

The Pencil Puzzle and Some Important Truths

A puzzled magician

Don't give up easily! The solution to this puzzle is not intuitively obvious. It took the pictured magician two days to remove the pencil from his shirt!

(Please send stories and photos of your pencil puzzle adventures to pencils@LifewaterEngineering.com)



Life is all about relationships. It's not about what you know or do but about who you know and follow.

As a follower of Jesus, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because God's love for you is so powerful that it will transform your life, if you allow it to do so!

Solving the Pencil Puzzle

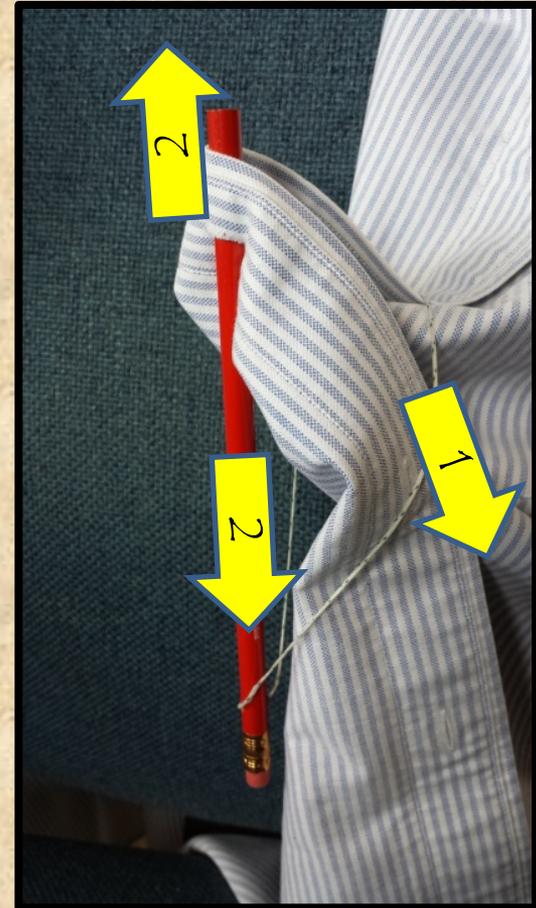
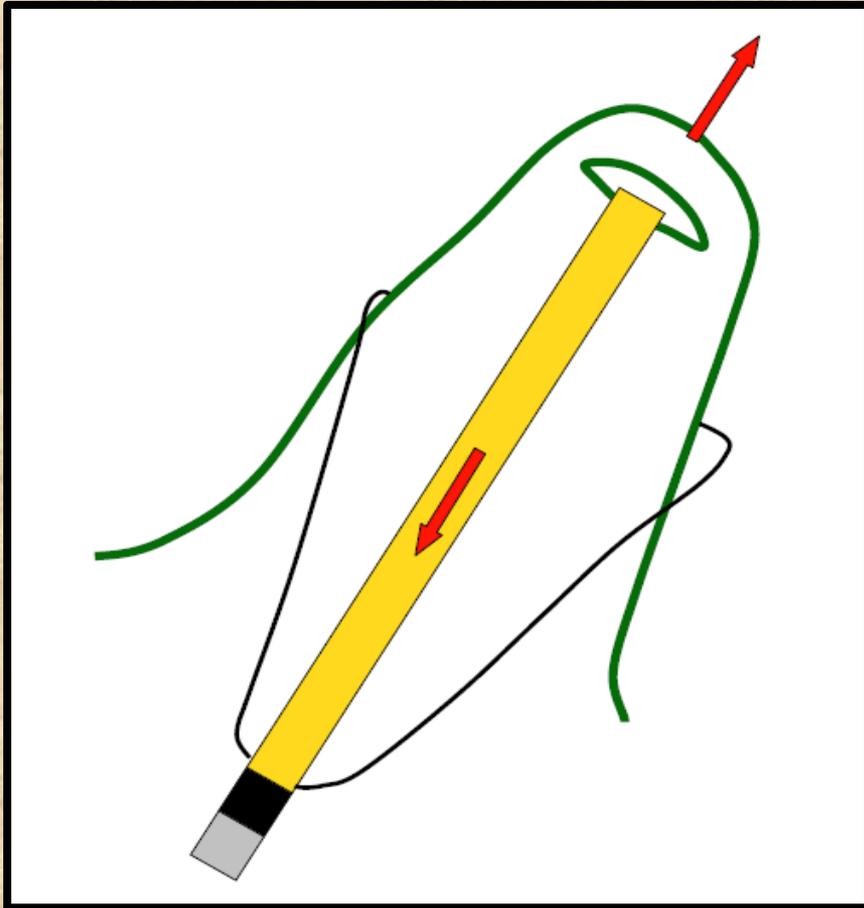
You have three items to work with – the pencil, string, and shirt. All three are important (but the key is in the often overlooked shirt).

There is one simple (but not obvious) way to get the pencil off the shirt. Arrange it so that only the pencil (no string) is in the buttonhole. Now open up the loop of string, push the string away from the pencil by pulling some fabric through the loop of string, and lift the fabric off the end of the pencil.

There's a lot of satisfaction in mastering the pencil puzzle on your own, so be sure to try it first – for a few hours, days, weeks, or even months – before peeking at the solution.

The next two slides contain illustrations of what you just read. Skip over them unless you've given up on solving the puzzle.

Removing the Pencil Puzzle



Removing the Pencil Puzzle in four easy steps



1 – Arrange the pencil, string, and shirt like this so that only the pencil is in the buttonhole.



2 – Pull some fabric through the string by moving the loop of string away from the pencil.



3 – Grasp the pencil with one hand and the fabric near the buttonhole with the other hand.



4 – Gently pull the pencil out of the buttonhole while keeping the loop of string away from the pencil.

Simple, isn't it! Have fun 'buttonholing' others.
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Solving Life's Puzzle

Every person consists of three parts – body, soul, and spirit. All three are important (but the key is in your often overlooked spirit).

Jesus said, "Follow me." That is neither as simple nor impossible as it seems, but nothing is more exciting, joyful, or fulfilling!

Following Jesus is the one simple way to restore your relationship with God. If you honestly and earnestly seek the truth with an open mind and heart, you will come to Jesus. (John 14:6) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Pure Logic

Jesus did not need pencil puzzles. He spoke with wisdom; taught with authority; preached with power; turned water into wine; calmed the winds and sea; healed the sick; cast out demons; raised the dead; captured people's attention and transformed their lives.

Historical accounts (not just in the Bible but in extra-biblical writings as well) substantiate that He lived and was no ordinary man.

Either he is God, as He claimed, or he is a liar or a lunatic.

Jesus said (John 5:36) "...the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me."

He accomplished His Father's desires.

When we follow Him, He provides everything we need to change the world.

Pure logic leads me (Bob, an engineer trained to analyze situations and make rational decisions) to accept that Jesus lived and actually did what is recorded about Him.

This evidence indicates that He is supernatural and is exactly who He claims to be – the Son of God and Savior of mankind.

Faith

I encourage you to take a step of faith.

Acknowledge that sin separates you from God; repent; confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus; believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead; invite the Holy Spirit to guide you; and offer the rest of your life to God to accomplish His purposes.

The scriptures on this page and the following pages will lead you through this process:

We are all sinners:

(Romans 3:23) ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(Romans 3:10) As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;

Therefore we are spiritually dead:

(Romans 6:23) For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus Christ took our place on the cross:

(Romans 5:8) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

We are reconciled to God through faith by confessing and believing:

(Romans 10:9-10) ...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation

When you accept Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into you to guide you:

(John 14:15-17) "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

(John 16:13) "...when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

My Testimony (Bob)

I am happy to share with you my full testimony, but here is a shortened version. After growing up in a loving family and attending a great college, I came to Alaska for a whitewater canoe trip and decided to stay. I had many fun and rewarding jobs. I hunted, fished, prospected for gold (and found some), dated, and saw much of Alaska.

By the world's standards, I pretty much had it all. Yet there was an overwhelming emptiness inside me. That void was filled when I accepted Jesus as my personal Savior and Lord (through the repentance process described above) and made a commitment to follow Him for the rest of my life.

At that point, my personality changed. I was at peace with God and myself. The world no longer had hold of me. Now, my greatest joy is showing the love of Christ and introducing people to Jesus.

What Next?

When you wholeheartedly believe what is stated above, accept God's gift of salvation through Jesus, and accept Jesus as Lord of your life, then you receive what is commonly called the gift of salvation (you are 'born again'). It is a step of faith that I don't want to minimize, but it is only the first step in your walk with God!

Everyone's salvation experience is different (kind of like DNA), but no matter how wonderful your salvation experience may be, you cannot stay there (so enjoy it, but prepare to move even closer to God)!

I encourage you to read the gospel of John. Then find a gospel-preaching, Bible-believing church and ask the pastor or elders to help you find some accountability partners to study the scriptures with you.

Lessons from the Pencil Puzzle

- A. Confidence – the feeling you have before you fully understand the situation.
- B. Many things in life are simple, but not intuitively obvious.
- C. Sin so easily entangles us (like the pencil and string). We're certain that we can get rid of it anytime we want to by ourselves, but we actually can't without God.
- D. Don't neglect your spiritual side – it's most important!
- E. Christianity isn't a religion, it's a relationship with Jesus.

The Pencil Puzzle

(a poem)

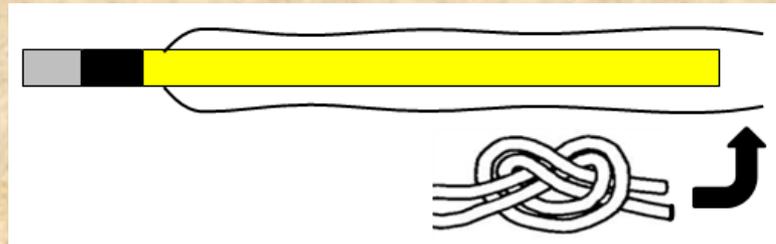
Solving this puzzle, there's only one way
Like entering heaven, ever to stay

I'll do it my way!" just eternal strife
Jesus said, "I am the way, truth, and life"

How to Make Pencil Puzzles

Use 80-lb braided fishing line for the cord. It is easy to grip and very strong (lessening the chance of some forceful person breaking it while attempting to stretch it over the pencil).

Drill a 1/8" hole through the wood near the eraser end of the pencil. Pass the fishing line through the hole and cut it so that both ends of the line extend 1/2" past the end of the pencil.



Tie an overhand knot in the line as close as you can to the end of the line, but make sure that the resulting loop is shorter than the end of the pencil!

Apply a drop of superglue to the knot then pull the knot into the 1/8" hole so it's out of the way and will not come undone.

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