

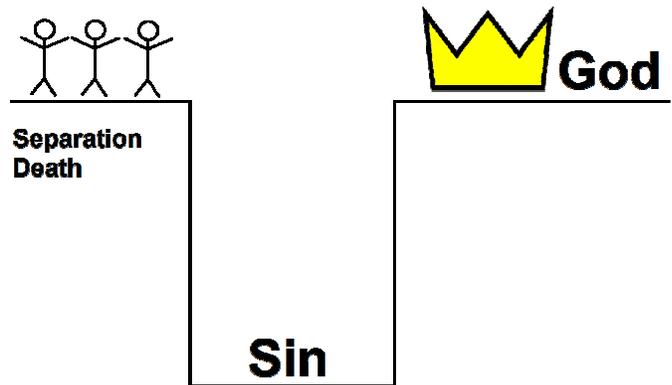
# The Bridge

There are different ways in which the heart of the Christian faith can be explained from the Bible. Some people have explained it like this.

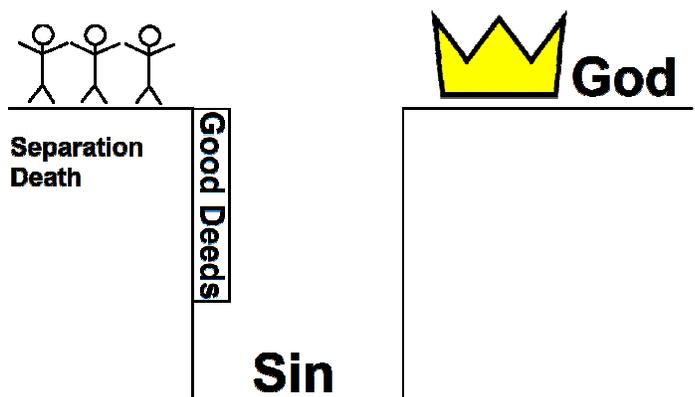


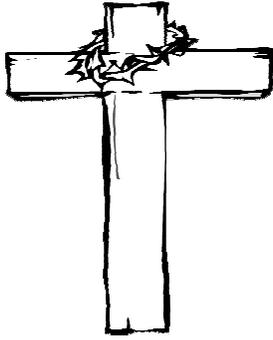
God created us in His own image to be His friends and to experience fullness of life, with Him. But God didn't make us robots – he gave us the freedom to choose to follow him, or to go our own way.

The tragedy is that we chose to live our own way, with out God – disobeying Him. This is what the Bible calls 'sin', and we can see the results all around us in the world. The world made by God is beautiful and good, but spoiled by sin and greed. Even worse, going our own way means that we have become separated from God, unable to reach him by our own efforts, however hard we try.



People of all faiths and none live genuinely good lives, but the Bible tells us that even the best of us can't get back to God on our own. That would need us to be perfect, and we're not. Our good deeds can't bridge the gap between us and God. As the Bible puts it, all of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We miss out on a life-changing relationship with God, a life as God intended it to be, and this brings death in its wake.





That's what the death of Jesus on the Cross is all about. God so loved the world, that he wouldn't leave us in the mess we've made. He sent his only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to save us – so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). Jesus came to bring us back home, to where we belong.

Fully God and fully human, at the same time, Jesus lived a perfect life, never once doing anything wrong. He healed people, set them free from sin, sickness and evil spirits, and taught people about God. But the religious leaders of the day hated him. They had him arrested, tried on trumped up charges and condemned to death. Jesus died a horribly painful death on the Cross – the death of a common criminal. But he did that for you and me. As he died, the only person who's never done anything wrong, he paid the price for the sin of the whole world. He showed us what God's love is really like. He died in our place, and took our punishment in our place.

The Cross is therefore a bridge between us and God. If we simply come to God, not trusting in our own good deeds, but in Jesus' death for us on the Cross, then we can cross over that great divide and come back to God. We can receive new life. It isn't just a ticket to heaven, but a gateway to life in a new dimension – to knowing God personally, to being filled with His Holy Spirit and finding a new hope, peace and joy in forgiveness. Once again we can live the kind of life that pleases God. A life lived in relationship with God – a life dedicated to changing the world!

