

First-Person, Five-Minute, Bridge Illustration Video (17:04)

Michael R. Daily, August 2026

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I was invited to speak at a conference on Witnessing sponsored by Great Commission Alliance in Aug. 2026.

The link below will take you to a 17-minute video of my talk that day or you can do a search on:
"First Person Five Minute Bridge Illustration Great Commission Alliance"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9_XJHsbvdY

Below are my notes from the same talk

Hi, I'm Mike Daily. I'll be going over the First-Person Five-Minute Bridge Illustration with you today. It has some important differences compared to a traditional Bridge Illustration that significantly increase its effectiveness so if you do an internet search please keep that in mind.

I became a Christian my Freshman year in college through a ministry called The Navigators. In graduate school I was discipled by the Navigator Representative on campus, Rev. John Mahon.

I've continued to minister with John over the last 40 years including sharing a website (gciweb.org) and teaching the Bible on mission trips to Zambia, Nigeria, and Cameroon.

John is the one who trained me in the method of witnessing I'm going to show you in a few minutes.

For those of you who attend Hoffmantown, you probably know Rob Mahon. John Mahon is Rob's younger brother.

I'm an engineer. I retired from Sandia National Labs as a senior manager, and I currently work full-time for the Air Force as a Chief Engineer.

I don't have the spiritual gift of evangelism. Also, some of the spiritual gifts are highly relational (pastoring, leading, helps). I don't have any of those either. By nature, I'm an introvert and I am not a particularly good conversationalist. But I can still share the gospel effectively and I can still lead people to Christ.

This has been an unusual year for me. In a typical year I might lead one person to Christ. But over the last few years that number has been increasing and over the last 12 months, 14 people have prayed with me to receive Christ.

So, what changed? Well, the leadership at my church (Hoffmantown Church) set up a number of outreach events and I participated in them. It turns out the method I'm going to show you works really well at those types of events. So, thanks to the leadership of Hoffmantown, my numbers are up by an order of magnitude.

There are three critical principles that make the First-Person Five-Minute Bridge Illustration effective.

The first principle: Keep the gospel presentation to five minutes or less. If you can present the gospel in five minutes the number of opportunities to share the gospel increases significantly.

For example, If I say to a non-Christian, "May I share with you how I became a Christian?" 80% of them will say, "no". But if I say, "May I share with you how I became a Christian, it only takes five minutes" 80% of them will say yes. It's a small thing but it makes a huge difference.

Of course, if you say five minutes you have to be able to actually do it! That's critical.

WORKMAN STORY

The second principle: Use first person singular language while sharing the gospel. First person singular language is saying I and me rather than you, us, we, or man. For example, I would say "I was a sinner separated from God" or "God did this for me"

From what I have experienced not using first person language is the single biggest reason people will feel the need to interrupt or disagree with you.

For example, what if I say "man" or "we" instead of "you"? "Man was separated from God by sin" or "We were separated from God by sin." *"I'm an atheist, I don't believe that"* They've stopped listening & are disagreeing.

PARARESCUE STORY

Years ago, I was involved in a ministry where we received permission from the base commander to share the gospel and hold bible studies in dormitories on a USAF base. There were five of us. Each chose a dorm.

I chose the dorm for soldiers at the special forces school. Once a week I would go through the dorm and share the gospel. I led one of the soldiers to Christ and would also have a short Bible study with him each week. One night, I was in one of the rooms and I was sharing the gospel with another soldier.

For some reason, I started by saying, *"The Bible says that you are a sinner separated from God".* The soldier stopped me, looked at me and said, *"Wait just a minute. You just met me. You don't know anything about me. How dare you call me a sinner!"* And he showed me the door. If I had said "I" instead of "you" that would not have happened!

The Third principle is: I quote Bible verses.

Ephesians 6:17

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

So, if I am going into spiritual battle, seems like it would be a good idea to have my sword with me.

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

And God's Word has this supernatural power even with people who don't believe the Bible.

Billy Graham was a 20th century evangelist who preached the gospel to over 2 billion people. *"When the Gospel of Jesus Christ is presented with authority – quoting from the very Word of God – He takes that message and drives it supernaturally into the human heart" – Billy Graham*

OK, I'm going to share the Bridge Illustration now and afterward we can talk more about it.

Public Witnessing

When I do public witnessing I start a little differently. I say, "Have you heard the good news?" The good news is you can know for sure if you are going to heaven before you die. Do you know for sure you are going to heaven? May I share with you how I learned if I was going to heaven or not. It only takes 5 minutes.

You can start tomorrow

Work on the dialog of the Bridge and quote **John 3:16**. Then keep working on memorizing the other verses. As you get more memorized you can add them to your Bridge Illustration.

1 Peter 1:23 - for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and enduring word of God.

Romans 10:17- So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

John 5:24 - Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal

Mark 4:14 - The sower sows the word. (the seed being sown is the Word of God)