

Presenting the Gospel (The John 3:16 One-Verse Method)

By Bill Jones

What follows is a step-by-step explanation, including diagrams, for using John 3:16 to share the gospel in personal evangelism.

INTRODUCING THE VERSE

TRANSITION: John 3:16 is the most famous verse in the entire Bible. May I show you why?

ACTION: Take out a piece of paper and write the words of John 3:16 at the very top of the page in this particular order. (To help you remember this order, note that the middle two phrases both start with the word "that" and both end with a reference to Jesus Christ.) Number these phrases in the following order: 1, 3, 4, 2.

John 3:16

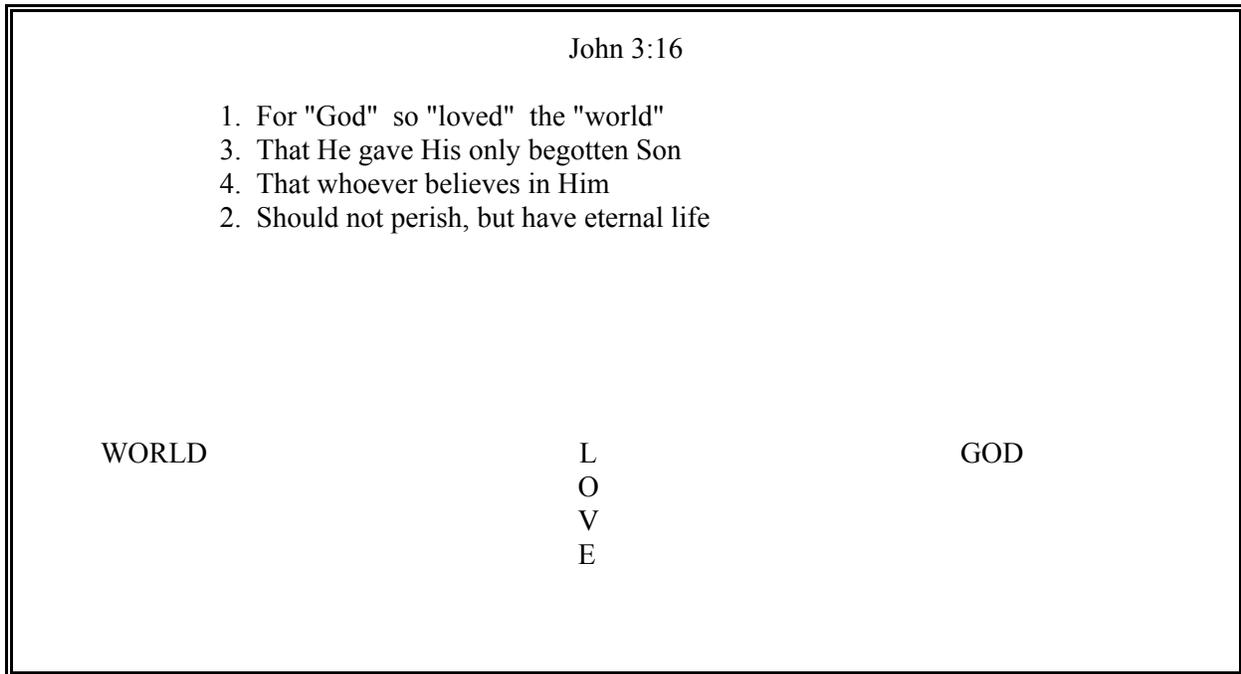
1. For God so loved the world
3. that He gave His only begotten Son
4. that whoever believes in Him
2. should not perish, but have eternal life

EXPLANATION: The reason John 3:16 is so famous is because it summarizes the Bible in four spiritual truths. If you understand these four spiritual truths, you will understand what the entire Bible is all about.

GOD'S PURPOSE

TRANSITION: Let's look at the first truth.

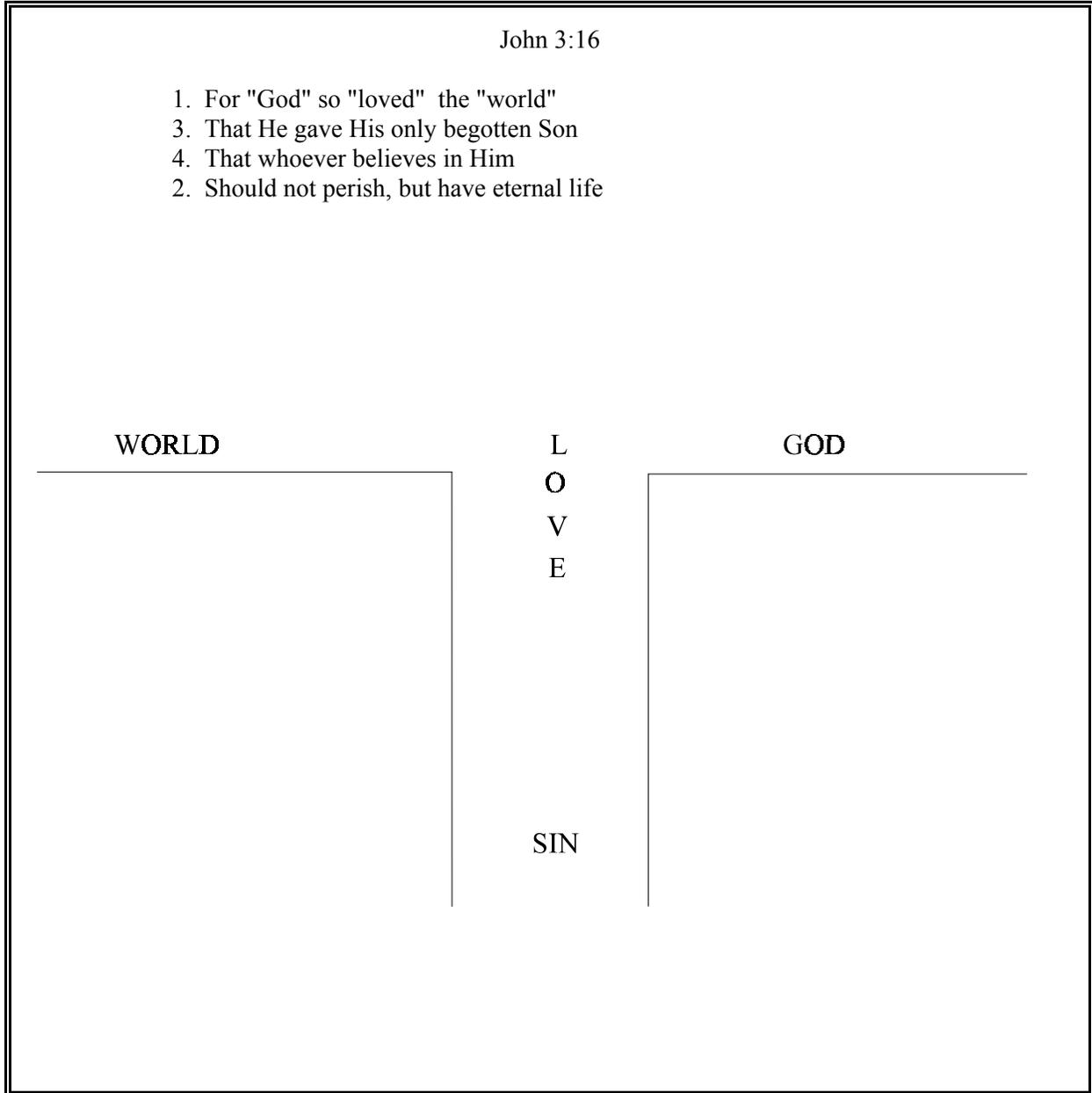
ACTION: Put quotation marks around the words "God", "Love", and "World." Then, about half-way down the page, diagram this truth by writing the word "God" on the right, the word "world" on the left, and the word "love" down the middle.



EXPLANATION: God created man to have a personal relationship with Him. He wants this relationship to be one of love. One where God shows His love to people and where people show their love to Him.

TRANSITION: Why do you think that more people are not experiencing this loving personal relationship?

ACTION: Write the word "sin" below the word "love." Then draw two cliffs, one under the word "world," and the other under the word "God."

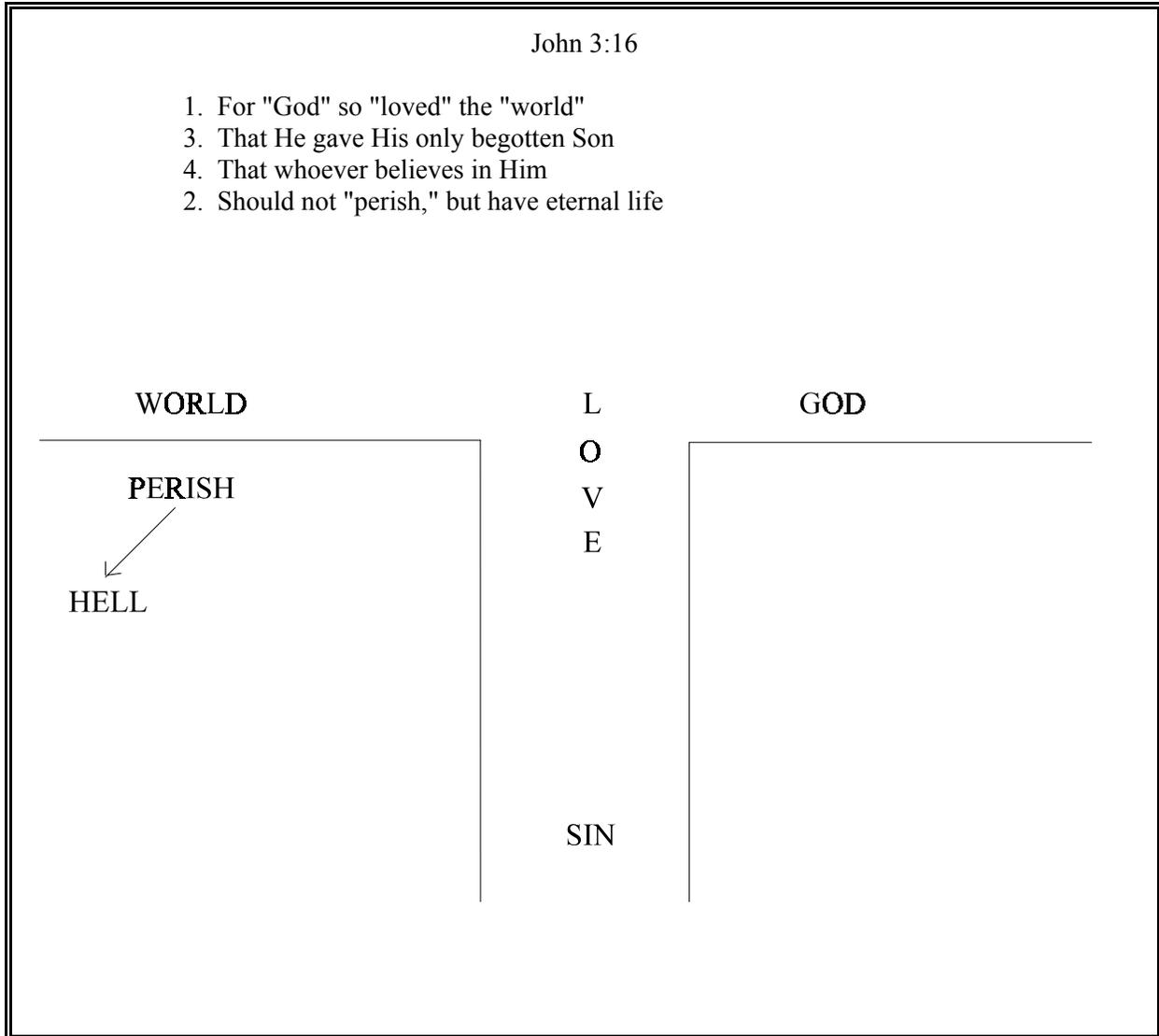


EXPLANATION: It is because of sin. Sin is disobeying God. When someone is offended it causes problems in the relationship. Sin causes a separation between God and man.

MAN'S PROBLEM

TRANSITION: Let's look at the second spiritual truth. It says "should not perish, but have eternal life."

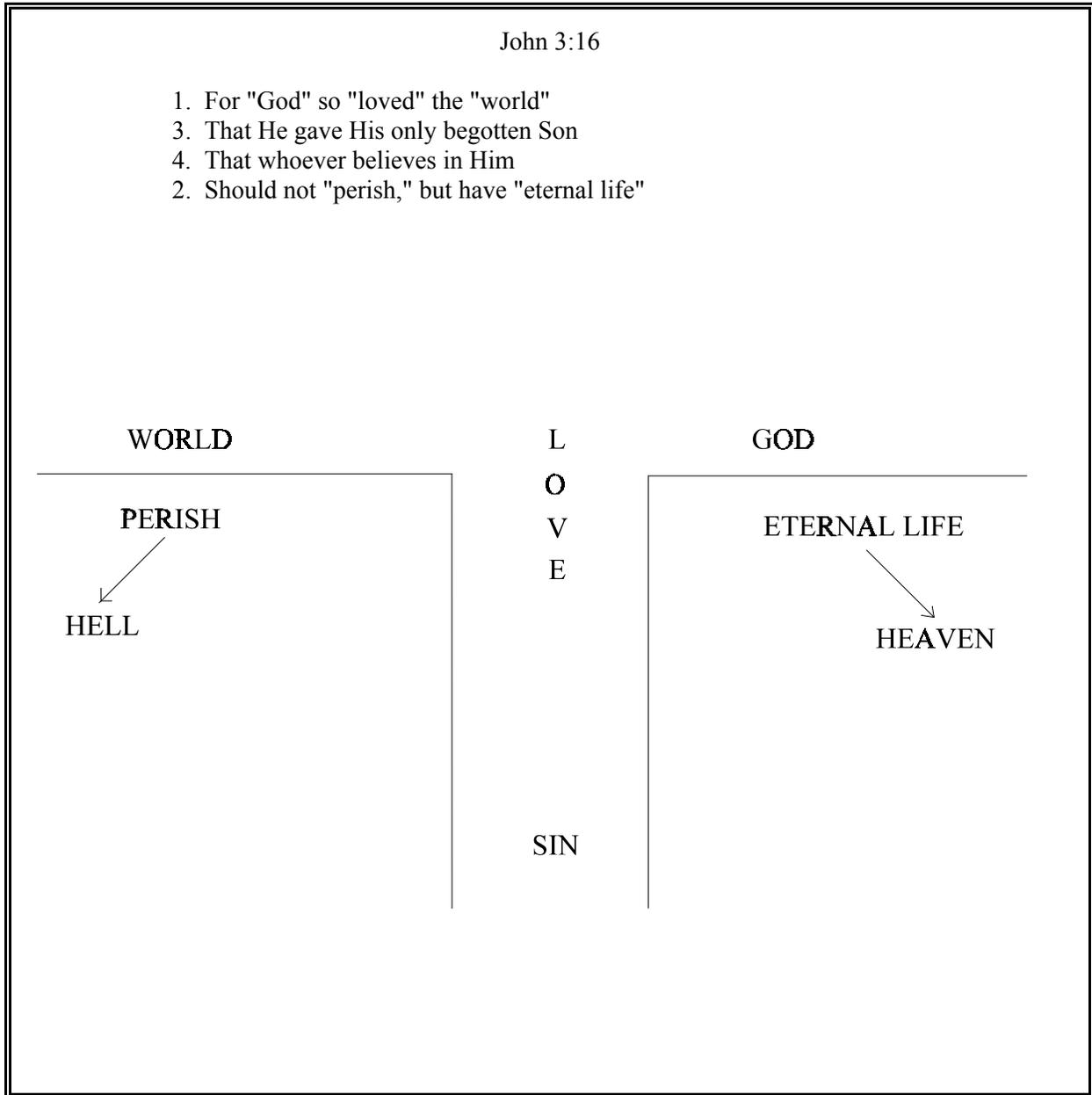
ACTION: Put quotation marks around the word "perish" and write it under the left hand cliff, the one with the word "world" on it. Then draw an arrow downward from the word "perish" and write the word "hell."



EXPLANATION: It is bad enough to be separated from God and His love, but it gets worse. The Bible says that if anyone dies physically while spiritually separated from God, he/she will spend eternity in a place called hell.

TRANSITION: That's bad news, but this second spiritual truth also gives some good news.

ACTION: Put quotation marks around the words "eternal life" and write them under the right hand cliff. Draw an arrow downward and write the word "heaven."

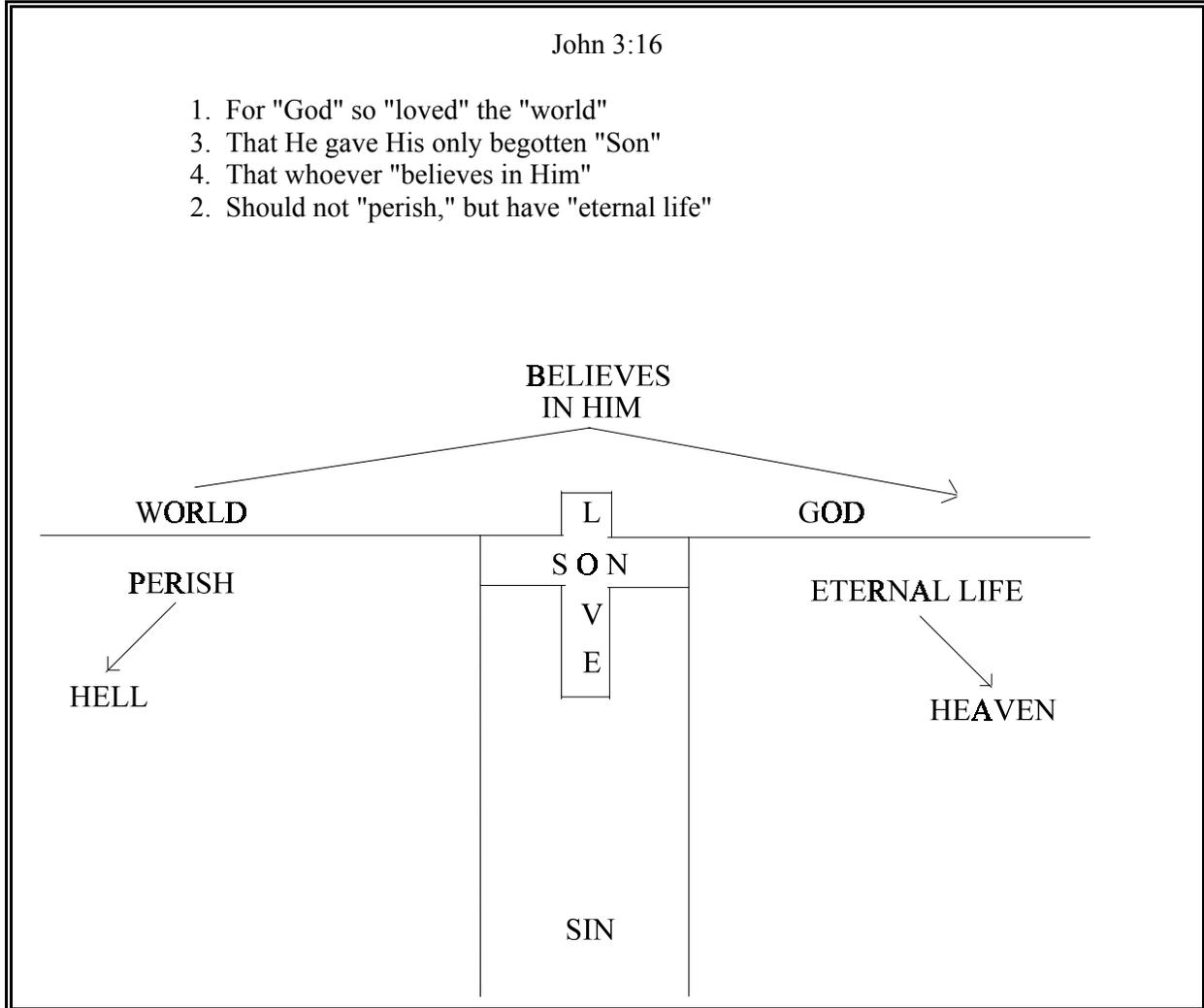


EXPLANATION: The good news is that God does not want man to spend eternity in hell. His desire is to have a personal relationship with man so that they can live together forever in a place called heaven.

MAN'S RESPONSE

TRANSITION: The question now is, how can a person cross over the bridge that Christ has provided? The fourth spiritual truth gives the answer.

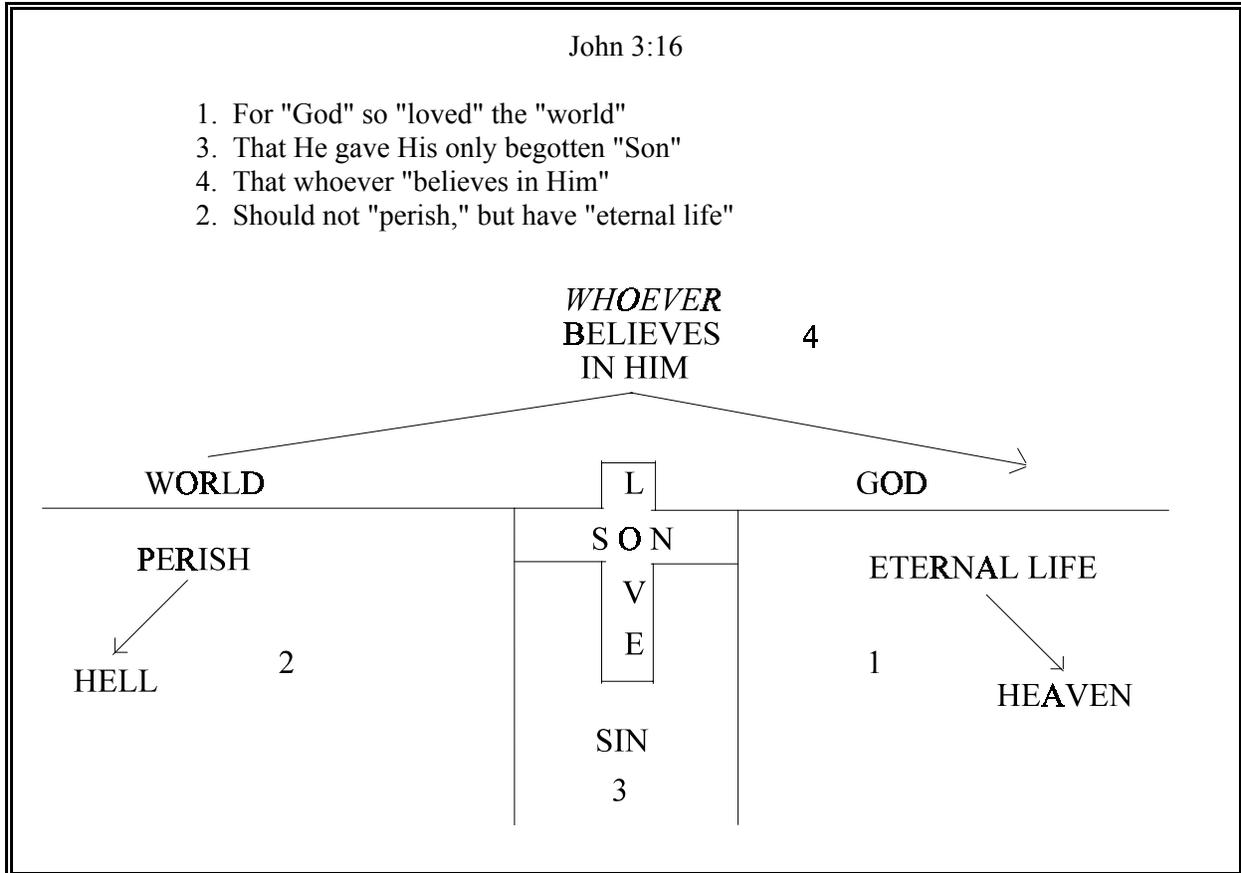
ACTION: Draw an arrow from the word "world" to the word "God." Put quotation marks around the words "believes in Him" and write them on top of the arrow.



EXPLANATION: It is not enough to simply know (1) that God loves you, (2) that your sin keeps you from that love and will ultimately send you to hell, and (3) that Jesus Christ's death on the cross spares you from it all. It is only as you believe in Christ as your Lord and Savior that you cross over the separation caused by your sin and begin a personal relationship with God. This word "believe" is more than just believing in Abraham Lincoln. It means to commit everything you know about yourself to everything you know about Christ. It means to trust Christ and Him alone to make you right with God.

TRANSITION: If you desire to place your faith in Christ to make you right with God, it's as easy as 1, 2, 3, 4.

ACTION: Put the number 1 under the right hand cliff, the number 2 under the left hand cliff, the number 3 under the cross, and the number 4 beside the word "whoever."



EXPLANATION: If you would like to trust Christ you can do so right now. Tell God: 1) that you are grateful that He loves you, 2) that you are sorry for your sin that has separated you from His love, 3) that you are grateful that He gave His only Son to forgive your sin, and 4) that you believe Christ will make you right with Him right now.

I can pray and you can repeat after me. Remember, what is most important is the attitude of your heart, not the words of your mouth. You can pray the right words, but if your heart is not truly convinced that only Christ can make you right with God, then you will not cross over to God. Let's close our eyes and pray right now. (Pray the above four truths back to God.)

Project Page

1. Use the space below to practice sharing the message of Christ using John 3:16. Do this as much as possible without looking back. If you must look back, place a smiley face where you became stuck. These smiley faces will serve as a reminder to you where you need to review in order to enhance your presentation.