

One-Verse Evangelism

By Randy Raysbrook

FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.	
WAGES	
SIN	

WAGES

Open your Bible to Ro. 6:23 and ask the person to read the verse aloud to you while you write it at the top of a piece of paper.

Draw a box around the word "WAGES," then write it midway down the left side of the page and box it there also.

"How would you define the term wages?" (Wages are the reward we receive for what we have done.)

► "How would you feel if your boss refused to pay you the wages that were due to you? Deep down, we all know that it is only right that a

person gets what he deserves. We earn wages from God for how we have lived our lives."

SIN

Draw a box around "SIN" in the verse and then write it below "WAGES." Draw a box around it there.

"What do you think of when you hear the word sin?"

"How would a person have to live in order to get into heaven? Have you always lived a life like you just described?" (This should help him to see that even by his own definition he falls short of living a good and perfect life.)

"Sin is more an attitude than an action—it can be a hostile or apathetic response to God.

At any point in your life, has God seemed far away?"

When he answers "yes," draw in the lines of the cliff on both sides and explain that sin has separated everyone from God.

► "Imagine that you agreed with your roommate on rules regarding how to use your stereo. What would happen if your roommate ignored the rules and broke your stereo? Would that create a separation or problem in your relationship? Our sin creates a distance between us and God."

DEATH

Draw a box around the word "DEATH," write it down on the illustration, and box it there.

What thoughts come to mind when you

think of death? Death often means separation—when we die our soul is separated from our body. If a person chooses to reject God while he is alive, that separation will extend into eternity: the separation will ultimately result in eternal torment in hell. Not only will he experience separation from God today, but also forever."

BUT

Draw a box around "BUT" in the verse and write it in a box between the bases of the cliffs.

"This is the most important word in the verse because it indicates that there is hope for all of us. What we have talked about so far is bad news, but God has good news. What we're going to talk about now is a contrast to what we just discussed."

GIFT

Draw a box around "GIFT" in the verse and write it on the right side of the cliff. Box it there.

"What is the difference between a gift and wages?"

(From now on, be sure to point back and forth to each side of the cliff to emphasize that the words contrast with each other.)

"A gift is not earned by the person who receives it, but someone else pays for it. How do you feel towards someone who gives you an expensive gift?"

"Some people try to earn God's favor by doing good deeds, living moral lives, or taking part in religious activities. But it is impossible to earn something that has already been bought."

► "Say you wanted to buy a special gift for a close friend to show how much that person means to you. How would you feel if the friend refused to accept it without first paying you for it?"

OF GOD

Draw a verse around "OF GOD" and write it on the right side of the cliff, across from "SIN." Box it.

Point to "SIN" on the left side and then back to "GOD" on the right and explain that all of us have sinned but God is perfect and has not.

"God wants to give you a gift. I can't give it to you; a church can't give it to you; no one can give you this gift but God alone. Why do you think God would want to give you a gift? Why does anyone want to give someone a precious gift?"

ETERNAL LIFE

Draw a box around "ETERNAL LIFE" and write it on the right side of the cliff with a box around it.

"What do you think eternal life is?"

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Point to "DEATH" on the left side and show that "ETERNAL LIFE" is the opposite. "Eternal life means a relationship with God in blissful harmony forever. Just as separation from God starts in this life and extends into eternity, eternal life starts now and goes on forever. No sin can end it."

(Ask if there is any part that you have explained so far that he does not understand or if he has any questions. Be sure that each point is clear before you proceed any further. If necessary, go back and explain each point that is not clear.)

CHRIST JESUS

Draw a cross between the cliffs as a bridge. Box the words "CHRIST JESUS" in the verse. Write "CHRIST JESUS" inside the cross.

"Jesus is the means by which we can obtain the gift of eternal life. No one can offer a gift except the one who purchased it. He purchased it by paying for it with His life."

► "Imagine that a police officer writes you a ticket for speeding and you go to court and the judge finds you guilty. But to your surprise, the policeman pays your fine out of his own pocket. In the same way, Jesus paid the fine for you—death."

► Hold out a pen to the person, and ask him to imagine that someone had bought it for him as a present. As you hand it to him, ask him at what point the pen becomes his (when he accepts it). Tell him that he can accept God's gift to him by following two steps.

► "A person is dying because his heart is diseased. Someone volunteers to donate his heart for a transplant, knowing that he will have to die in order to give it up. But first, in order to save his own life, the recipient must agree to accept the heart. It cannot be forced upon him. In order to accept God's gift, you must do two things."

LORD

Box "LORD" in the verse, and write it inside the cross on the illustration.

"The gift is offered to everyone who makes Jesus Lord. For Jesus to be Lord, He has to have total control of a person's life. He gains that control, or becomes Lord, when a person does two things."

CONFESS AND SURRENDER

Write "CONFESS" across the top of the cross on the left side and number it with a "1."

"Confessing means to agree with God that we are not perfect, that there are things in our lives that are wrong, and that we want Christ to forgive us as we turn away from our sin."

Write "SURRENDER" across the top of the cross on the right side and number it "2."

"To surrender means to allow Christ to be

the final authority in our lives and to live in order to please him and not ourselves. It doesn't mean that we have to be perfect, but that we will try our best to please Christ."

Draw a man on the left side of the bridge.

"As a person confesses and surrenders, he passes across the bridge. He begins a relationship with God and starts to experience a new and eternal life."

Draw an arrow across the bridge.

"On the basis of what I have just explained, what must a person do to have a relationship with God and eternal life?" (If he does not say "confess and surrender" and understand what that means, go back and explain it until it is clear.)

"If you were to place yourself on the bridge, where would you be? Are you far off to the left—far away from God—or close to the bridge and eager to learn more about God?"

"What two things does a person have to do to cross over the bridge in order to begin a relationship with God and have eternal life?"

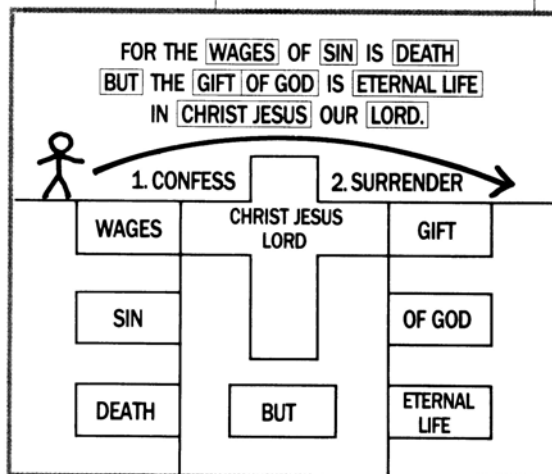
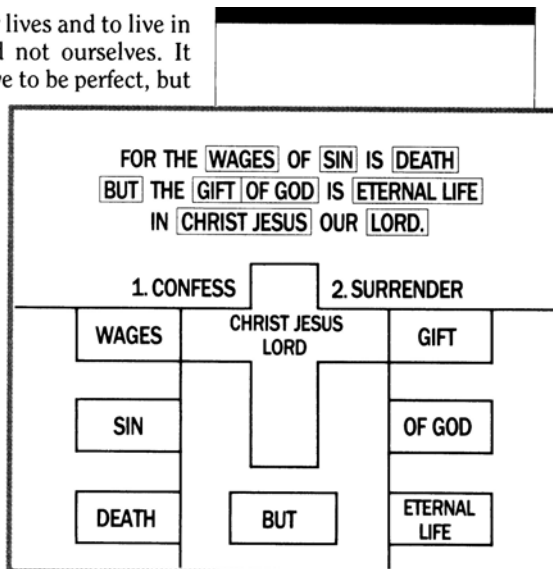
"Is there any reason why you should not confess and surrender right now and begin to experience a close relationship with God and eternal life?"

If the person is ready to repent of his sin and trust Christ for salvation, help him to pray, confessing his need for Christ and surrendering his life to Him.

You may want to repeat a simple prayer similar to the one you prayed when you accepted Christ and ask him to repeat it after you, one phrase at a time.

Naturally, you will want to put the questions and explanations in this presentation into your own words. You might want to practice giving it to a Christian friend before you share it with an unbeliever.

After you have become familiar with this method, be sure to personalize it—use your own stories or analogies so that the presentation becomes a natural part of you. It is also a good idea to know at least one verse that backs up each step in the illustration in case the hearer needs further explanation.



Be sure to listen carefully as the person you are talking with answers the questions. Try to understand where he stands in relation to the gospel and adjust your presentation to suit his personality and needs. Be alert to signs of confusion as you explain. Most important, remember that the power to change lives is not in having an effective, smooth-flowing illustration. It is the Spirit of God who opens people's hearts to hear the message of salvation (Jn6:63-65). But what a privilege we have in being able to co-labor with God Himself in reaching out to others! Let us sharpen our tools and be ready always to give the answer that every person needs to hear with clarity and simplicity.