

The Basics

- This week (April 2, 2001), Kmart Corporation announced the largest marketing initiative in its history, designed to create excitement, reward loyal customers and attract new shoppers to its 2100-plus stores. 62% of shoppers will immediately recognize it, because it has become a cultural icon – America’s most popular retail initiative and catchphrase. It’s the BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL.
- Kmart’s new BlueLight Specials build upon the excitement and surprise of the original, which first appeared in 1965. Earl Bartell, a young associate manager in an Indiana Kmart store, developed the promotional tool to help consumers locate sale merchandise. Bartell put a police light atop a long pipe, attached it to a 12-volt car battery and placed the whole contraption on a stockroom cart. He would then wheel the cart to the marked-down products. Once the cart was stationed, the now-famous phrase would be heard over the loud speaker, "Attention Kmart Shoppers!" For the next 15 minutes, Kmart customers could save big on the select merchandise. The BlueLight Special ran until 1991.
- It has been ten years since those words were last officially uttered in a Kmart store. Now, the BlueLight Special is Back! This time, it is bigger and better than ever before, with a new look and a new website at BlueLight.com. BlueLight Special Zones in the center of all stores will be immediately recognizable with suspended canopies, flashing blue lights and music, and yes, merchandise will be displayed for a limited time. Kmart is counting on the revamped initiative to help it catch up with its aggressive rivals Wal-Mart and Target. Where previous executives have seen the blue light merely as a symbol of the past, the current team sees potential in playing off the company’s heritage, using their most distinguishable trademark and getting back to the basics.
- Brent Willis, executive vice president and chief marketing officer for Kmart, says: "We are taking the heritage of value that the BlueLight Special represents for consumers across the country and repackaging it for a new market and mindset." The ad campaign puts it succinctly: "The blue light is back."
- Today, we too want to go BACK TO THE BASICS. Some may see the gospel message as too old-fashioned, but there is great advantage in preaching God’s changeless Word in our changing world. Apostolic doctrine is our most distinguishable trademark, Apostolic living is our heritage, and the supernatural power they provide generates excitement among the saints and interest among the sinners. There is blessing in the basics!
- **Jude 3** Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.
- **Here then, are the BASICS, in a simple illustration called the BRIDGE ...**
- The Bible teaches me that I was created to enjoy a personal relationship with God, and that I will never be truly fulfilled outside of that relationship.

- **John 10:10** The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.
- This is the kind of lifestyle that God intends for us to live. But most people are still searching for real fulfillment, because man has a natural desire to sin and rebel against God’s principles for living. This is expressed every day in common phrases like: Look out for number one, Do your own thing, If it feels good do it, I don’t care what God says about it, It’s my life and I’ll do what I please.
- **Isaiah 53:6** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- **1 John 1:8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- **Isaiah 59:2** But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.
- Sin breaks our relationship with God, causing us to fear Him and try to live our lives outside of His will. And when our relationship with God isn’t right, it leaves a void in our inner man. We instinctively try many different ways of coping, trying to find happiness, but none of them bring lasting fulfillment. Some people even try religion or good works to feel good about themselves, by saying things like: I come from a Christian family, I’ll give up all my bad habits, I’ll work real hard and earn salvation, I’ll be religious and go to church, My religion teaches it a different way, It doesn’t matter what you believe – just be sincere, I’m as good as the next guy. But though some may achieve much more than others, every one of us fall short of God’s standard of perfection.
- **Proverbs 16:25** There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

- Not finding fulfillment and happiness in this life is only the “tip of the iceberg” where the sin problem is concerned. The real problem is that the penalty for sin is eternal death ... and eternity of punishment and separation from God.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- The solution to your sin problem is not found in your efforts. Instead, God came to earth as a man to bring us back to Himself, so we could have a second chance to be His children through being born again.
- **John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

- **Romans 5:8** But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Peter 3:18a For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

- All of the major world religions attempt to POINT THE WAY to truth, but Jesus said, "I AM the truth!"
- **John 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
- **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;
- God has already done His part to restore our relationship. He took the initiative! Now He waits for each of us to individually receive what He has done for us. GOD WILL HELP YOU, BUT HE WILL NOT FORCE YOU!
- While having faith in the Lord is important, IT IS NOT ENOUGH!
- **James 2:14** What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?
- **James 2:20** But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?
- Basically, all faith in God does is make the remedy for sin available to us. Faith provides the medicine, but we still have to take it to get well. Faith makes the plan of salvation accessible to us.

John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

- This verse tells us three things: (1) that we must "receive" the Lord into our lives, (2) that we must take on his "name," and (3) that he will give us "power" to live for him!
- When we believe the gospel, the cross becomes more than a historical event to us – it actually becomes a bridge that can cross the chasm created by sin and get us back to God! Jesus' blood shed on the cross has the power to cancel out our penalty of eternal death!
- **Colossians 2:14** Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;
- **BUT WE STILL HAVEN'T CROSSED THE BRIDGE!**

- We cross the bridge to salvation not by BELIEVING in what Jesus did for us, but by APPLYING what Jesus did for us to our own lives!
- The gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 ¹Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; ²By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. ³For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:
- To obey the gospel, we must have a death (repentance), a burial (baptism), and a resurrection (the Holy Ghost) in our lives. That's why, when the crowd on the day of Pentecost asked "Men and brethren, what shall we do (to be saved)?," Peter gave this answer ...

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

- These are the THREE STEPS that take us across the bridge of salvation, into the relationship that God intends for us to have with Him!
- When I REPENT, I apply the DEATH of Christ to my life, making it effective in me ...
- **Galatians 5:24** And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.
- When I am BAPTIZED, I apply the BURIAL of Christ to my life, making it effective in me ...
- **Romans 6:4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
- When I receive the HOLY GHOST, I apply the resurrection of Christ to my life, making it effective in me ...
- **Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
- **The only question that remains is the most BASIC question of all: WHERE ARE YOU ON THE BRIDGE?**
- **Deuteronomy 7:7-8a** ⁷The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: ⁸But because the LORD loved you ...