



Basic Rope Illustrations

Compiled by Andrew Garvey-Williams

Basic Rope Illustrations

It's amazing what you can do with a piece of rope or two to grab interest and illustrate the gospel! The following are all very simple to learn, but do practice to make sure the presentation is smooth.

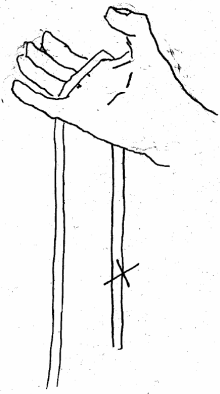
As with most illustrations, doing the trick is only a small part of the performance. Content and patter are also important. A few storyline ideas are given with the illustrations, but be creative and develop your own angles and patter.

The best rope to use is magicians' soft rope – available from magician's suppliers. But in most of these illustrations any soft rope could be used.

One handed knot

Challenge a person to tie a knot in a rope with just one hand. Watch them struggle and then take the rope and with a quick twist of the hand leave a knot on the rope!

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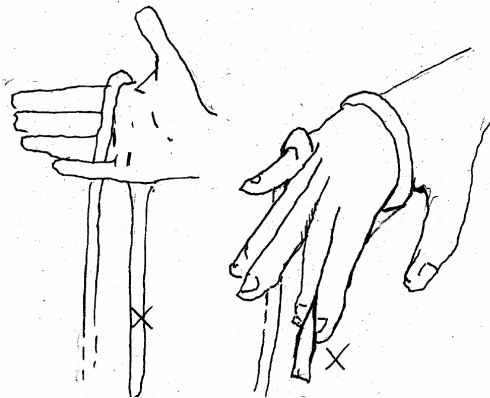


1. Hold your hand palm up. Lie rope across palm and between little finger and ring finger as illustrated. The end marked with an 'x' should hang about 15-20 cms below the hand.

2. Turn your hand keeping the rope nipped between ring and little finger. Look for point 'x' on the rope.

2.

3.



3. As you turn your hand, grasp point 'x' with your index and middle finger and grip hard.

4. Do not let go of point 'x', with a flick of your hand let all the rest of the rope fall off your hand.

4.



You will have a knot on the rope.

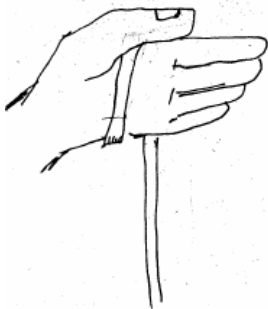
Applications:

- Use just to attract attention
- Use to show how quickly sin can catch you
- Use to show how difficult or impossible things can seem – like getting into heaven, but it is easy when you know how!

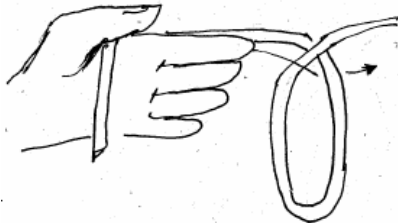
Three Knots in One

Amaze people by throwing three knots onto a knot in one flick of your wrist.

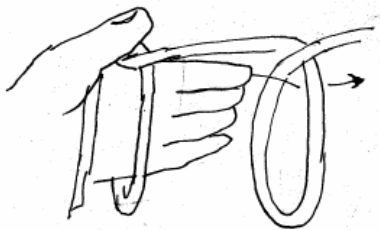
1.



2.



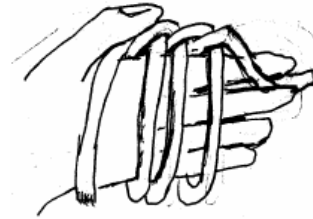
3.



4.



5.



6.

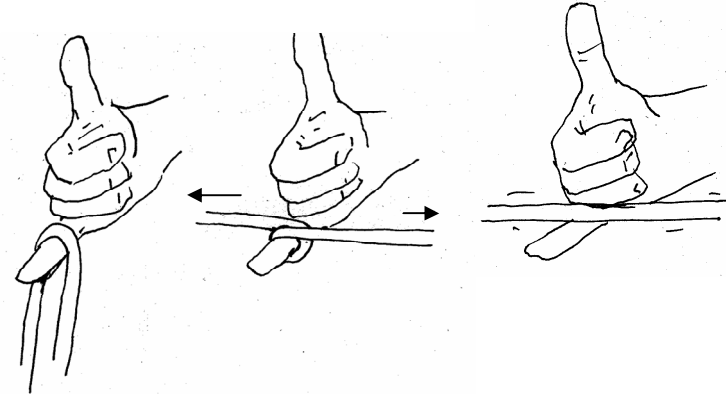


Follow the illustrations above. Twist and loop the rope three times over your hand (fig.s 1-4) . Grip the end of the rope between the index and middle finger and nip tightly (fig. 5) Throw the rope off your hand while retaining hold of the rope end.

Applications:

- Use in a talk about the trinity.
- Use just to attract a crowd.
- Use to illustrate how sin can often appear so much fun (looping the rope over your hand), but in the end it catches us in knots.

Through the finger



CAUTION: This trick must be done EXACTLY as illustrated and described. Failure to do so could break the finger. It is not advisable to do this with children under ten.

Ask if the volunteer has ever seen or heard of a magician cutting a woman in half. Jokingly explain that you are not going to cut them in half – it is too messy, and your insurance does not cover you for that! However you are going to cut through their finger. Select their right hand (always use right hand) little finger – the little finger's not so important that they'd miss it! Ask them to hold it out (as in illustration).

Drape half-way point of rope over finger at the middle joint of the finger as illustrated. Take the right-hand (from your view point) end of rope and wind it under and over the finger exactly as illustrated in the the second figure above. **DO THIS EXACTLY AS ILLUSTRATED.**

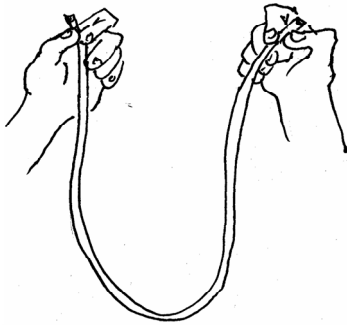
Take the two ropes in your two hands and pull them horizontally with a quick, sharp tug (as the arrows in the figure). The rope will appear to go through the finger. What actually happens is that their finger bends as you pull, but reflexes make it straighten immediately without them noticing!

Applications:

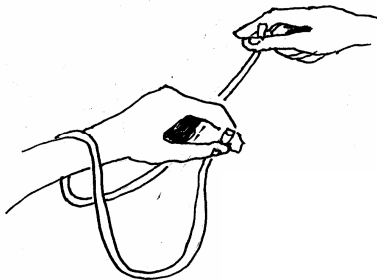
- Use just as an attention grabber.
- Use to illustrate faith – 'Do you believe that I can make a rope pass through your finger...?'
'Do you believe that I won't hurt you?'
- Use to illustrate the fact that you cannot always trust your eyes – to someone who says 'I only trust what I can see'.

Knot the Rope Challenge

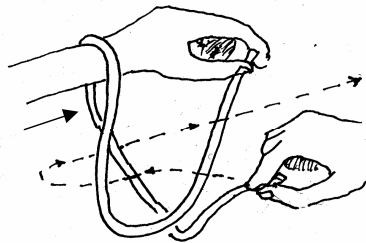
Challenge a spectator to hold the rope as in the first illustration and then to tie a knot – a real knot and not a slip knot - in the middle of a piece of rope without letting go. As this is impossible, it is safe to offer a five pound note to any who can! When they cannot do it, you take the rope from them and achieve it – below are two ways to achieve the knot.



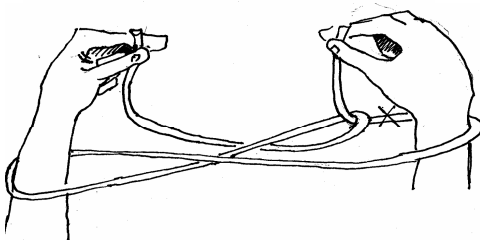
Take two ends of rope in fingers of both hands



Take right hand rope over left arm as illustrated



Without letting go of end, take right hand through loop hanging on left arm, around the strand arrowed, and back through loop.



You should end up with the situation illustrated here.

(If you want a simple version of the trick, you can now ask someone else standing in front of you to take the two ends out of your hands. You slip your hands out from the rope. When they pull the rope tight a knot will form in the rope. Use this to explain how when we give God control of our lives and we let go, He can do what we cannot do.)



To achieve a knot yourself takes a small deceptive move! From the position we had in the previous illustration, note the point marked 'x'. As you move to pull your hands apart and through the loops, grab point 'X' with your three free fingers (middle, ring and little) – see illustration. At the same time as you grab, let go with your index finger and thumb and pull your hands through while letting the rope slide off both your hands. You will find that you have a knot in the middle of the rope! Practice this move until it is one smooth continuous movement. The bigger move of your arms should mask the little move of your fingers.

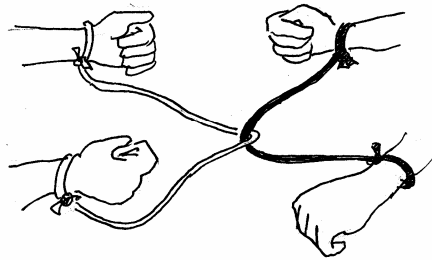
Applications:

Use to just grab peoples' attention

Use to illustrate how we (mankind) try achieve things in life that will last and hold, but achievements on earth will always fall away (like a slipknot). When we give our life to God and seek his kingdom, we can find something that will last (a proper knot). Use to illustrate your own testimony.

Use to illustrate how annoying it is when someone can do something that you can't. How mankind saw Jesus' perfect life, but we cannot achieve his perfection or our way to heaven – he was the only one good enough.

Rope Release



Use two ropes. Tie two volunteers together as in first illustration. Ask them to separate themselves without untying the knots.

Allow them some time to try and escape.

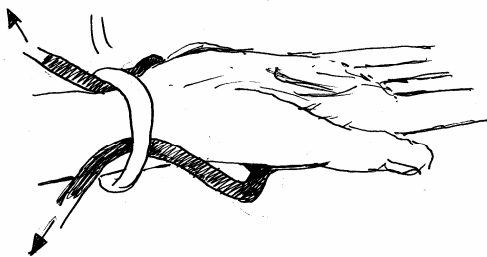
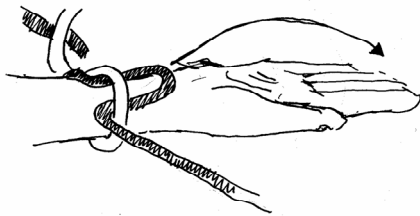
Explain how we often think we can sort out our problems and escape from them ourselves – often ending up in more knots or in failure.

There are things in life that we can't control or escape from. God has power over all things and knows how to set us free.

Explain cross as you help them to simply get free.

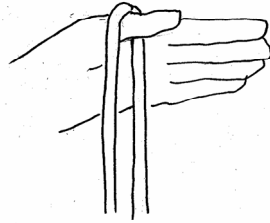
The way to do it is as illustrated: Take one rope and form a small loop in the rope; pass this loop under the wrist tie of the other person; pull the loop over the person's hand; pull loop back under the hand and back through the wrist tie. The two people will now be separated.

Easy when you know how! To keep the secret, you might want to do the move under a cloth draped over their hands, or ask the volunteers to turn their back to the audience to shield the audience from seeing – you could ask the volunteers to shut their eyes.

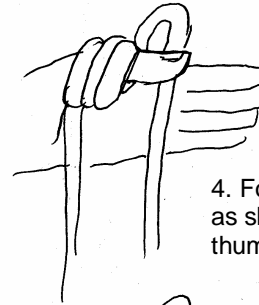


Eye of the Needle

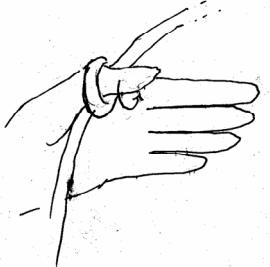
Follow the instructions below to thread your hand and end of a rope through a small loop in the rope. Application is obvious – Jesus' parable of the camel going through eye of the needle.



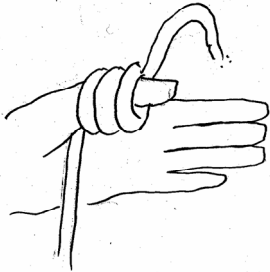
1. Drape rope over thumb as shown. End 'a' should hang about 40 cm down from thumb.



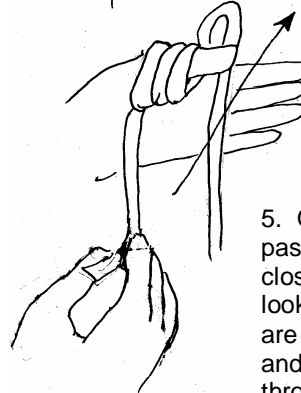
4. Form a small loop as shown. Grip with thumb.



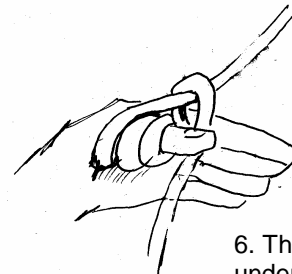
2. Wrap end 'b' around thumb as shown



3. Wrap two more times around thumb



5. Grab end 'a' and pass your hand fast close to the loop to look as though you are thrusting hand and rope end through the loop.



6. The rope will slip under your thumb and appear under the loop – the effect is as though you passed your hand and rope end through the loop.

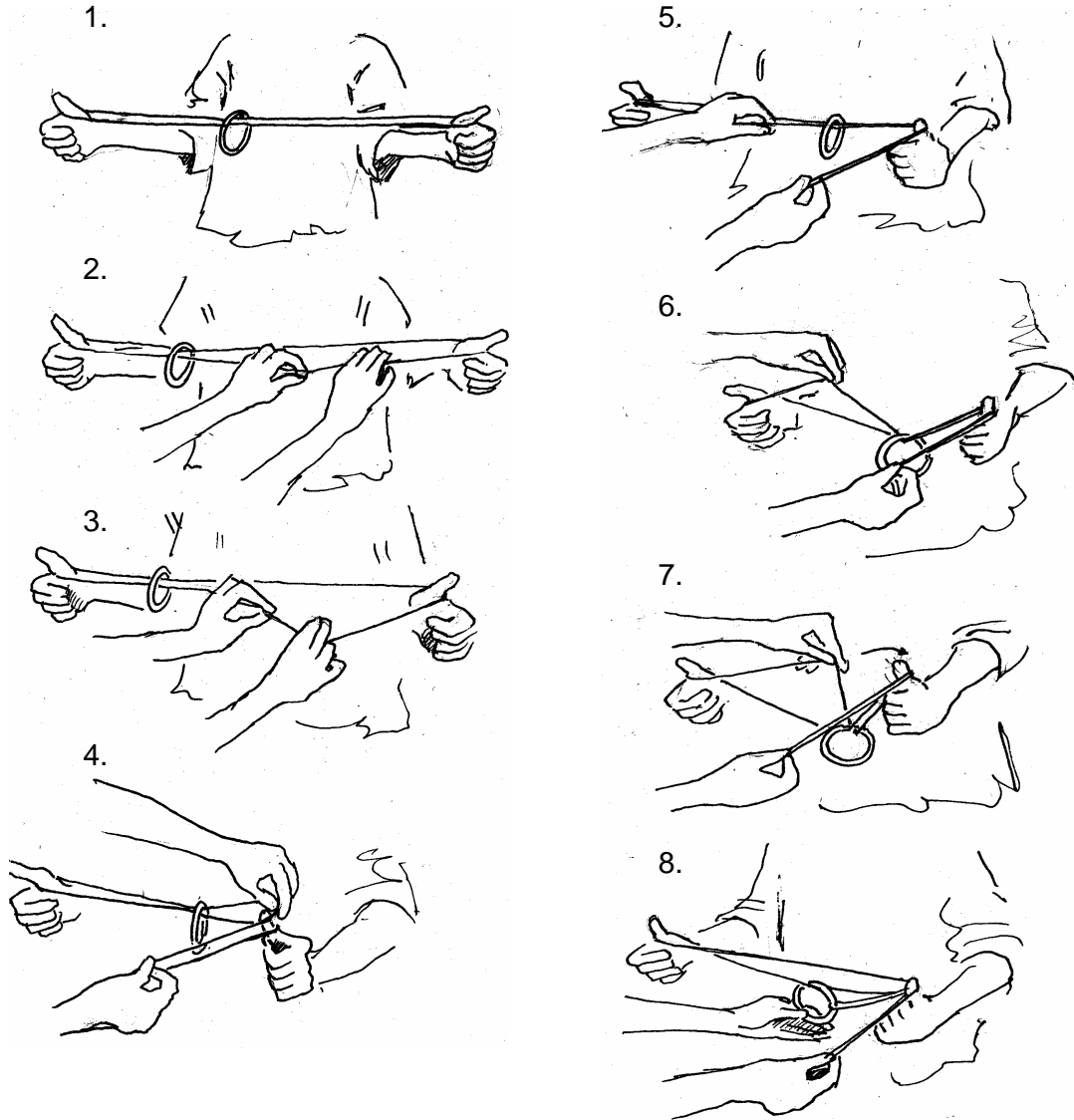
Presentation:

Wrap the rope around your thumb as in 1-4. Ask if people think it possible for you to pass the end of the rope through the loop without letting go of the end with your hand. Of course, it would be impossible. Tell about Jesus' parable that it would be easier for a rich man to enter heaven than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle – in other words 'impossible'. But Jesus went on to say what is impossible with man is possible with God. Do steps 5-6. Explain how God has made it possible for sinful men to go to heaven.

Ring off the rope

A rope is tied into a loop, the loop is threaded through a ring (e.g. curtain ring), and the ends of the rope looped over a spectator's thumbs – see first illustration. You ask if it would be possible to release the ring without undoing the knot, cutting the rope, or lifting the rope off the spectator's ropes. Impossible? With a few quick moves you show how it is possible.

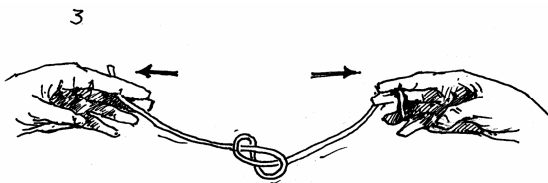
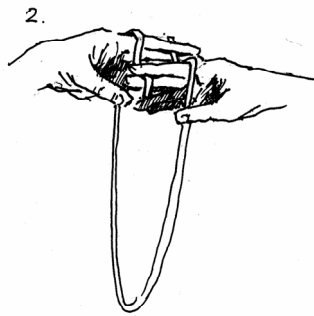
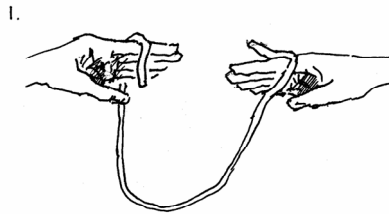
Follow the moves illustrated below to achieve the release.



Applications:

- Use to just grab peoples' attention
- Use to illustrate what is impossible for man is possible with God
- Use to illustrate how there is only one solution to the problem. With man's problem (sin) there is just one solution – Jesus had to come and do what we could not do (live a perfect life), and then to offer his perfect life as a sacrifice taking our place and our punishment on the cross.

Quickest knot in the West!



The performer asks if people would like to see the fastest knot in the world! Or challenge them to tie a knot in the rope in under two seconds! With an end of each rope over each hand, he passes his hands in front of each other a couple of times to build up effect. Suddenly bringing them together again and pulling his hands apart, there is a knot in the rope!

Use soft rope about 0.5m long.

Follow the diagrams slowly and carefully noticing how the index and second fingers 'scissor' pinch the rope ends (fig.2).

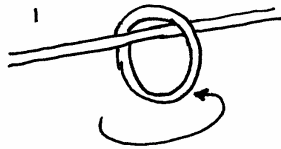
The hands should look like they are just passing in front of each other.

Practice and speed up so that you can nip the ends really quickly as the hands come together. The quicker you do it, the better the illusion.

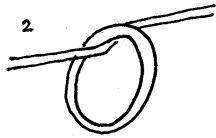
Applications:

- Use to just grab peoples' attention
- Having challenged them to tie a knot in under two seconds and when they have failed, show them how to do it and use to illustrate how easy it is when you know how! What is impossible for man is possible with God.
- Use to illustrate how quick life or things in life can happen – an accident, a heart attack. Life is very short.
- Use to illustrate how quickly sin can leave us with a 'knotty problem' in our life.

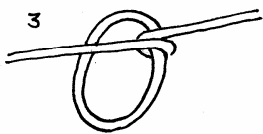
Ring Release 1



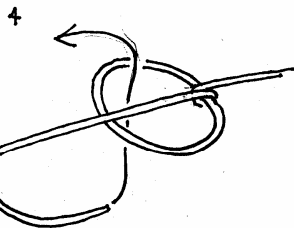
Slide a ring on a rope. Give one end of rope to a spectator to hold. You hold the other end. Ask if would be possible to get the ring off without letting go. Then say, that to make things even more difficult, you are going to tie the ring onto the rope.



Follow diagrams 1-4 exactly. It appears like you are tying the ring on the rope. Retake your end of the rope in your left hand, or even pass the end to the spectator to hold in their other hand, or give your end to a second spectator. Explain that now the ring is tied and tangled onto the rope, it should be even harder to get it off the rope.

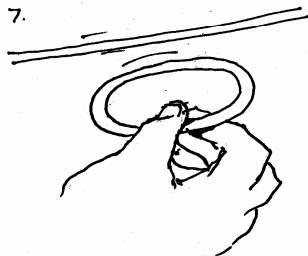
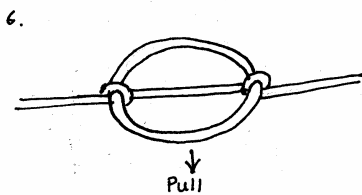
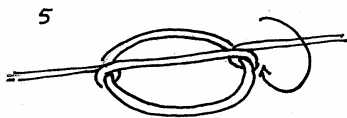


Then twist the ring over exactly the same way as in the diagram 5. With a tug towards you as in diagram 7, the ring should come off the rope.

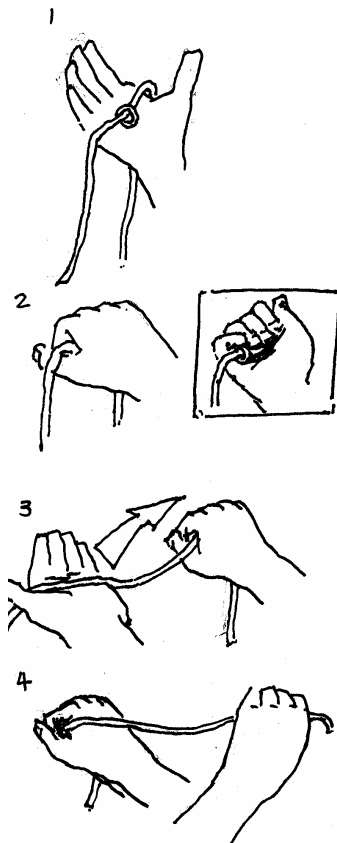


Applications:

- Use to just grab peoples' attention
- Use to illustrate how quickly sin or wrong things, or problems can get caught into our life and how impossible some seem to remove or deal with. Explain how Jesus can help us get release from those things.



Ring Release 2



Thread a ring on a piece of rope and hold in your right hand (1). Turn your hand over (2). As you do allow the ring to slip along the rope to lie under your little finger (2 inset shows under view).

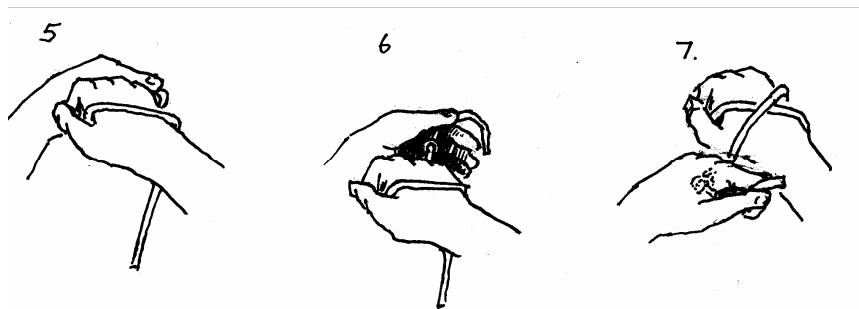
With your other hand lift left rope end over your downturned hand and drop end (3)

Reach left hand under down-turned right to get the right end of rope (5).

As you do secretly transfer ring from under your right little finger into the palm of left hand. (6).

Cross the left end over the back of your downturned right hand (7). Spectators believe that the ring is still in your right hand.

Show the right hand empty, and nothing on rope. Transfer rope into your left hand and drop rope

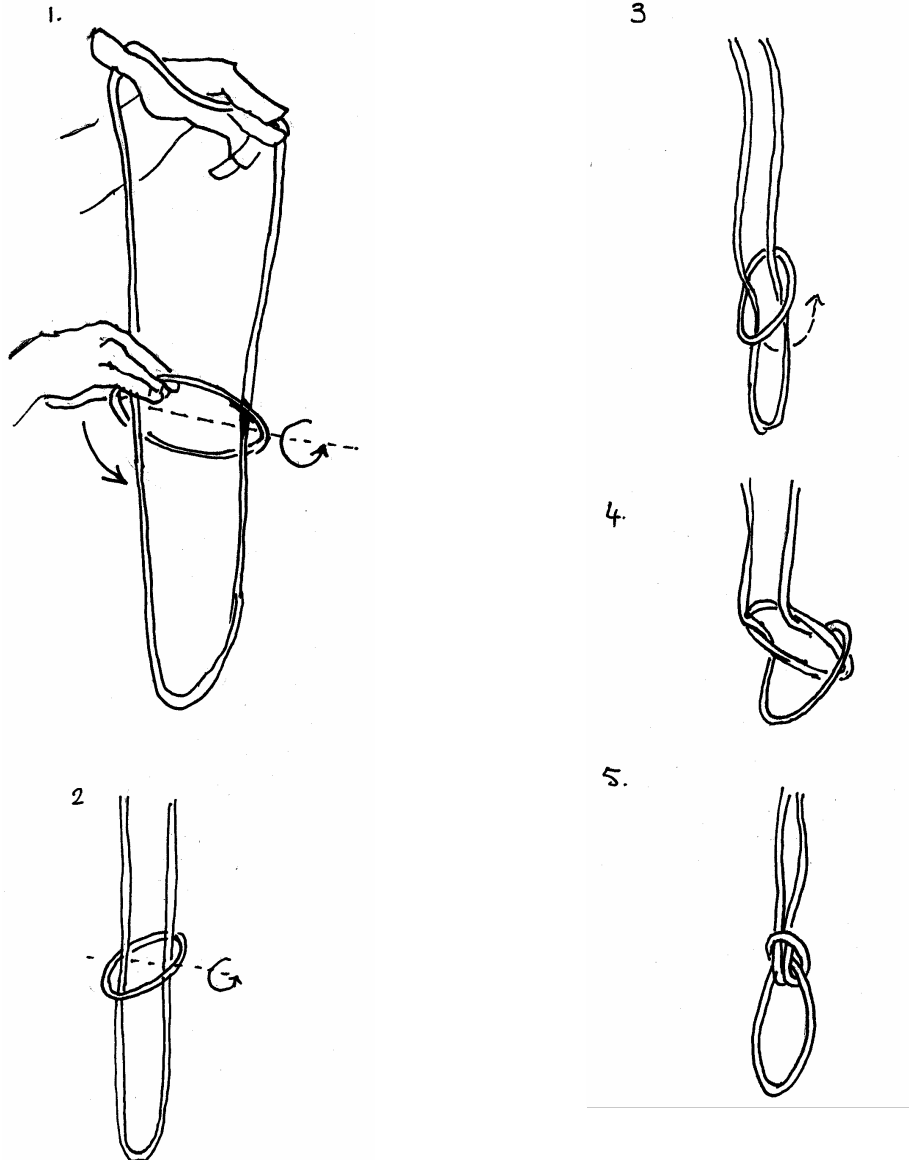


Applications:

- Use to just grab peoples' attention
- Use to illustrate how quickly sin or wrong things, or problems can get caught into our life and how impossible some seem to remove or deal with. Explain how Jesus can help us get release from those things.
- Use to illustrate and escape, eg. Peter from prison, Jesus' body in tomb disappears.

Ring Throw

A ring (metal one about 10cms diameter) is tied on to a loop of rope with a flick and a throw of the wrist.



Follow the diagrams above. It takes practice and a little bit of experiment to achieve the result consistently. You may need to experiment with different ring and rope sizes and weights. In fig. 2 The ring has to be thrown downward with some force and speed to make achieve the twists in the following figures.

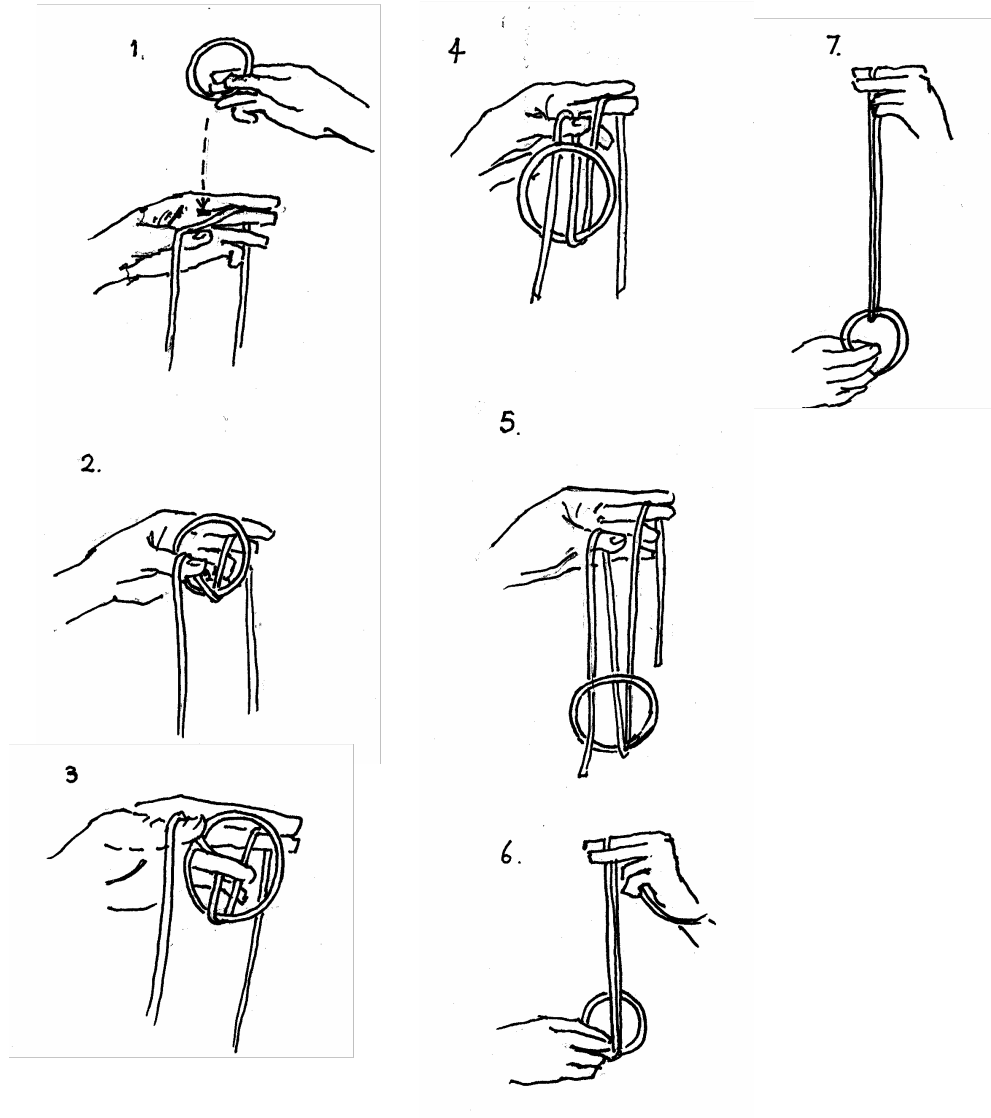
Applications:

- Use to just grab peoples' attention
- Use to illustrate how quick life or things in life can happen – an accident, a heart attack. Life is very short.

- Use to illustrate how quickly sin can leave us with a 'knotty problem' in our life.

Ring Pass onto Rope

A ring is pushed down onto a rope and appears to penetrate onto the rope. The performer asks if it is possible to pass a ring onto a rope in the middle of the rope. He then proceeds to push a ring onto the centre of a rope and the ring is left hanging on the rope.



Follow the diagrams. The back of your hand should be towards the audience so they cannot see the secret moves. The diagrams are from your view. Practice until the moves are smooth and continuous.

Applications:

- Use to just grab peoples' attention
- What is impossible for man is possible with God.
- Don't need God on or around our life, but in our life, linked together and right at the heart. God wants to be at the centre.

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