

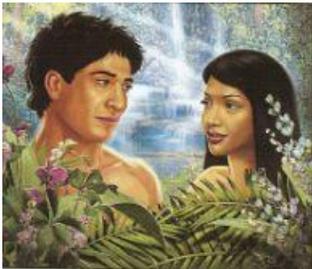
Bridge Cards Leaders Guide

God opens doors to share His good news in many ways.... a "get-acquainted" series of questions often provides an opening in a respectful and natural way. A simple question like... "Tell me your story... where were you born... how'd you get to where you are today?" can open a door naturally allowing you to weigh the spiritual interest level of your new friend.

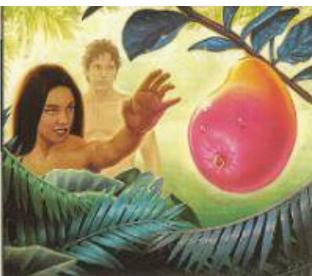
Each of the 8 cards has a picture highlighting the truth category and a key verse and faith response. The ninth card, "Personal Choice", is designed to allow you a natural way to share your own faith story.



GOD God's story, as it is told in the Bible, begins with these simple but profound words.... "In the beginning GOD." God has always been. He is uncreated, eternal and good. This is an ancient symbol of the Trinity, that is, that God has eternally existed in three persons that are mysteriously one in being and yet three in personality. This wonderful, eternal, spirit Being is the source of all life and goodness in the universe.



MAN The one true, eternal, all powerful God created a perfect universe. He made a world of beauty and life and peace. In the beginning there was no evil, sorrow, death or disaster. God made man, (Adam and Eve), "in His own image". That is, man is unique among all created beings. He possesses both a body and a spirit. Man is both physical and spiritual. Being created in God's image, we possess conscience, the power of personal moral choice, and a level of understanding and accountability unique to mankind. God also provided everything we needed in this original, perfect world. God blessed man and gave to man all that was necessary for life and happiness. And above all this, God desired man to live in His perfect presence and daily "showed up" to interact with man face to face. As God, in His story says... "It was very good!"



SIN God placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful paradise garden where all their needs were met and life was beautiful and good. They could eat the fruit from every tree in the garden with only one exception. They were commanded not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or they would die. They faced a personal choice: to love and obey God freely and live in His presence in paradise, or to rebel and refuse to obey God, and face death. They chose to disobey God. Disobedience to God is called "sin".



DEATH God always does what He says. And just as He said, when Adam and Eve sinned, they died. The essence of death is separation. Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the body. Spiritual death is the separation of man's spirit from the presence of God. Spiritual death includes fear, guilt, shame, and blame shifting. Sin brought punishment; the death they deserved and were helpless to escape from. But God still loved man and provided a promise of a coming Rescuer. In the meantime, God instituted a system of sacrifice, providing an innocent substitute that would die in man's place, taking the punishment of his sin (death), and allowing man to go on living. Although this postponed God's judgment, it did not eliminate it. Sin would only be eliminated when the perfect, promised Son of God would come. Adam and Eve were clothed in the skins of the sacrifices God provided, and then sent from the paradise

garden. No longer would life be peace and joy in God's presence in paradise. Life would now be hard, filled with struggle and sorrow and death.



CHRIST God always keeps His promises. Over the centuries since the beginning of time, God gave many reminders of His coming judgment of mankind and also the promise of the coming Rescuer who would take sin away. The day finally came when Jesus, the perfect Son of God was born. He grew in obscurity and lived a perfectly sinless life of goodness and love. The time came for everyone to know God's promise was here. John, a prophet of God, announced to Israel that God's promise had come true saying: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." Just as lambs had been sacrificed for sins since the beginning, so God's promise of the perfect Savior, the final, full sacrifice for sin, had come in Jesus Christ.



CROSS Jesus lived a perfect life of love. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and even raised the dead. He showed He was both God and man by His miracles, teaching and absolutely sinless life of love. The time came when He laid His life down as the sacrifice for our sins. God took all our sins and laid them on His perfect, sinless Son. Because Jesus is sinless, and eternal, He could take the punishment for all our sins and fully satisfy God's righteous judgment as the sacrifice in our place. God raised Him from the dead three days later to prove His promise is true and that forgiveness is available for all mankind. Through Jesus anyone can be forgiven of all their sins and be restored to God to live forever in paradise with Him.



FAITH In the beginning, mankind refused to believe God's warning. Refusing to believe God's warnings and promises (sin) always results in death. And although we are helpless to escape sin and death, God has done for us what we could never do. Jesus is God's promised provision for our sin debt. God sent His Son Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. Jesus did it! Now God commands us to recognize our sin, admit our helplessness and believe His promise. God promises that if we place our trust in Jesus alone, Jesus will restore us to God forever.



LIFE When we make the personal choice to believe in Jesus as our Savior, we are restored to God and begin to experience life as God meant it to be. The world we live in is not yet changed, nor are we. But that final and glorious change is coming. One day, at the end of time, Jesus will judge all men, and create a new universe. This new, eternal paradise will be filled with all those who have believed God's promise and made the choice to place their trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins.

PERSONAL CHOICE At this point, lay down card #9 and read the words on the card out loud. Then tell a brief account of your faith story. Share how you came to understand God's story, your need, and God's perfect provision. Then read the statement again and ask your friend, "Is this a true statement for you?" Seek to carry the conversation on to get a greater understanding of what objections or confusion may exist. Be patient, and allow God to do His work in His time.