

7 Bridges we can build to reach unbelievers with the Gospel

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We all work in different environments. You may work in an office like me. Or on a construction site, in a workshop or on a farm. You may even be on the road.

It doesn't matter where you work. If you see yourself as a "sent one", you'll know that you have a mission field in the workplace. Look up, the harvest is ready!

But how do we reach unbelievers in the workplace? In my experience we reach them by building bridges.

Bridge #1 – Love them

It might not seem obvious, but what has Apostle Aje been preaching this month? Building loving relationships!

Often there isn't much love going around at the workplace. Office politics may cost you your promotion, or your colleague may secretly be working against you to try and earn your position.

But love is a great differentiator. When you respond in love, they will know that there's something different about you.

No wonder the Lord Jesus summarized the law into the two greatest commandments.

Mark 12:29-30 – Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Bridge #2 – Greet them

Some people are being ignored by society. They are so used to it, they don't expect anyone to greet them.

Something I learned in this church: When I see someone cleaning, sweeping or mopping at work, I make a point of greeting them with a smile.

Sometimes it's as if they wake up out of a deep sleep. Their eyes light up. They smile and greet you back.

To greet someone is to build a bridge that says: "I notice you. I'm not that important. You can talk to me."

Matthew 5:47 - And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?

Matthew 25:40 - And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

No wonder the epistles start with an apostolic greeting! The apostles knew the importance of greeting, sometimes even by name.

2 Tim 4:18 - Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick. Do your utmost to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.

Bridge #3 – Remember their names

This brings us to bridge number three.

When you greet someone for the first time, say "Hi, I'm Morné" (use your own name!)

Chances are they will respond with their name. Remembering a person's name is a very important bridge for future conversations and also for when you pray for them.

Isaiah 43:1 - Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.

Do you find it hard to remember names? Do you forget them 30 seconds later?

The trick is to engage with them for a few minutes and repeat their name in your responses. The conversation might go something like this.

Morné: Hi, I'm Morné

John: Hello, I'm John

Morné: Nice to meet you, **John**. How long have you been working here?

John: 3 years and a bit

Morné: 3 years! Well done, **John**. And what do you do for fun when you're not at work?

John: I'm actually a good guitar player. I even made a few jingles for ad agencies.

Morné: Awesome! I'll see you around, **John**

Did you notice that I responded with his name every time? I also made an association to remember his name: "Jingle John"

The next time I see John, I will greet him by name and he will appreciate it. He will know that someone cares, and will be more open to hear the gospel from you when the time comes.

Bridge #4 - Learn a language

Did you know that Jesus spoke at least 3 languages, possibly 4? Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic and possibly Egyptian (since He spent a part of His childhood in Egypt)

At our office we work with remote teams. One of these teams are from an Eastern European country. They are very stoic, very direct, and at first glance even rude. When I started

interacting with them it was hard to work with them. They seemed to click together, not letting others into their inner circle. The line of defence was almost tangible.

At one point some of them started attacking me verbally in front of others, because they didn't understand where my project fitted in. I had to ride it out and keep forgiving.

At one point the Lord gave me an idea. I downloaded a free app and learned 20 phrases of their language. It only took me 3 evenings. Then I started greeting them in their language and used some of the phrases.

Dobre rano! Good morning.

Dobre den. Good day.

Ja mam rad kavu. I like coffee.

It put a smile on their faces. Their hearts opened up and they showed a different, caring side of themselves. The ones who attacked me before, came to me in person (when they visited our office) to apologise. I could see that the Lord worked in their hearts. Even though I couldn't share the gospel at the time, I believe that they will be more open when it comes.

Language is an important bridge, because it speaks to the heart.

No wonder the inscription on the cross was written in 3 languages.

Luke 23:38 - And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And at Pentecost the Holy Spirit thought it important to speak to each one in their home language.

Acts 2:8 - And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

Bridge #5 – Reason with them

Acts 17:2 - Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths **reasoned with them** from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ."

Isaiah 1:18 - "Come now, and **let us reason together**," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

It's okay to reason with unbelievers about the gospel. Analysis and reason are often the only tools they trust. But we ourselves do not live in the arena of reason. We live in the arena of faith.

I work with a bunch of software engineers (computer programmers). They are very intellectual, and not afraid to debate a matter. most of their arguments are along the lines of evolution and the non-existence of God.

But fear not. Did you know that science is actually on our side? Lately the momentum in scientific research has shifted towards confirming the creation of the earth, while more and more evolution theories are being disproved. One such example is in the field of genomics: [How modern genetics research confirms the creation of Adam and Eve](#).

It is also noteworthy that many fields of science have been developed by [Bible-believing Christians](#).

Rom 1:20 mentions that God's attributes are **clearly visible in nature** and that the truth is being **suppressed**. The truth is that God exists, and that Jesus is coming to judge the world.

Some responses are: "My truth is not the same as your truth". In response I say that there is only one version of the truth (programmers understand versioning of code and the idea of a main branch in source control). John 14:6 – Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

I often argue that even without evidence, the scientific mind will still acknowledge that the absence of evidence doesn't prove non-existence.

For example, a planet may exist in a far away galaxy, but we may not have any evidence of it yet. Does it make the planet non-existent? Certainly not. It still exists, but it's outside of our perceivable horizon.

The same with God. Just because a given person hasn't experienced God yet, doesn't mean that God doesn't exist. (A lot of negatives I know!)

Let's take John 3 as another example. In verse 6 Jesus says: Flesh is born of flesh and spirit is born of Spirit. Therefore, you need to be born again (born of the Spirit).

While a baby is unborn, the womb is the only world it knows. They have no idea that there is another world out there. They are comfortable in the womb and cannot imagine that the day would come where their world would end – that they would need to transition to a new world through birth.

Likewise, an unbeliever only knows this carnal world, the one they can perceive with their five senses. They are comfortable in it and have no idea that a spiritual, more permanent world exists. Even Nicodemus, a highly educated academic, asked: *How can it be?*

Every knee shall bow at the Name of Jesus. I find that even human science acknowledges that the absence of evidence does not prove non-existence.

By reasoning politely, we can build a bridge that inches closer and closer to the point where they are willing to accept the Gospel.

Bridge #6 – Share your testimony

And of course, there are those who are not scientifically inclined. They require a different kind of bridge, the bridge of your personal testimony.

Rev 12:11 - And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Our testimony is what we have seen and heard, what we've experienced first-hand. It's that simple.

Nobody can deny a first-hand experience that you had. It's personal evidence.

Even large portions of the Bible is compiled from personal testimonies, like the 4 Gospels and the Book of Acts.

Bridge #7 – Prophecy to them

1 Cor 14:24 - But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all

Often the heart of the unbeliever has already been prepared to receive the gospel. We don't know if they are actively seeking, asking for a sign, or waiting for something to happen.

In John 4 Jesus visited the woman at the well and told her all that she had done. It was a word of knowledge, something He wouldn't have known otherwise.

It convicted her so deeply that she told the whole town, resulting in many coming to Christ. Later the apostle Philip returned to Samaria for a follow up evangelistic campaign.

In closing, remember that we are sent out into the world to be witnesses for the Lord, ambassadors of Jesus Christ. Our "neighbour" is the one next to us, possibly the one that sits at the desk across us at work, or the one we see daily at the shop.

Use every opportunity to build bridges to reach them, so that when they are ready, they can cross over to the Kingdom of God.