

Walk in Light



BECOMING A DISCERNER

Material in this resource was developed by long-term ABWE missionary **J. Rupert Morgan, PhD.**

"for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light"--Ephesians 5:8 (ESV)

Book 3 of The Walk Series

Published by
Good Soil - A Ministry of ABWE

Copyright © 2025
Association of Baptists for World Evangelism
P.O. Box 8585
Harrisburg, PA 17105 USA

Author: Gil Thomas & J Rupert Morgan, PhD
Graphic Design: Lauren Miller

Email: Info@GoodSoil.com
Web: GoodSoil.com

Material in this resource was developed by long-term ABWE missionary **J. Rupert Morgan, PhD.**, who served as a missionary in Togo before serving as a church planter in Columbus, OH. His area of service was then in missionary development until he took the role of Strategic Initiative Researcher.



Contents

4

WELCOME

Becoming Acquainted



7

WALK IN LIGHT

Becoming a Discerner



Spiritual Warfare!

7

Session 1: Battle for Your Heart, Soul, and Mind - Part 1

11

Session 2: Battle for Your Heart, Soul, and Mind - Part 2

15

Session 3: Building a Biblical Theology of Spiritual Warfare OT - Part 1

19

Session 4: Building a Biblical Theology of Spiritual Warfare OT - Part 2

23

Session 5: The Armor of God

27

Session 6: A Model for Spiritual Warfare

31

APPENDIX

Welcome



Walk in Light

Book 3 in “The Walk Series” — Continuing on the Path to Disciple Maker

This is exciting! By now you have gone through *The Story of Hope*, trusted Christ as personal savior, becoming alive. Then you went through *The Way to Joy* and began to put down roots and walk in good works. Then you became deeper in your walk as you went through *Walk Worthy*. You may have even started discipling others! And went through *Walk in Love* and helped cement your commitment to the local community of believers. Now, you’re starting another study which will help you walk in light and be discerning.

A great basis for this study can be found in 1 John 1:5-10. Even though they are not included in the curriculum, you may want to include these verses in your memorization routine.

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.⁶ If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.⁸ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Interestingly enough, though, the context of our key verse for *Walk in Light* ("For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light" Ephesians 5:8), not only tells us to be discerning but also to "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible" (Ephesians 5:10-14).

Walking in Light includes being prepared to do battle against the forces of darkness. Much of *Walking in Light* has to do with fighting against the forces of darkness. This is spiritual warfare. May God bless as you learn about spiritual warfare and how to battle against the Devil.

Following a Disciple's Walk in Ephesians			
DISCIPLE'S WALK SCALE		WHO THEY ARE	WHAT WE USE
5.15	Walk as Wise	Equippers	<i>Gaining Ground as a Truly Evangelistic Church</i>
5:8	Walk as Children of Light	Disciple-Maker	<i>Walk Wise</i>
5:1-2	Walk in Love	Discerning	<i>Walk in Light</i>
4:1, (17-24)	Walk Worthy of the Calling	Dear Children	<i>Walk in Love</i>
2:10	Walk in Good Works	Different from World	<i>Walk Worthy</i>
2:4-5	"BUT GOD..."	Designed by God	<i>The Way to Joy</i>
2:2	Walked, following the course of this world	Dynamic/Alive!	<i>ChronoBridge</i>
			<i>The Story of Hope</i>
			<i>The Story of Hope Condensed</i>
		Dead/Lost	

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY REVIEW

Before we start our first session, let's review the Inductive Bible study approach that we learned in Session 1 in *Walk Worthy*.

"Inductive Bible study is an approach to God's Word focusing on three basic steps that move from a focus on specific details to a more general, universal principle"—so says www.GotQuestions.org. The three basic steps are Observation, Interpretation, and Application.

OBSERVATION asks:

What does the text we're studying say?

During this step, we should answer basic reporter questions; who, what, when, where, why, and how. Also look for words that seem to be repeated or seem particularly significant — **STUDY**.

INTERPRETATION asks:

What does the text we're studying mean?

During this step, we are trying to determine what the Bible story or text meant to its original audience. Try to put yourself in their place. What might they be thinking? Feeling? Experiencing at that time? — **CONTEXT**.

Then we'll usually try to pass the text through our essential truths grid: what does this passage tell us about **GOD, MAN, SIN, DEATH, CHRIST, CROSS, FAITH, LIFE**? This can help us build our theology.

APPLICATION asks:

How should I respond to God or how should I change the way I relate to people based on this text?

During this step, we're trying to determine how we should respond based on the meaning we discovered in steps one and two. Certainly, people will have different responses, but our different applications should come from a singular, non-contrived meaning. We want our application to have a response to the God who gave us His Word and also a response to the people around us. A text may demand a response to both—or not—but we want to ask ourselves the questions to be sure — **OBEY/APPLY**.

01

Spiritual Warfare!

BATTLE FOR YOUR HEART, SOUL, AND MIND

Part 1

Opening Prayer

Quiz each other on all or any of the verses, *starting with 1 John 3:18*.



ACCOUNTABILITY— How are you doing with your relationship to ...



GOD (includes, but not limited to devotional time/disciplines)



FAMILY (starting with wife, if married)



CHURCH (as a community, but including discipleship opportunities)



WORLD (How are you sharing the gospel/cultivating relationships.?)



SELF (How might you be struggling with a specific sin or temptation?)

*Prayer scattered throughout this section as is deemed appropriate.



BIBLE STUDY—based on 5 questions

Before reading the Bible event today, we will introduce a couple of ideas that will orient us as we look at the Bible. Write below three of some of the manifestations of evil in the world today.

● See Appendix Note #1 pg 31

Three enemy partners are battling against you.

Can you find them in Ephesians 2:1-3?



To check
answers
see
Appendix
Note #2
pg 31

Read the events in **Genesis 3:1-6**. Respond to the 5 questions.



What does this passage say? **STUDY**



What did this passage mean to its original audience? **CONTEXT**



What does this passage tell us about the essential gospel truths?
(GOD, MAN, SIN, DEATH, CHRIST, CROSS, FAITH, LIFE)



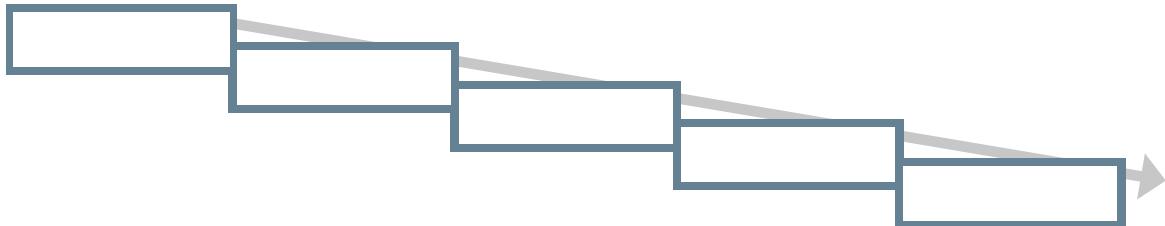
How should I respond to God? **OBEY/APPLY**



How should I change the way I relate to people? **SHARE**

In the text boxes below, write the five downward steps in this story/passage.

To check
answers
see
Appendix
Note #3
pg 31



Can you think of a time in your life when this 5-step process took place?

Five downward steps will defeat you in spiritual warfare if you are not careful.

Sin is a _____ before it becomes an event in your life! ● ... See Appendix Note pg 31 #4



Look at **1 John 2:15-17** below. Circle each reference to the **world** and underline the three allurements of the world.

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life – is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

1 JOHN 2:16	GENESIS 3:6	CATEGORY
All that is in the world...	The woman saw that the tree was...	Desire for...
Desire of the eyes	good for food.	NEED
Pride of life	a delight to the eyes.	GLORY
Desire of the flesh	desired to make one wise.	PLEASURE

Draw an arrow from the left and right columns to the corresponding statements in the central column. ● ... See Appendix Note pg 32



Evangelism & Discipleship Skills

Talk about how what you learned today helps you do spiritual warfare.

Before you meet with your disciple/disciple-maker, read the article [Sharing the Gospel Through Your Faith Story, Pt. 1 | Good Soil](#) on page 37 in the appendix (or read it together during your meeting). If you read beforehand, take time also, to write out your faith story and share it during your session.

What part of your faith story is “The Before”?

Talk about “The How”.

What goes in “The After” part of your faith story?

If you didn’t write out your faith story ahead of time, take time to do it now and share with each other. During this week, share with at least one other person.

See
Appendix
Note pg 32

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT:

Ephesians 6:10-11.

Pray for each other before you go.

02

Spiritual Warfare!

BATTLE FOR YOUR HEART, SOUL, AND MIND

Part 2

Opening Prayer

Quiz each other on all or any of the verses, *starting with Ephesians 6:10-11.*



ACCOUNTABILITY— How are you doing with your relationship to . . .



GOD (*includes, but not limited to devotional time/disciplines*)



FAMILY (*starting with wife, if married*)



CHURCH (*as a community, but including discipleship opportunities*)



WORLD (*Are you sharing the gospel/cultivating relationships, etc.?*)



SELF (*Are you struggling with a specific sin or temptation?*)

*Prayer scattered throughout this section as is deemed appropriate.

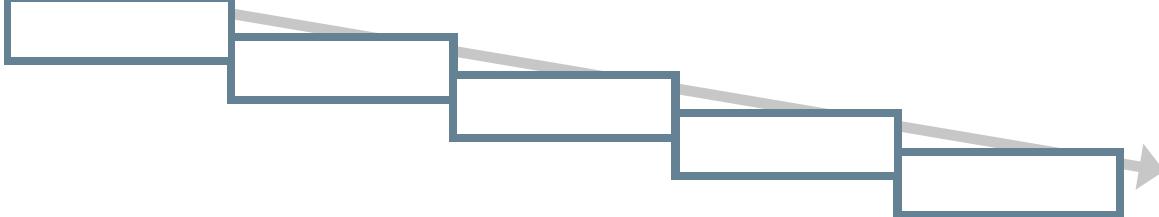


BIBLE STUDY—based on 5 questions

Last time, we looked at Eve's temptation by the serpent. Do you remember the three partner enemies and the five downward steps?

To check answers
see Appendix
Note pg 31

See Appendix Note pg 32



Today, we will look at Jesus' temptation by Satan. Read the event in **Matthew 4:1-11**. Respond to the 5 questions, and then look for the three enemies.



What does this passage say? **STUDY**



What did this passage mean to its original audience? **CONTEXT**



What does this passage tell us about the essential gospel truths?

(GOD, MAN, SIN, DEATH, CHRIST, CROSS, FAITH, LIFE)



How should I respond to God? **OBEY/APPLY**



How should I change the way I relate to people? **SHARE**

Now, read the temptation of Jesus on the next page and

1. **Highlight** or underline the three temptations of the devil,
2. Draw a line from the allurement of the world in the left column to the corresponding temptation of Jesus in the middle column, and
3. Draw a line from the desire in the right column to the corresponding temptation of Jesus in the middle column.

Desire of the Eyes

Pride of Life

Desire of the Flesh

Satan tempts Jesus to change stone into bread (Matthew 4:1-4).

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Satan tempts Jesus to leap from the temple (5-7).

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you,' and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone." (Psalm 91:11-12; Deuteronomy 6:16)

Satan tempts Jesus with kingdoms (8-11).

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

"You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve." (Deuteronomy 6:13)

Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Need

Glory

Pleasure

What are the similarities and differences between the temptation of Eve and Jesus?

Consider the 3 enemy partners, 5 steps, and 3 allurements in your response.

See
Appendix
Note #1
pg 32

Similarities

Differences

Considering the similarities and differences between Eve and Jesus, how can you have the victory that Jesus experienced when you are tempted by sin?

● ... See Appendix Note #2 pg 32



Evangelism & Discipleship Skills

Before you meet with your disciple/disciple-maker, read the Sharing the Gospel Through Your Faith Story, Pt. 2 | Good Soil on page 43 in the appendix (or read it together during your meeting).

Do you agree with the statement “... *most people, even non-Christians, will be receptive to hearing your “story,” even if it is your faith story*”? Why or why not?

Which of the ten tips for crafting your faith story seem to be most helpful for you?

In your own words, summarize the “Getting into and out of your Faith Story” section.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT:

Ephesians 6:12.

Pray for each other before you go.

03

Spiritual Warfare!

BUILDING A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE OT

Part 1

Opening Prayer

Quiz each other on all or any of the verses, *starting with Ephesians 6:10-12.*



ACCOUNTABILITY— How are you doing with your relationship to . . .



GOD (includes, but not limited to devotional time/disciplines)



FAMILY (starting with wife, if married)



CHURCH (as a community, but including discipleship opportunities)



WORLD (How are you sharing the gospel/cultivating relationships?)



SELF (Are you struggling with a specific sin or temptation?)

*Prayer scattered throughout this section as is deemed appropriate.



BIBLE STUDY— based on 5 questions

Read **Job 1:6-2:10** and answer the five questions below.



What does this passage say? **STUDY**



What did this passage mean to its original audience? **CONTEXT**



What does this passage tell us about the essential gospel truths?
(GOD, MAN, SIN, DEATH, CHRIST, CROSS, FAITH, LIFE)



How should I respond to God? **OBEY/APPLY**



How should I change the way I relate to people? **SHARE**

Then, interact over the following questions:

What are God's Actions?

What are people's actions?

What are Satan's actions?

What are key points you would put into your theology based on these passages?

● ... See Appendix Note pg 34



Evangelism & Discipleship Skills

Before you meet with your disciple/disciple-maker, read the [Making Evangelism & Discipleship a Priority in Your Life | Good Soil](#) on page 46 in the appendix (or read it together during your meeting).

Make your own E card and D card.

Be sure to keep your card in your Bible or put it up someplace where you will see it (e.g., on the mirror where you brush your teeth), and remember to pray regularly for these people and for opportunities to share Christ and/or begin discipleship Bible studies.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT:

Ephesians 6:13.

Pray for each other before you go.





04

Spiritual Warfare!

BUILDING A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE NT

Part 2

Opening Prayer

Quiz each other on all or any of the verses, *starting with Ephesians 6:10-13.*



ACCOUNTABILITY— How are you doing with your relationship to . . .



GOD (*includes, but not limited to devotional time/disciplines*)



FAMILY (*starting with wife, if married*)



CHURCH (*as a community, but including discipleship opportunities*)



WORLD (*How are you sharing the gospel/cultivating relationships?*)



SELF (*How might you be struggling with a specific sin or temptation?*)

*Prayer scattered throughout this section as is deemed appropriate.



BIBLE STUDY— based on 5 questions

Read Mark 1:21-28 and Luke 8:26-39, answering five questions below.



What does this passage say? **STUDY**



What did this passage mean to its original audience? **CONTEXT**



What does this passage tell us about the essential gospel truths?
(GOD, MAN, SIN, DEATH, CHRIST, CROSS, FAITH, LIFE)



How should I respond to God? **OBEY/APPLY**



How should I change the way I relate to people? **SHARE**

Then, interact over the following questions:

What is the relationship of the unclean spirits to Jesus?

What do the evil spirits recognize about Jesus?

● See Appendix Note #1 pg 34

In the Mark passage, how do the people respond?

In the Luke passage, what do the disciples say, and what role do they have in this event?

● See Appendix Note #2 pg 34

How were the demons limited in this event?

What do we learn about Jesus and demons from these two passages?

• See Appendix Note pg 35

What are key points you would put into your theology based on these passages?



Evangelism & Discipleship Skills

Before you meet with your disciple/disciple-maker, read the [What Must I REALLY Do to Be Saved? | Good Soil](#) on page 49 in the appendix (or read it together during your meeting).

Talk about what one must REALLY do to be saved. What are synonyms and synonymous metaphors for believing in Jesus?

Which ones are common in your host culture?

What might you say to someone instead of using the common metaphors for believing in Jesus in your culture?

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT:

Ephesians 6:14-15.

Pray for each other before you go.



05

Spiritual Warfare!

THE ARMOR OF GOD

Opening Prayer

Quiz each other on all or any of the verses, *starting with Ephesians 6:10-15.*



ACCOUNTABILITY— How are you doing with your relationship to . . .



GOD (includes, but not limited to devotional time/disciplines)



FAMILY (starting with wife, if married)



CHURCH (as a community, but including discipleship opportunities)



WORLD (How are you sharing the gospel/cultivating relationships?)



SELF (How might you be struggling with a specific sin or temptation?)

*Prayer scattered throughout this section as is deemed appropriate.



BIBLE STUDY—based on 5 questions

Read **Ephesians 6:10-18**, answering five questions below.



What does this passage say? **STUDY**



What did this passage mean to its original audience? **CONTEXT**



What does this passage tell us about the essential gospel truths?

(GOD, MAN, SIN, DEATH, CHRIST, CROSS, FAITH, LIFE)



How should I respond to God? **OBEY/APPLY**



How should I change the way I relate to people? **SHARE**

Then, answer these questions:

1. Against whom are we fighting (using this armor)?

2. Talk about each piece of the armor. What is the purpose of each piece?

3. How does God expect you to use it?

4. Is any one piece or any instruction key to all of it?

5. Compare the armor in Eph. 6 with Gen. 15:1; Psalm 17:13; 18:2; 91:4; 93:1; Isaiah 11:5.

6. Read Colossians 3:12-14 and compare the armor of God with the clothing of Christ.

● ... To compare answers, see Appendix Note pg 35

Read 2 Chronicles 20:15. Notice that the battle is God's, not yours.



Evangelism & Discipleship Skills

Before you meet with your disciple/disciple-maker, read the [How Many Stories in the Bible? | Good Soil](#) on page 52 in the appendix (or read it together during your meeting).

What did you think about this article?

What is the difference between a general survey of the Bible and presenting God's story of redemption?

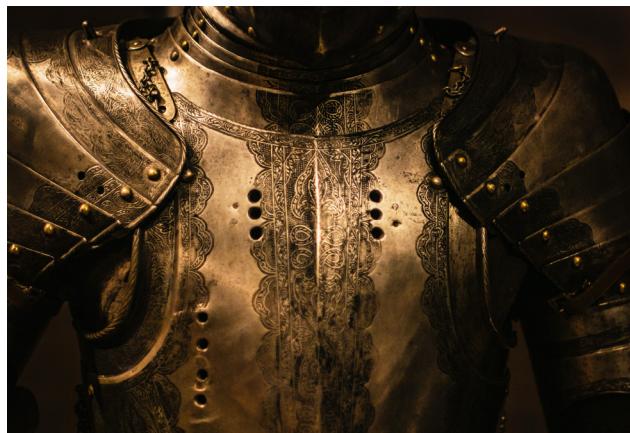
Why include end time events in God's story of redemption?

Why not just stop with the death and resurrection of Jesus?

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT:

Ephesians 6:16-17.

Pray for each other before you go.



06

Spiritual Warfare!

A MODEL FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Opening Prayer

Quiz each other on all or any of the verses, *starting with Ephesians 6:10-17*.



ACCOUNTABILITY— How are you doing with your relationship to . . .



GOD (*includes, but not limited to devotional time/disciplines*)



FAMILY (*starting with wife, if married*)



CHURCH (*as a community, but including discipleship opportunities*)



WORLD (*How are you sharing the gospel/cultivating relationships?*)



SELF (*How might you be struggling with a specific sin or temptation?*)

*Prayer scattered throughout this section as is deemed appropriate.



BIBLE STUDY—based on 5 questions

Read **James 4:1-10**, answering five questions below.



What does this passage say? **STUDY**



What did this passage mean to its original audience? **CONTEXT**



What does this passage tell us about the essential gospel truths?
(GOD, MAN, SIN, DEATH, CHRIST, CROSS, FAITH, LIFE)



How should I respond to God? **OBEY/APPLY**



How should I change the way I relate to people? **SHARE**

Find 10 commands in verses 7-10 and list them below with the first three on the left.

1

2

3

These three have to do with your relationship with whom?

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Commands 4 & 5 have to do with what?

Commands 6-9 have to do with what?

Command 10 has to do with what?

● See Appendix Note pg 36

With which command do you struggle the most? How can you pray for each other?



Evangelism & Discipleship Skills

Gaining Ground with Good Soil is an entertaining narrative with thought-provoking exercises that help the reader understand worldview-relevant evangelism and discipleship and its importance in a postmodern world. An individual study guide, leader's guide, and teaching resources are available. The book is also available on Audible.

You may want to begin reading through the book with your disciple at this point. Download the study guide and do each exercise. By reading just a chapter or two per week, you can slow down and do the exercises in the study guide. The more exercises you do and the more you talk with each other about what you are reading, the more it will sink in. Read the Introduction and Chapters 1 & 2 this week.

If your disciple will apply what he/she is reading, this can help him/her on the pathway to becoming an effective disciple-maker.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT:

Ephesians 6:10-18.

Congratulations! You finished **Walk in Light** and are ready to move on to **Walk as Wise** finding out how to look for and develop key partners and leaders.

Pray for each other before you go.

Appendix

Page 8

#1 ANSWER: Here are some examples: murder, pandemics, wars, abortion, mass murder, video games, movies.

#2 ANSWER: The world, the flesh, and the devil. The point here is that the devil is not the cause of all our problems in spiritual warfare. You may want to use some or all of the verses below to develop this more.

VERSES:

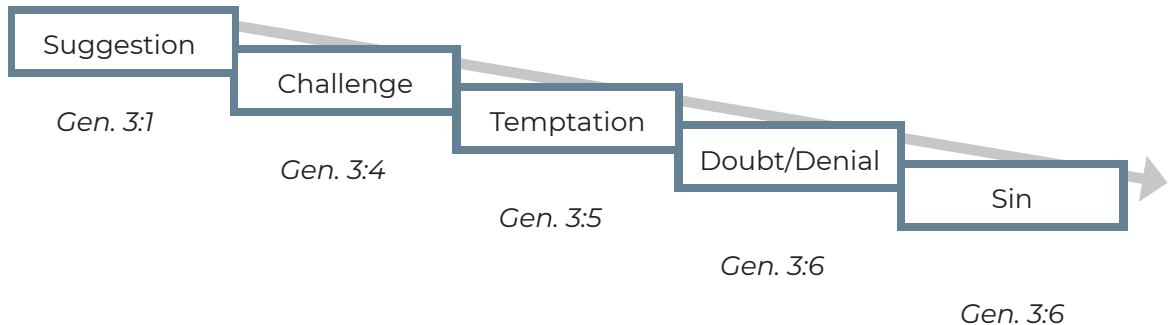
Mk 16:15; Ps 96:13; Jn 17:14

Ecc. 12:12; Gal. 5:17

Ez. 28:11-19; Jn. 8:44; Rev. 12

Page 9

#3 ANSWERS



#4 FILL IN THE BLANK: process

You may disagree with this statement. However, the fact is, once we get proficient at sinning (a sad state of affairs!), we may go through the steps very quickly, possibly not even noticing them.

Appendix

Page 10

1 JOHN 2:16	GENESIS 3:6	CATEGORY
All that is in the world...	The woman saw that the tree was...	Desire for...
Desire of the eyes	good for food.	NEED
Pride of life	a delight to the eyes.	GLORY
Desire of the flesh	desired to make one wise.	PLEASURE

Page 10 **DISCIPLE-MAKER**, you should be prepared to share your faith story as an example for your disciple. Then listen and give tips for polishing your disciple's story.

Page 12 **ANSWERS:** The World, The Flesh, and The Devil.

Page 14 **ANSWERS:** See handout on the next page.

Page 14 **#1 ANSWER:**

Similarities - Using the five steps, in both events, they faced suggestion, accusation, and temptation.

Differences - Only Adam and Eve had doubt/denial and then sinned.

#2 ANSWER: By doing the same thing Jesus did - use scripture.

Temptation of Jesus

Allurements

Passages

Desires

Desire of the Eyes

Pride of Life

Desire of the Flesh

Satan tempts Jesus to change stone into bread (Matthew 4:1-4).

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Need

Satan tempts Jesus to leap from the temple (5-7).

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” (Psalm 91:11-12; Deuteronomy 6:16)

Glory

Satan tempts Jesus with kingdoms (8-11).

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

Pleasure



GoodSoil

A MINISTRY OF ABWE

Appendix

Page 17

#1 Answer: Here are 5 key points you may want to share:

1. Spiritual warfare is portrayed as a celestial battle in which Satan opposes the plan and purposes of God.
2. This is not a battle for power but for human allegiance. The battleground is your mind and heart for your obedience and trust.
3. Satan uses the righteousness of God to argue against the people of God.
4. These passages demonstrate that the Lord is sovereign over Satan and evil spirits. They do his bidding. The conflict is not undecided.*
5. People are affected by, but not directly involved in this supernatural discourse.

** Some will want to disagree and say that Satan has sovereignty as well; after all, he offered the kingdoms to Jesus. But Satan is a liar! He lied to the woman in the garden, and he lied to Jesus. He had no right to offer those kingdoms to Jesus. They may also disagree with “the conflict is not undecided” based on the same argument, but remember, Satan is a liar and the father of lies.*

Page 20

Note #1 They call Him “The Holy One of God” - This is the only event in the Bible where this title is used. (Mark 1 and Luke 4 passages are parallel, recording the same event.) The demons automatically went into the mode for which they were created--worship. They couldn’t help but bow. When we ultimately see Jesus, we will do the same.

Note #2 Notice that the disciples don’t say anything and don’t seem to have any role in this event. The point here is that they were observing and learning from the Master.

Appendix

Page 21 Why do you think Jesus asked the demon his name? Because He didn't know? Of course He knew the demon's name. Every time Jesus asks questions of people in the New Testament, it is for instructional purposes. Who is He instructing here? His disciples. This was a very unusual case, and Jesus was using it to help His disciples learn from this experience.

Page 32 **First Box:** The Devil, rulers, cosmic powers of darkness, etc.
Second Box: Various answers
Third Box: Prayerfully
Fourth Box: "...take up the whole armor of God."
Fifth Box: After comparing the Ephesians armor with the OT armor, ask, "Whose armor is it and whose fight is it?" Yes, the armor is God's armor and it is God's fight. But that doesn't mean we are to be passive. God wants us to participate in the fight or He wouldn't have clothed us for the fight.
Sixth Box: Both the Ephesians passage and the Colossians passage use the Greek word *enduo* - "to put on, to clothe, or dress." Note: you can't put on the armor of God until you are already clothed! Also, help your disciple to realize that the armor of God in Ephesians has to do with salvation (look for terms that bear that out) and the clothing of God has to do with sanctification. The armor becomes available to us at salvation and is to be used in spiritual warfare. So, we need to clothe ourselves with the clothing of Christ (continuing with our sanctification process) and taking advantage of the armor of God to protect us as we participate in God's battle.

As you finish up this lesson, read 2 Chronicles 20:15 and emphasize the that battle is God's, not yours.

Appendix

Page 30 Depending on the translation of the Bible used, here are the answers.

1 Submit

2 Resist

3 Draw near

These three have to do with your relationship with whom?

God

4 Cleanse

5 Purify

6 Be afflicted

7 Mourn

8 Weep

9 Turn

10 Humble

Commands 4 & 5 have to do with what?

Repentance

Commands 6-9 have to do with what?

Confession

Command 10 has to do with what?

Character

Sharing the Gospel Through Your Faith Story, Pt. 1

What is sometimes called “evangelism” or “witnessing” can be as easy and simple as telling your story—the story of what Jesus Christ has done in your life. We call that your personal “faith story.” Here’s how to develop and share your story of faith in a way that your unsaved friends and other acquaintances (even strangers) will enjoy hearing it.



Crafting Your Faith Story

The goal, at this point, is to plan and practice a faith story that you can share in four minutes or less. Brevity is key. Inclusion of gospel content is essential. Organization of the story is important. Here’s a structure that has been proven to work:

The “Before” – Share what your life was like before Jesus changed it.

- Transition into your faith story, as naturally as possible, from where you were in the **onion-peeling process** of your conversation.
- Share specific symptoms of pre-Christian spiritual needs that led you to realize your need for something that would bring you eternal hope, peace, joy, and so forth.
- Perhaps, share some of your futile human attempts to deal with those symptoms of what we know as “lostness” (without using that term).

The “How” – Share how you came to faith in Jesus Christ, including key gospel truths.

- Share some circumstances that led up to the time when you made your personal faith response to embrace Jesus as your Savior.
- Briefly explain the specific steps you took to make your personal faith response.
- Interweave gospel concepts informally into your story, without sounding like a rote-memorized formula. You may want to take another look at the **Chronological Bridge to Life** to review the essential content of a gospel presentation.

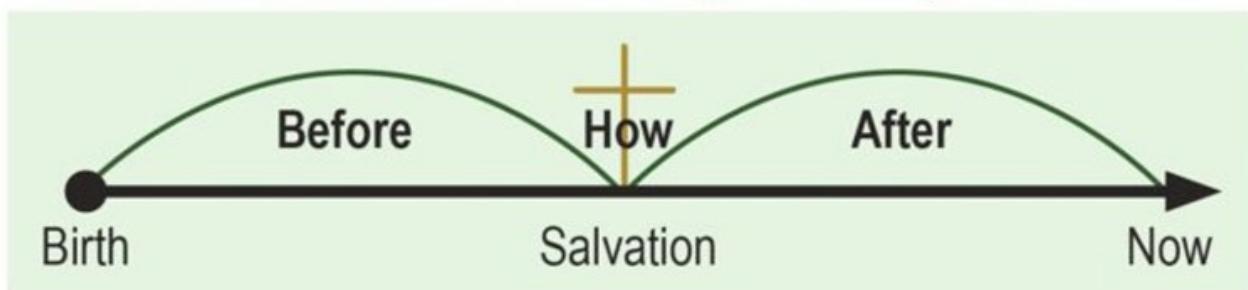
The “After” – Share the after-effects of your faith response, positive changes in your life.

- Share some of the benefits you have realized from your new life, as a true believer in Jesus Christ.
- Conclude with a statement regarding your confident assurance of eternal life.

Two Faith Story Patterns

The Basic Pattern—Chronological Sequence The before-how-after organization pattern described above is chronological. It talks about what your life was like before your trusted Jesus, the time surrounding your conversion experience, and then the changes in your life as a result of your conversion.

Basic Pattern—Chronological Sequence

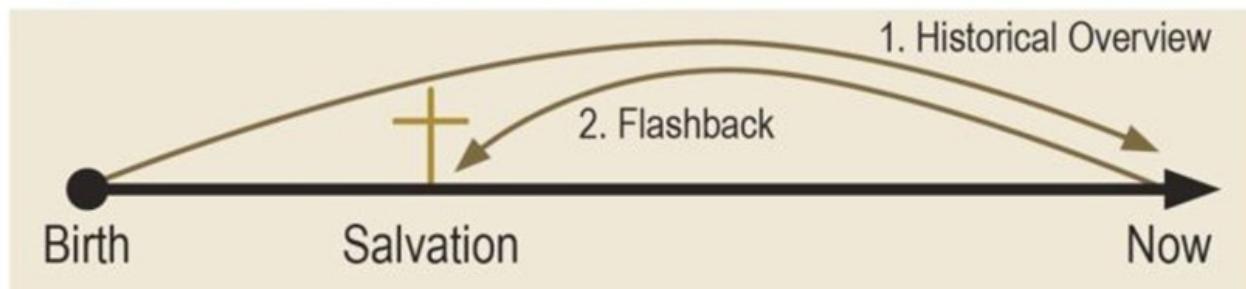


Read an example of a Chronological Sequence faith story at the end of this article, (pg. 40).

Optional Pattern—Overview and Flashback This basic (chronological) structure works well for people who are saved in their teen or adult years, especially if they have an interesting “before” story and their “how” experience is helpful in clearly explaining the gospel. But people who come to true faith in Jesus Christ at a very early age may not have an interesting “before” story and may not remember details of their “how” experience.

If you were saved as a young child, here's a faith story structure that may work better for you.

Optional Pattern—Overview and Flashback



Give a brief overview of your life, then flashback to tell your before-how-after stories.

See and read example of an **Overview and Flashback** faith story on page 41.

Write – Critique – Tweak - Practice – Tweak – Practice – Re-tweak – Polish - Etc. - Use

It takes time and lots of effort to craft a faith story that is **coherent, clear, concise**, and that contains essential gospel **content**. The only way to achieve these objectives is to begin by putting your faith story in writing. Then ask multiple people, who understand what you are trying to accomplish, to read it and give you candid helpful feedback. Tweak the story, then practice telling it to a sympathetic listener to get more feedback. Continue this process of critiquing, tweaking, and practicing it until:

1. You can tell it from memory in four minutes or less in a way that does not sound memorized and ...
2. It embeds the gospel in a meaningful and interesting manner.

Use the form for writing your faith story at the very end of this article.

But, how do you know if your faith story will be effective? The next article in this series will include a “tips checklist” for crafting your faith story.

Chronological Sequence Faith Story — An Example

■ **Before** As I was growing up, I heard people talking about God and Jesus and the Bible, but it was just religious talk to me—I didn't understand what it all meant. Oh, I believed there was a God who created this beautiful world, but I didn't realize that he cared anything about me. But when I was in high school, I began to wonder about life and death and whether or not there was any purpose in life for me. One of my closest friends was killed in a car accident while I was a sophomore in high school and I remember thinking, I wonder where he is now? Is there life after death? And, if so, how can a person be prepared for that life? And, from some of the things I was reading at the time and seeing in movies and hearing in the music I was listening to, I began to wonder if there was ANY purpose in life worth living for. And why were the lives of so many of my cultural heroes all messed up, if what they believe is true?

■ **How** And then one day, while I was a freshman in college, some guys who lived down the hall from me in my dorm invited me to a Bible study. I wasn't particularly excited about attending, but they were cool guys who had always been friendly with me, so I agreed to attend, at least for the first study. And, frankly, I was curious about the Bible and some of the things I had heard about it. When I got to the study, they handed me a Bible and a book called *The Story of Hope*. I must admit I was skeptical about the Bible because of what I had heard about it in some of my classes. I had been told that it was just an old book, filled with myths and fables and inaccuracies. But some of the facts about the Bible in the introduction of the study book caught my attention—40 authors spread over 1,500 years wrote the Bible and supposedly they all contributed to telling one big unifying story! As we went through the study, it all began to make sense to me. And, contrary to what I had been told by some of my professors, the stories in the Bible all fit together around one story. I soon found myself interested and curious as to how the story would end. And I also found myself learning about God and the reason behind the problems we see all around us. The story explained a lot to me—and a lot about me. I began to realize that God has established some moral laws for us to obey—that there IS right and there IS wrong. And I knew that I had done a lot of wrong things, things that the Bible calls sins. But, the more I studied the Bible, the more I realized that God loves me, in spite of all the wrong things I had done—He loved me enough to send His Son Jesus Christ to Earth to live a perfect life and take the punishment for my sins. And then God raised Jesus from the dead—that's what Easter is all about, something I had never understood. So, at the end of the study—several weeks later—my friends asked if I was “trusting Jesus, and only Jesus, to forgive my sins and give me eternal life.” I had to admit that I had never placed my faith in Jesus to be my Savior, but I wanted to do that—then and there. And, quietly in my heart, I did! Then we prayed a prayer thanking God for forgiving my sins and accepting me into His family.

■ **After** Since that time, I have had my ups and downs. Life still is tough some times. But I now know that God loves me and is continually changing my life for the better. And two things I know for sure—God has a plan for me while I'm here on Earth, and I'm very confident that I am now prepared to meet Him when I die and go to Heaven to live with Him.

Overview and Flashback Faith Story — An Example

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: (SETS THE CONTEXT FOR YOUR STORY)

I was reared in a home where my parents loved me and taught me about God and Jesus and the Bible. They took me to a church where people believed the Bible and where the Bible was taught in a way that helped me understand the world and why it's in such a mess. As I got older and was in high school and college, I realized that not everyone had enjoyed the kind of opportunities I had experienced. And, as I saw my friends struggling to make sense out of life, my appreciation for my parents and my upbringing increased—in spite of the fact that I didn't always live consistently with what I had been taught. But now, as an adult with a family of my own, I can see even more clearly how important it is to know God and how vital it is to understand the teachings of the Bible. It gives me a great sense of hope and personal peace as I live in this chaotic world, as frightening as it is sometimes.

FLASHBACK:

- **Before** But having loving parents who were TRUE believers in Jesus and attending a church that believed the Bible did not make me a good person. I remember, even with all of those wholesome influences in my life, that I realized even then that I was capable of doing some bad things—things that I knew offended God. Well, obviously I was never a serial killer or down-and-out drunkard or a member of the Hells Angels, but I certainly did a lot of kid-sized bad things—the kinds of things that would have gotten even worse if God had not changed my life at an early age. Lying, intentionally hurting people, and even some petty stealing—I knew they were wrong but I did them anyway! And, from what I had been taught in the Bible,
- **How** I knew that those bad things were called “sins.” Even though I was quite young, I remember feeling guilty for doing bad things. And, from lessons in church, I knew that God was not pleased with me. I don’t remember exactly when it happened, but at some point I just had to face the fact that, even though I was just a kid and looked pretty good to people who knew me, under that fake halo, I was not a good person. But from the Bible, I knew that God loved me in spite of my disobedience to the teachings I knew from the Bible. And I had learned that there was nothing that I could do to turn myself into a good person—even though I tried many times to be good. My teachers in church, as well as my parents, had explained to me that God—knowing that we can’t make ourselves good—sent His special Son, Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself the punishment for our sins and die on the cross in our place—as our substitute. And I knew that if I would simply place my total trust in Jesus as my Savior—to forgive me of my sins and prepare a place for me in Heaven—Jesus would do that for me. And even though I don’t remember a lot about that moment, I know that I did put my total trust in Jesus. And I am confident that if I were to die right now, I would be prepared to meet God in Heaven.
- **After**

My Personal Faith Story

- **Before**

- **How**

- **After**

Sharing the Gospel Through Your Faith Story, Pt. 2

I once had lunch with a highly educated young man who told me, “I’m an atheist and you are a Christian. The difference between you and me is that your life is based on faith and mine is based on facts.” My response: “No, you have as much or more faith as I do, but my faith is in God and your faith is in atheistic evolution.”



When I asked him if he could scientifically prove that the universe was not divinely created and that humans evolved from non-living matter, he admitted that he could not prove these and reluctantly agreed that his worldview was also rooted in faith.

Everybody has faith and everybody has a “faith story.”

Sometimes, we, who are Christians, talk about sharing our “testimonies.” If we are specifically talking about sharing our testimonies with unbelievers, we may call them our “evangelistic testimonies.” But the terms “testimony” and “evangelistic testimony” may frighten unbelievers. Whereas most people, even non-Christians, will be receptive to hearing your “story,” even if it is your faith story.

The likelihood of people being receptive to your faith story will increase significantly if its brief (four minutes or less), non-preachy, and logically ordered. The previous article (Part 1 of this two-part series) focused on “Crafting Your Faith Story.” We suggested a couple of formats for a faith story, both of which included:

- **The “Before” – Your life before Jesus changed it.**
- **The “How” – How you came to faith in Jesus Christ.**
- **The “After” – Your life since you were saved.**

Writing, critiquing, tweaking, practicing, tweaking, practicing, re-tweaking, polishing, etc. etc. are important in making your faith story effective. Here are some critique-guidelines for crafting

a faith story that unbelievers will listen to, even though the gospel is clearly embedded in the story.

Top Ten Tips for Crafting Your Faith Story

1. Make your story sound informal, conversational, and not memorized.
2. As much as possible, try to connect your story to what you know about the person with whom you are sharing—life background, pre-Christian concerns, and your faith journey prior to becoming a true believer in Jesus as Savior.
3. Avoid sounding “preachy” by keeping it personal and conversational.
4. Use “I” and “me” and avoid using “you.” Remember, this is YOUR faith story.
5. Even if you were saved as a child, make your story sound grown-up and not childish.
6. Avoid dogmatic and mystical statements that might entice the recipient to debate them, especially if he or she is somewhat skeptical.
7. Avoid the “happily ever after” ending to your story, implying that the post-Christian life is problem-free.
8. Try to keep the story simple. Do not use too many names or details that would make it difficult for the recipient to understand your story.
9. Casual humor or other interesting anecdotes are helpful, if they can be woven naturally into your story in a non-distracting manner.
10. And maybe the most important of all—avoid religious terms and Christian jargon that you might use freely with other Christians, but that may be unknown to the recipient of your story. Think of ways to express salvation-related truths in common terminology that can be understood by people who are not familiar with the Bible or Christianity or our Christian subculture.

Some Don’t and Some Do’s

Don’t Use Such Terms as These:

- Born again
- Saved
- Christian
- Went forward in church
- Sin or sinner (unless defined in context)
- Accepted Jesus
- Got right with the Lord
- Pray the prayer
- Confessed
- Under the blood
- Etc.

Better to Use Wording Like This:

- Trusted Jesus Christ for my salvation
- Rebelled against God
- Disobeyed God
- Broke/violated God's moral laws
- Placed my complete faith in Jesus
- Told God I have done wrong
- True believer in Jesus Christ
- TRUE Christian
- Accepted God's forgiveness
- God accepted me into His family
- Etc.

Getting into and out of Your Faith Story

In conversations with people whom you think need to hear your faith story, look for opportunities ("entry points") that make it natural for you to ask permission to share your faith story, something like this: "Would you be interested in hearing my personal faith story?" Or "Would it be OK if I shared with you the story of how I became a sincere follower of Jesus Christ?"

When you have finished sharing your story, you might ask, "Does that make sense to you?" or "Does that bring up any questions in your mind?"

When you have addressed your friend's questions, if he or she has some, you might say something like this: "Now, I'd love to hear your personal faith story—would you mind telling me about your spiritual journey?"



If your conversation reveals an interest to know more about Jesus and the gospel, you might ask if he or she would be interested in doing a Bible study together, using *The Story of Hope*.

Making Evangelism & Discipleship a Priority in Your Life

Many of us make lists of to-be-done, tasks that are important to us, so that we will not forget to do them. No tasks are eternally more important than sharing the gospel with our unsaved friends, family members, and other acquaintances or assisting Christian friends who need to be encouraged and mentored in maturing as followers of Jesus Christ. Our Good Soil **Personal E-List and D-List Card** was created to help us keep our focus on these two Great Commission tasks.

Developing Your Personal E-List and D-List
Create your personal E-List and D-List. Using the appropriate E-List or D-List number for each person, indicate approximately where he/she is in the E-Matrix or D-Matrix.



Good Soil Evangelism

E-List

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Receptivity

Good Soil Discipleship

D-List

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

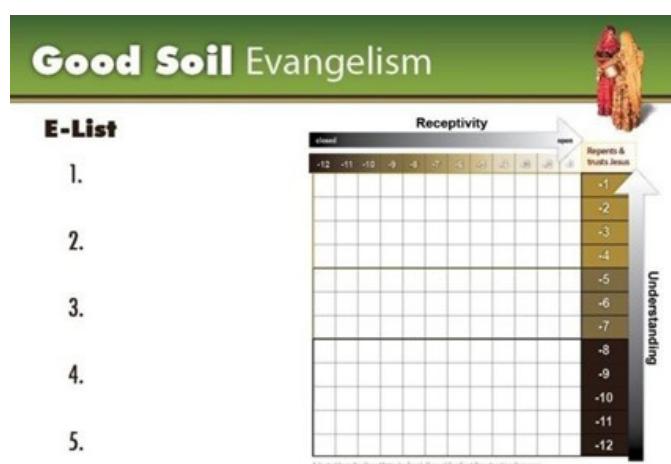
Improvement

Good Soil E&D User Support Site: www.GoodSoil.com

A Good Soil **E-List and D-List Card** is a 7" x 5" card with places for you to write the names of people for whom you are praying to be saved on one side, and, on the reverse side, places to write the names of believers that you would like to see grow in their relationship with Christ and become more involved in church or ministry.

The use of the E-List and D-List is based on what you have learned about the bottom half and the top half of the Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship Scale.

How to Use the E-List Side of the Card

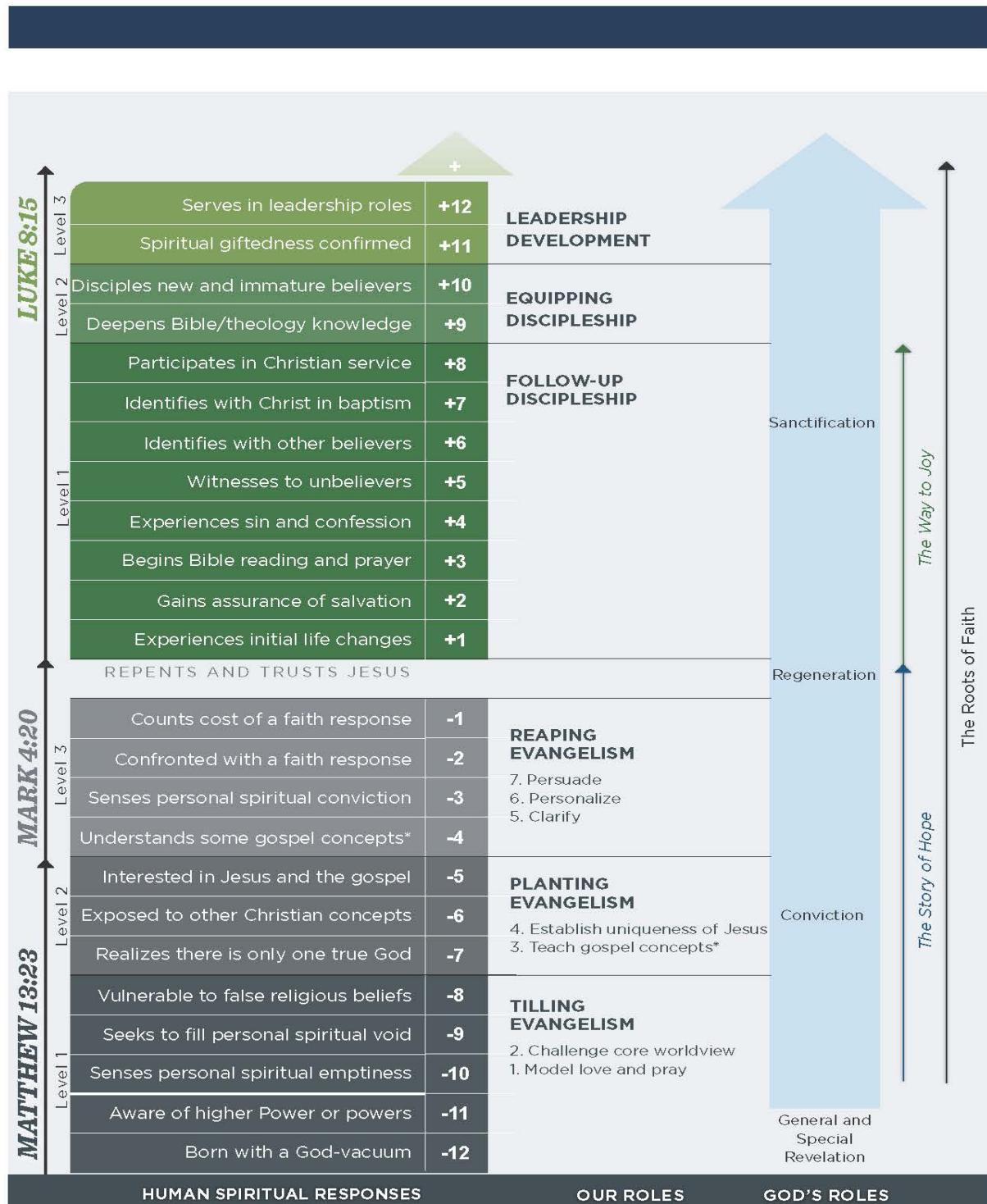


The E-List is related to the bottom half of the Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship Scale.

First, think of a person that you have some kind of a relationship with whom you think is probably not saved, not a true Christian—a friend, relative, work colleague, frequent casual contact such as salesperson, barber or hair stylist, restaurant waiter or waitress, etc.

Second, based on what you know about that person, try to determine (as best you can) where you think he or she is on the “Vertical Dimension of the Scale”—the level of his or her **understanding** of the Biblical gospel.

THE GOOD SOIL E&D SCALE



Third, do the same thing for your perception of his or her **receptivity** to the gospel. That's the "Horizontal Dimension of the Scale."

Fourth, locate the cell in this grid where those two come together—level of understanding and degree of receptivity. Write the person's initials in that cell.

Fifth, add names of other unsaved contacts (up to five) and follow the same procedure for each of them.

Sixth, use this card as a reminder to pray for these friends and for opportunities to share Christ with them.

If you have not yet learned about the Good Soil E&D Scale or have forgotten what you learned sometime earlier, you can learn about or review the Good Soil E&D Scale by reading two of the earlier articles in this series.

How to Use the D-List Side of the Card

The D-List is related to the top half of the Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship Scale.

Follow a similar procedure for your D-List (other side of the card)—names of people you know who are, to your knowledge, true Christians but need to be discipled. The "Vertical" dimension here is spiritual **maturity**. And the "Horizontal" dimension is **involvement** in church and ministry.

You can purchase these **Personal E&D Cards** from this site: www.GoodSoil.com/Resources. We hope they will help you to make evangelism and discipleship a higher priority in your life.



What Must I REALLY Do to Be Saved?

The gospel of Jesus Christ is really quite simple and easy to understand when presented properly. But, in many cases, Christians have made the gospel sound complicated by using terminology that is not Biblical or, even worse, by using Biblical terminology theologically-incorrectly or unclearly. With this in mind, I came up with a list of 50 things that unbelievers are sometimes told they need to do in order to be saved! Here's the list:



Some Actions that Unbelievers Are Often Told to Take in Order to Be Saved

Accept Christ	Get Saved	Ask Jesus to Save You
Give your life to God	Be Baptized	Give your heart to Jesus
Be born again	Be Converted	Have your sins forgiven
Humble yourself before God	Be washed in the blood	Invite Jesus into your heart
Become a Christian	Look to Jesus and live	Believe in/believe on Jesus
Make a faith commitment	Call upon the Lord	Make Jesus your Lord
Cleanse your heart	Make your peace with God	Obey the gospel
Come to Jesus	Commit your life to Jesus	Pray "the prayer"
Confess Jesus as Lord	"Pray through" (at a mourner's bench)	Confess publicly with your mouth
Prepare to meet your God	Confess your sins to God	Put your faith in Jesus
Convert to Christianity	Reach out to Jesus	Decide (make a decision) for Christ

Cry out to God to be saved	Receive Jesus	Receive the gift of salvation
Deny yourself and take up the cross	Repent of your sins	Draw near to God
Surrender your life to Christ/God	Drink/take water of life freely	Trust Jesus
Enter the narrow gate	Turn from your sins	Follow Jesus
Turn to the Lord	Forsake all to follow Jesus	Turn your life over to God
Get right with God	Yield your life to Jesus/God	

Suppose you went through this list and checked off the actions that you think have legitimate Biblical support as actions that result in salvation. Let's say that you selected 20 of them. Would you think of these as separate action steps to salvation? Or would you think of these simply as different ways to describe a single heart-action that results in salvation?

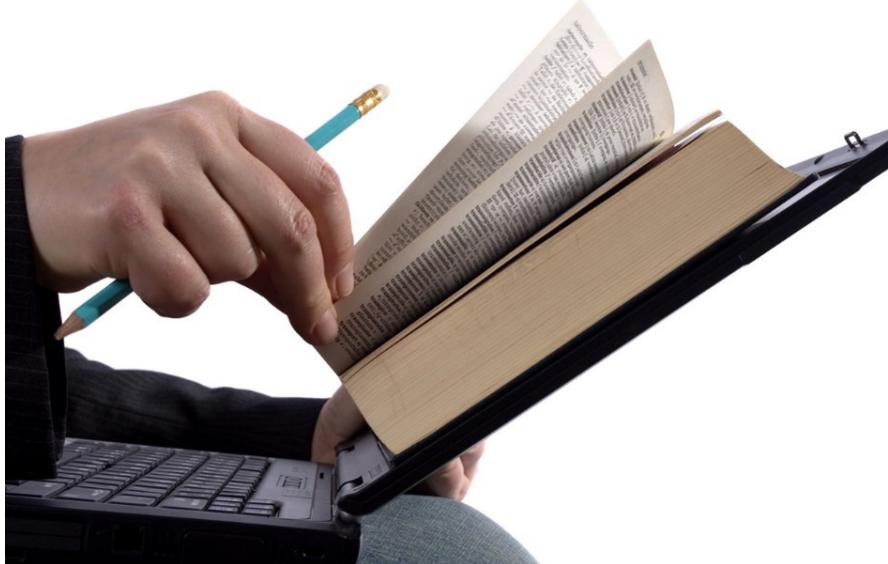
Wouldn't you agree that the simple "believes in Him" truth of John 3:16-18 is sufficient, even though this heart-action might be expressed in the New Testament through the use of a variety of metaphors and synonyms?

John 3:16-18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.¹⁸ He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Why is this issue so important that I wrote an article to address it?

Throughout the **Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship Basic Seminar** and ***The Story of Hope***, we emphasize that "faith" (believing/trusting) is the heart-action step that results in the salvation of a sinner. More specifically, it is faith that is focused on God's provision for man's spiritual needs—the death and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ.



Yet, frequently, we are asked the “But what about ...” questions:

- But what about turning from sins; when does the unbeliever do that?
- But what about calling upon the name

of the Lord (“praying the prayer”); when does the unbeliever do that?

- But what about receiving Jesus and God’s gift of salvation; when does the unbeliever do that?

These actions (and many of the others in the table above) are mentioned in a few passages in the New Testament. But the New Testament clearly teaches that there is one single heart-action that brings salvation, and it is “faith” in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through **faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Because of the various synonyms and synonymous metaphors used in the Bible to describe the act of “saving faith,” some people seem to think that (genuine) faith in Christ is only one step that must be preceded or followed by other steps—turning from sins, praying a prayer, receiving the gift of salvation, and so forth. They fail to differentiate between the synonyms (and synonymous metaphors) for “faith in Christ” and the heart-action of (saving) faith in Christ itself. Consequently, the synonyms are misunderstood to be separate steps to salvation.

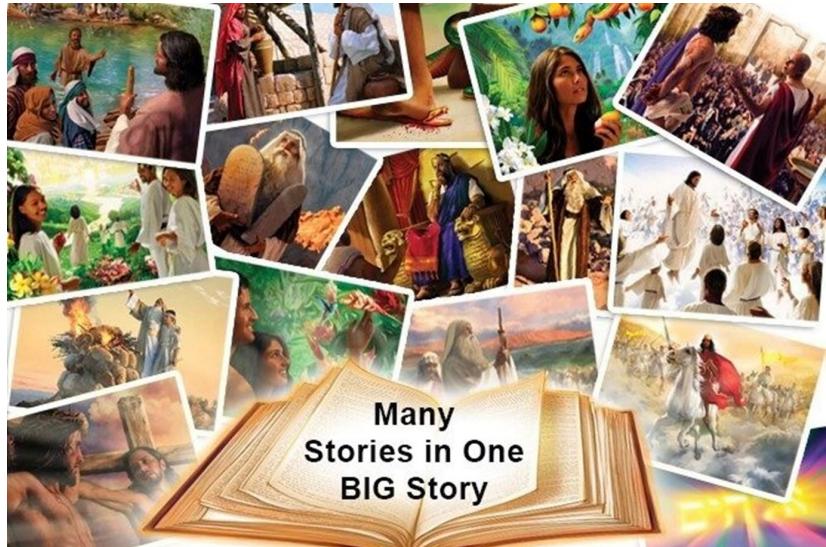
Does it not make better Biblical sense to think that a sinner is turning from his/her sins, calling upon the Lord in his heart, receiving God’s gift of salvation, when he or she sincerely places his or her trust in Jesus Christ as Savior?

How Many Stories in the Bible?

How many unique events or stories are there in the Bible?

It's impossible to answer for sure since it's often difficult to determine where one event or story begins and another one ends. Any way you look at it, there are hundreds of events (true stories) in the Bible, probably between 600 to 800 of them. So how did we determine which

Bible events should be selected to best summarize "God's Big Story" in *The Story of Hope*, if the limit was 40 events?



When we were working on the creation of *The Story of Hope*, in 2007, the biggest question we faced was:

How many Bible events did we need to include in the study in order to tell and teach the redemptive story of the Bible clearly, even for people who have no previous knowledge of the Bible?

A group of missionaries and missionary administrators were part of that decision-making group. Our friend, Mark Zook (known broadly through the [Ee-Taow video](#)) was also part of the group, as well as some other missiologists outside of ABWE. After narrowing the number to 40, the next and more challenging question was "which 40"?

There are probably about 30 of the 40 events that are "no brainer" in the selection process. For example, how could you tell the "story of hope" without including the Old Testament stories of the creation of the universe and mankind, the fall of mankind, God's promise to send a deliverer, the call of Abraham and God's promises to him, etc. From the New Testament, it seems obvious that you would want to include stories such as these: the remarkable birth of Jesus Christ, the "Lamb of God" proclamation by John the Baptist, select stories from Jesus' miracle working ministry, the rejection and betrayal that Jesus experienced, His crucifixion and resurrection, etc.

Contents

The Story of Hope is a Real Time-and-Place Story.

Introduction to the Bible and its Big Story.....	4
Instructions for Self-Study and Group Study Leaders.....	5
Map of the Holy Land (Canaan/Palestine).....	7
Map of the Ancient Near East (Middle East)	8
Visual of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness.....	10

The Story of Hope Begins in the Old Testament.

The Eternal God.....	12	Promises to Abraham	22
Creation of the Earth.....	13	Offering of Isaac	23
Creation of Mankind	14	Moses' Call to Leadership.....	24
Fall of Lucifer	15	The Plagues and Passover	25
Beginning of Human Sin	16	Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.....	26
Origin of Death	17	The Ten Commandments.....	27
Promise of a Satan Conqueror	18	Tabernacle in the Wilderness.....	28
Provision of Coverings.....	19	Bronze Serpent	29
Banishment from Eden.....	20	Reign of King David.....	30
The Great Flood	21	Prophecies of a Coming Messiah.....	31

The Story of Hope Continues through the New Testament.

Birth of Jesus of Nazareth	32	Crucifixion of Jesus	42
Temptations by Satan	33	A Repentant, Dying Thief.....	43
John the Baptist's Proclamation	34	Resurrection of Jesus	44
Encounter with a Religious Leader	35	Ascension of Jesus.....	45
Encounter with a Samaritan Woman	36	Peter Proclaims the Good News	46
Claims of Oneness with God	37	Jesus' Return for Believers	47
Teachings about Hell.....	38	Jesus' Return as King.....	48
Miracles of Jesus	39	Satan's Final Doom	49
Betrayal of Jesus	40	Dreadful Destiny for Unbelievers	50
Appearances before Unjust Judges.....	41	Blissful Destiny for Believers	51

Eight Essential Truths Emerge from the Story of Hope.

God—What We Learned about Our Creator	52
Man—What We Learned about Mankind	53
Sin—What We Learned about Disobedience to God.....	54
Death—What We Learned about the Penalty for Sin	55
Christ—What We Learned about Jesus Christ	56
Cross—What We Learned about the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ	57
Faith—What We Learned about Trusting Jesus Christ.....	58
Life—What We Have Learned about Eternal Life.....	59

The Story of Hope Calls for a Personal Faith Response.....

- For that matter, why did you include any events after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus?

Here are a couple of our key selection criteria that will help you to understand our answers to the above questions:

Our purpose is to present God's story of redemption, not to present a general survey of the Bible.

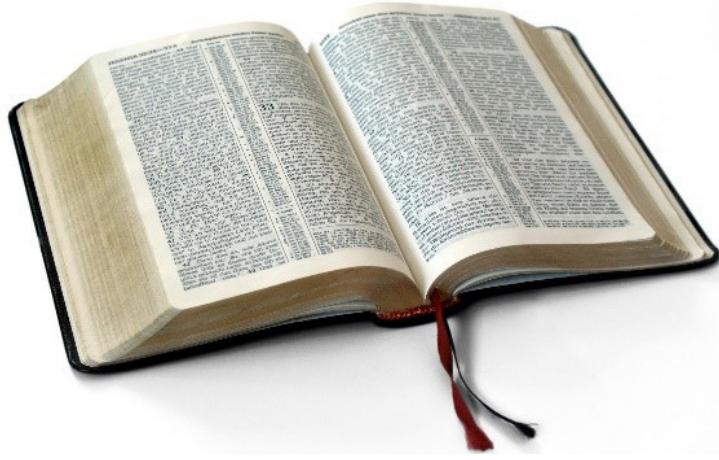
Yes, there's a difference. In order to highlight the story of redemption, we selected events that we thought would best do that. If our purpose was to give a general overview of the Bible,

But finalizing the list of 20 Old Testament events and 20 New Testament events was not so easy. To some degree, this process was subjective and, occasionally, mildly controversial. We are often asked why we did not include certain Bible events in "The Story of Hope 40" or why we chose to include some events that other people may not think are significant enough to be in the final 40.

Some common questions that we occasionally receive, related to event selection:

- Why did you not include the tower of Babel?
- Why did you not include the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people?
- Why did you include the return of Jesus for believers and other prophetic events?

we would certainly have chosen some other events instead of some that we did select. For example, in a survey of the Bible, we would have selected the tower of Babel or Babylonian exile event instead of the bronze serpent event. Those more broadly significant historic events would have been essential to a Bible survey. But even though the tower of Babel and Babylonian exile events do convey very significant redemption story implications, the less-historically significant bronze serpent event is more helpful in presenting and clarifying redemption and faith issues. And since the bronze serpent story comes up in the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in the New Testament, that story provides a strong connector event to tie the death of Jesus to the Old Testament.



We believe that the end-focus of the Bible's story of hope is not that Jesus Christ conquered physical death through His resurrection, as important and foundational as that is to God-given hope.

We believe that the ultimate hope provided through Jesus Christ's redeeming work is the end-hope

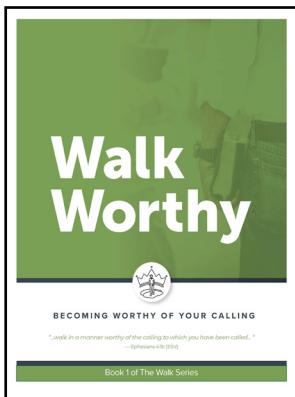
recorded in Revelation 21-22. And, yes, the death and resurrection of Jesus made that possible. And in between the resurrection of Jesus and that ultimate end-hope--a restored paradise--there are some other key hope-points in history that need to be highlighted in "the story of hope." For more on this topic, read our blog article, [End-Focus for The Story of Hope](#).

We certainly do not claim to have the "perfect list of 40 key Bible events." But, based upon the criteria we chose to guide us in the process, we feel confident that these 40 events do a good job summarizing the "Big Story of the Bible," God's overarching redemptive story. And now, more than 15 years later, evangelism experiences with *The Story of Hope* (literally, around the world!) have validated the selection of "The Story of Hope 40."

One way to overcome this tight 40-event ceiling is to extend the number of events in the presentation of the story of redemption beyond 40 events. And that's exactly what we did in creating the 100-event chronological Bible teaching resource, [The Roots of Faith: Exploring the Bible from Beginning to End](#). But even there we have asked ourselves, "How do we limit the presentation of this great story to only 100 events?!"

The Walk Series

is a free download
on our website: GoodSoil.com

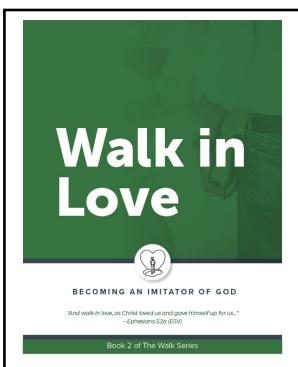


Book 1, Walk Worthy

Becoming Worthy of Your Calling

“...walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called...”

—Ephesians 4:1b (ESV)

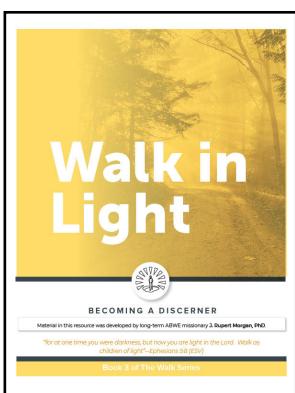


Book 2, Walk in Love

Becoming an Imitator of God

“And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us...”

—Ephesians 5:2a

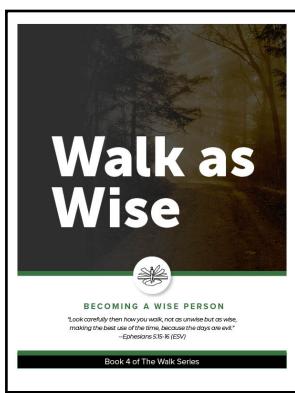


Book 3, Walk in Light

Becoming a Discerner

“for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light”

—Ephesians 5:8



Book 4, Walk as Wise

Becoming a Wise Person

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”

—Ephesians 5:15-16