. I Receive Jesus Christ – John 1:12

How do you use God's Bridge so you can go to Heaven when you die and be with God? You must receive Jesus as your Savior. Let us review the steps you must take before you receive Jesus as your Savior. First, you must agree with God that you have sinned against Him and you deserve to go to Hell. Second, you must believe that God loves you and sent His Son to die on the cross for your sins. Third, you believe Jesus arose from the dead and went to Heaven to be the mediator, God's Bridge, between you and God. Fourth, God offers eternal life as a gift to you, if you take Jesus Christ as your Bridge to Him. If you believe these facts, you can receive Jesus as your Bridge to God and be one of His children.

WE: We cross the Bridge and come to God when we receive Jesus and ask Him to save us from our sins (Rom 10:13). Do you want to receive Jesus and ask Him to be your Bridge to Heaven?

6. I Have Everlasting Life Now – John 5:24

When you receive Jesus as your Bridge to God, He will save you from falling into Hell, and you will pass from death to life. If you believe Jesus will do this for you, you will want to thank Him again and again. Thanking Jesus from your heart is proof that you have safely crossed over the Bridge to be God's child.

WE: We need to thank God for sending His Son to be our "Bridge" so we can be with Him. We need to thank Jesus for dying in our place so He could be our "Bridge" to God. We need to thank both of them again and again.

BE (for Action): Have the children bow their heads and ask them to raise their hand if they are not sure that they have received Jesus as their Savior and crossed the "Bridge" to God. (This will help you as the teacher to know how to help them throughout the coming year. Ask the children if any of them want to be saved. Ask them to stay after class and you will help them understand what they should do. Do not let anything else keep you from helping those receive Jesus as their Savior.