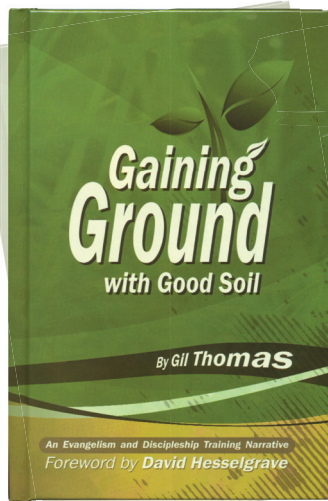


*Gaining Ground with Good Soil  
Individual Study Guide*





# Gaining Ground with Good Soil

## —Individual Study Guide

**Hi.** I'm Gil, the author of *Gaining Ground with Good Soil*. Thanks for choosing to read the book and for taking the time to learn and understand the concepts in it by working through this study guide.

My wife, Denise, and I (and many others) have found Good Soil Evangelism & Discipleship (GSED) principles\* to be a huge help in relating to, learning about, and sharing our faith with unbelievers. We hope and pray that the same can be true for you, so I am going to map out some activities I think will help you get the most from the book and the principles found in it.

If you are working through the study guide by yourself or going through it with a group, just follow the instructions in this guide as you go. It will tell you how much to read in the book before it asks you to do an activity. These activities coordinate with the exercises in the book. If you are leading a group study, go to [www.goodsoil.com/gainingground](http://www.goodsoil.com/gainingground) to download a leader's guide.

### *Each lesson of the study guide has 3 sections:*



#### ***Preparing the Soil of the Mind***

Just as the farmer needs to prepare the soil (pull the weeds, take out the rocks, and plow), so our hearts and minds need to be prepared to receive the seeds of learning. The purpose of the activity in this section will be just that—to prepare us to learn.



#### ***Planting the Seedlings of Learning***

The farmer invests in his seed by planting it in the prepared soil. Having done an activity to open the mind, this section will help you plant precious seeds of learning in the soil of your mind. Read. Stop to think. Meditate on what you see in these sections.



#### ***Picking the Harvest for Living***

Finally, the harvest has a purpose—to feed the farmer and his family and/or his flocks. Learning is not to be an end in itself. The purpose of this section is to help you take a harvest truth home with you; to incorporate it into your life.

**Ask God to teach you as you work through each section of the study guide and read the book.**

**Be sure to read Bible passages that are mentioned. Then your prepared mind will receive the seed and you will be able to put into practice the Good Soil principles and reap a harvest.**



\*The purpose of Good Soil E & D Ministries is to motivate, train and resource people in worldview-relevant evangelism and discipleship.

## —An Evangelism and Discipleship Training Narrative



### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



1. Read the *Preface* (page 1) silently, then respond:  
Have you ever been to Europe? Another country? Where?

Do you speak another language?

How do you feel about reading foreign words in a book?

*If you are reading the book by following this study guide in a group, you will be instructed about how to do the exercises. Sometimes you will do them before you come to the meeting, sometimes you will wait to do them as a group.*



### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



2. Read the *Table of Contents* (page ix).



3. What observations can you make about this book and its assumptions from the *Table of Contents*?

What questions does the *Table of Contents* raise in your mind?

What do you hope to learn from this book?



### Picking the Harvest for Living



4. Read the *Introduction*, (pages 3-5) then respond:  
Can you relate to Greg and Diana? Can you share a little about frustration you have experienced in evangelism and discipleship?

*Just suppose... Since the time you were saved, several people have professed faith in Christ as a result of your witnessing experiences. That's great! However, the majority of these people have not demonstrated the kind of spiritual fruit that would clearly indicate their professions were genuine. That's sad!*

*You are deeply concerned about these disappointing results. Thinking back over these experiences ask yourself, "Why are those people not now demonstrating the kind of life that clearly identifies them as followers of Jesus Christ?"*



5. If you had to point to one possible/probable major factor, what would it be?

—What is “Good Soil”? Where Do the Seeds Fall?



### Preparing the Soil of the Mind

1.

Read *Chapters 1 & 2*, (pages 9-27) taking time to do the exercises.



### Planting the Seedlings of Learning

2.

Why were Greg and Diana going to leave Germany?

Why would that be difficult?

3.

What did you think of the group's reasons why people who “made decisions” were not becoming part of the church or living lives identifying them as followers of Christ? Did you come up with other reasons?

4.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke each use a different word to describe “good soil” hearers. You’ve read about the quartet’s experience and looked at the definitions of each word. Can you write a short ‘in-your-own-words’ definition of each?

***Understands:***

***Embraces:***

***Retains:***



### Picking the Harvest for Living

5.

Look over the *Good Soil Scale* (page 25) the group came up with and make some personal observations about it.

What do you learn from this Scale?

How do you think principles learned from the Scale can help you with your evangelism and discipleship?



### —What Can We Do About It?



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



1. Read *Chapter 3*, (pages 29-42).



#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



2. Do the exercise described on page 35.  
What do you think are essential gospel components?



3. Name the eight essential gospel components the team discovered, then tell the Bible's story linking the eight gospel components.

1.
2.
3.
4.

5.
6.
7.
8.

Bible's story:



#### Picking the Harvest for Living



4. Write practical things (actions) you can do this week in each area of evangelism (from the bottom half of the Scale on page 42).

#### Tilling Evangelism

1 – Model, love, pray: \_\_\_\_\_  
2 – Challenge worldview: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Planting Evangelism

3 – Teach gospel concepts: \_\_\_\_\_  
4 – Establish uniqueness of Jesus: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Reaping Evangelism

5 – Clarify: \_\_\_\_\_  
6 – Personalize: \_\_\_\_\_  
7 – Persuade: \_\_\_\_\_



5. Choose at least one of the actions you wrote down above. Ask God to help you to evangelize this week by doing it. Remember to start by tilling, if necessary. Don't plant seeds in the rocks!

### —How Should We Sow? (Part 1)



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



1. Read pages 43-52 of *Chapter 4*.

Read *Acts 10*. One might think that Peter's preaching in Cornelius' house was Initial Contact Evangelism because he preached once to a crowd and several responded in faith.

Starting with verse 23, list the "evidences" you find that show Relational Evangelism was in effect in this passage.

Finish reading *Chapter 4* (pages 53-55).



#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



2. Study the Figures on pages 50 and 51 then respond below:

When is Initial Contact Evangelism most appropriate?

What are some dangers associated with this approach?

What are some advantages of Relational Evangelism?

What are some dangers associated with this approach?



#### Picking the Harvest for Living



3. The question asked in the beginning of Chapter Four is "How should we sow?" and the Good Soil group compared Initial Contact Evangelism with Relational Evangelism. They came away convinced they needed to do more to develop relationships with people to prepare the soil of their hearts. **Write practical steps (actions) you can take this week to prepare the soil in the hearts of people you know.**



4. Choose at least one of the actions you wrote down above. Ask God to help you to evangelize this week by doing it. Prepare the soil and ask God open hearts. Don't plant seeds in hard ground!

### —How Should We Sow? (Part 2)



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



#### 1. Read Chapter 5 (pages 57-71).

How did the advantages and dangers you saw in Initial Contact Evangelism and Relational Evangelism compare with the group's?

Can you think of examples in your life when Initial Contact or Relational was clearly more appropriate or advantageous? Have you seen a manifestation of one of the dangers in your experiences?

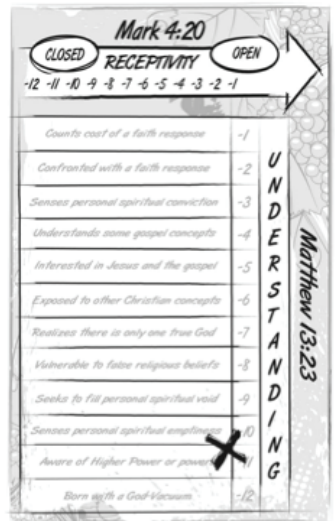


#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



For some, the small graphs on pages 68 and 69 can be controversial. Some would say, "The terms 'regeneration' and 'conversion' are synonyms." They can be synonyms, but they can also represent different realities in a person's life. *Notice that with the first and third chart, all or part of what I'm calling the conversion process happens after regeneration.* In these cases the conversion process could also be called the sanctification of the believer. But in the second chart almost all of the conversion is before regeneration. In these cases, conversion is the changing of the mind in relation to core beliefs or the previously held worldview.

In either scenario, the individual's actions and attitudes are changed (converted)—and the converting is a process that happens in conjunction with, but not necessarily at one point in time as does regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Acts 10 (which we studied in lesson four) is a good example of this. Cornelius was a good man, giving alms, helping the Jews, seeking God. But he was not 'saved' until he heard Peter preach about Jesus and the Spirit regenerated him. His conversion process started long before Peter came to his house.



#### 3. Read Acts 16:11-34.

Can you draw a conversion/regeneration chart for each convert in this chapter?

Lydia

Slave Girl

Jailer

<sup>1</sup> This matrix is adapted from the Gray Matrix developed by Frank Gray of the Far East Broadcasting Company.



## ***Picking the Harvest for Living***

4.

In response to the question “How can we move people across the scale,” Miriam answered, “Love, integrity, and time.” (page 62) What do you think that means? What practical steps can you take this week to move your friend/family member across the matrix so they will be more open to the gospel?

5.

Find someone in your study group or a believing friend or family member to whom you can read “Our Best Ideas” on page 71, one at a time, and explain them in your own words.



### —What Do They Hear?



#### ***Preparing the Soil of the Mind***



**1.** Read *Chapter 6* (pages 75-86). The quartet began by reviewing what they had learned as they started their final day of study together at the retreat.

What do you remember about...

- The 3 verbs describing the Good Soil response to the gospel?

- The 3 levels of evangelism on the Good Soil Scale?

- The 8 essential gospel elements?



#### ***Planting the Seedlings of Learning***



**2.** On page 82 there is a pull-quote that says, “Unbiblical elements exist in a person’s worldview that may confuse his understanding of words I use to communicate a message.” Stop and think for a moment. Can you think of some concrete examples of this? Write them here:



**3.** Look at the **Worldview Noise Diagram** on page 86. Try to think of specific negative results that will likely occur if we do not understand and effectively cut through worldview noise.



**4. Read Acts 2:5-41, 14:6-18, and 17:16-34. Compare the passages.** Are the audiences different in their initial understanding of what is being shared?

*How?*

How many of the eight gospel concepts (God, man, sin, death, Christ, cross, faith, life) do the audiences understand before the preaching starts?

*Jews in Jerusalem*

*Lystrans*

*Epicureans and Stoics in Athens*

With which of the eight gospel concepts do the preachers begin? Why?

*Peter with the Jews in Jerusalem*

*Paul with the Lystrans*

*Paul with the Athenians*



### ***Picking the Harvest for Living***



In 1 Corinthians 1:23, Paul says, “we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block...” Because they had had God’s Word for years, they understood (for the most part) who God is, who man is, how sin separated man from God, and how it brings death. But the idea that the Messiah (the Christ) was going to be a servant and come die a criminal’s death was a stumbling block for them. Paul goes on to say, “we preach Christ crucified, ... to the Greeks foolishness...” As we saw in the Acts 17 passage, the Greeks had a hard time with the resurrection—they mocked him and called him a babbler—it appeared as foolishness to them.

**Think about people you know that are in one of those two categories. Pray for family and friends and how you will be able to help them get past these barriers and trust Christ.**

### —Is That So Bad?



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



Chapter 6 ends abruptly with Miriam’s summation of the worldview noise concept (“Even though Bernard understands the gospel and gives what he would consider a clear presentation of the gospel, his friend might not get it because something in the way he looks at the world skews his understanding.”) and Bernard’s question to Diana (“Does this make sense to you?”). We have to wait until the next chapter to see how Diana responds. **Read the first page of Chapter 7 and the first third of the next page (pages 87-88).**



#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



The illustration Bernard gives of a worldview putting up a barrier to the gospel is just one of many possible scenarios. **Do the exercise on page 88, trying to think of specific negative results we might see if we do not understand and effectively cut through worldview noise as we present the gospel. List the results here if you do not list them on the chart of the book.**

**Now read on through the middle of page 92 and see what examples our heroes gave.**

Do yours match theirs? Did you think of some they didn’t mention? If you did, feel free to share them with us at [www.goodsoil.com/gainingground](http://www.goodsoil.com/gainingground). Or, if you are having trouble understanding the worldview noise issue, feel free to write to the above site as well.



**As you read on (pages 92 to 99), notice that you already should have studied the passages in Acts last week that the team studies in this chapter.** This was to let you get a grasp of the passages before you saw what Bern and company did with them. *Now as you read through the end of the chapter, you should be able to review what you learned and pick up any insights the quartet has on those passages.*

At the end of the chapter Greg says that what they learned about “the Gospel Communication Process, worldview noise, and the biblical examples of dealing with audiences of different worldviews” opened his eyes. In your opinion, what is the greatest lesson from this chapter?



**4. Read the Bible passages below.** From what you see in the Bible story and what you may know or research about the main characters, where would you say each of these people were on the Good Soil E & D Scale (A copy of the scale is on the following page for your reference). and in their understanding of the eight essential gospel elements(EEGE) before they heard the gospel as described in the passage? Do you think that affected their response? Did it affect how the gospel presenter shared with them?

<i>Passage</i>	<i>Hearer(s)</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>EEGE</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>How Presented</i>



### ***Picking the Harvest for Living***



**5.** Missionaries have to deal with different worldviews when they travel to other lands or cultures to preach the gospel. But in today's world, many of us have people from different cultures and worldviews living all around us. We live in Harrisburg, PA, where on our street we have at least 4 (that I've found so far) major worldviews represented.

From what you've learned in reading *Gaining Ground* and studying some key Bible passages, write what you think are at least two keys that ought to be remembered when dealing with people from different worldviews. Pray that God will help you break through worldview noise and communicate the gospel clearly with people around you. In the next chapter we will see how the quartet learns principles to cut through worldview noise.



# Good Soil Scale

Here is what the first draft of their "good soil" scale looked like. Study it for a few minutes before reading more so that you can understand what our quartet is learning.



### —How Can We Know What They Believe?



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



1. Read Chapter 8 (pages 101-114).



#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



2. A key paragraph of this chapter—and of the whole book—is found on page 111. After learning about peeling the Worldview Onion, Miriam responds. The paragraph is reprinted below. Read it again.

*"Our goal should be to initiate conversations with people that may become redemptive relationships," observed Miriam. "We peel back layers, getting to know them and what they value. But our overall objective is to share the gospel in a form that is relevant to their worldview."*

The majority of us have a tendency to operate at one extreme or the other. Some of us dive right into some kind of gospel presentation without getting to know a person or trying to know where they are coming from or what they believe. Others of us are great at getting to know people—we'll talk to them for hours and over years—but never get to sharing the gospel. Do you have one tendency or the other? If you are reading this book with others in a group, talk with one of them about this or find someone else in whom you can confide. On which end of the pendulum are you? What can you do about it?



3. Read Ephesians 6:18-20 and Colossians 4:2-6.

What words or phrases do you find there that relate significantly to peeling worldview onions? List them below.

- 
- 
- 



4. Study the "Peeling the Worldview Onion" graphic on page 111. Get familiar with the layers of the onion (core beliefs, internalized values, personal choices, behavioral patterns, and human commonalities) and the steps in peeling (entry conversations, investigative questions, conversion discussions).

What insights can you learn from these two passages?



#### Picking the Harvest for Living



5. Choose at least one neighbor, friend or family member with whom you will talk this week. Initiate a conversation that may become a redemptive relationship. The "conversation" may continue over weeks. Start with human commonalities and work your way down through the layers. Your goal should be to understand what his/her beliefs and values are so that you can then share the gospel with him/her. Be sensitive as you ask questions. Don't move too quickly—that may hurt them or shut them up—but show genuine interest and concern for their wellbeing as you try to understand your friend. Always seek to leave the door open for the continuation of the conversation. Share your progress with a believing friend and pray for one another as you peel onions.

### —What Do They Need to Know? (Part 1)



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



1. Read Chapter 9 (pages 115-123).



#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



2. Greg and Diana, Bernard and Miriam arrived in southern Portugal and began teaching the large group what they had learned about Good Soil evangelism. Page 117 reviews some basic principles. If you are studying this book with others, flesh out the subjects below a bit.

**If you are studying on your own, find someone who may be interested (your pastor, someone from church, etc.) and share a sentence or two about each subject.**

#### How much do you remember?

The Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship Scale (Chapter 2)

Initial Contact and Relational Evangelism (Chapters 4 and 5)

The Gospel Communication Process (Chapter 6)

Worldview Case Studies in Acts (Chapter 7)

Peeling the Worldview Onion (Chapter 8)



3. After reviewing the three levels of evangelism (tilling, planting, and reaping), Bernard and Greg helped the group learn that people have certain "gospel knowledge deficiencies" at different levels of the Good Soil E & D Scale. When someone is near the top of the scale, that means they already have a quite a bit of Bible knowledge and understand a good deal of the gospel. Our role at that point is to encourage a response. However, if they are lower on the scale, say the planting stage, we have got to share more of the Bible and fill in the gaps. If they are even lower on the scale (tilling) first we need to be praying and showing them love so their hearts will open to the gospel and then share as much Bible content as they need to understand the gospel.

**Read the following verses and write the gist of them in your own words to the right of each reference.**

Romans 3:23

Romans 6:23

Romans 5:8

Romans 10:9-10, 13





4. Now look at the chart on pages 122 and 123 of *Gaining Ground with Good Soil*.  
(The chart is reprinted below.)

<i>Deficiencies in Gospel Knowledge</i>		
<i>Counts cost of a faith response</i>	-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Once I trust Jesus as my Savior I will never regret it</li><li>• I must choose to receive or to reject God's provision</li><li>• The new "tug in my heart" is God drawing me to Himself</li><li>• My sins will be forgiven if I trust Jesus alone as Savior</li><li>• None of my "good deeds" bring me into favor with God</li><li>• Jesus truly arose from the dead - He conquered death!</li><li>• Jesus died in my place, to pay the penalty for my sins</li><li>• Jesus is not "one way" but the "only way" to God</li></ul>
<i>Confronted with a faith response</i>	-2	
<i>Senses personal spiritual conviction</i>	-3	
<i>Understands some gospel concepts</i>	-4	
<i>Interested in Jesus and the gospel</i>	-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jesus was innocent but evil people crucified Him</li><li>• Jesus Christ is God's special Son</li><li>• God has a plan to provide for the forgiveness of my sins</li><li>• After death, I will face God in judgment for my sins</li><li>• Disobedience to God offends Him greatly - it is "sin"</li><li>• The Bible is God's Word to mankind</li></ul>
<i>Exposed to other Christian concepts</i>	-6	
<i>Realizes there is only one true God</i>	-7	
<i>Vulnerable to false religious beliefs</i>	-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What and whom I believe does matter - eternally</li><li>• There is life after death and I must prepare for it</li><li>• There is hope for me that I can possess, here and now</li><li>• There are no human efforts that will fill this void</li><li>• Alienation from this God has caused my emptiness</li><li>• This God is the Creator of the world and all that's in it</li><li>• This God is eternal, personal, holy, just and loving</li><li>• The highest power is God - only one true living God</li></ul>
<i>Seeks to fill personal spiritual void</i>	-9	
<i>Senses personal spiritual emptiness</i>	-10	
<i>Aware of a higher power or powers</i>	-11	
<i>Born with a God-Vacuum</i>	-12	<i>What Unbelievers Do NOT Know</i>

Think of someone that would be in the lowest third of the scale. They have little or no knowledge of the gospel. The deficiencies listed on page 123 describe their lack of knowledge. Would the verses above fill the gospel knowledge deficiencies person in the tilling level would have?

Think about it carefully before you answer. A person at this level may only be aware of a higher power of some kind, but best case scenario this person is not even committed to monotheism yet.

"But wait!" you say. "That's the Roman's Road which I have used for years!" Yes, and God has used it effectively as people have shared it. But when "The Roman's Road" was conceived people already had a worldview that included the Judeo-Christian mindset. They generally believed in one God, that man was a sinner, and that sin was punishable by death. One could share the good news of Jesus Christ and see genuine faith responses to such a presentation. Today many worldviews do not include those basic tenets. **"But it's the Bible! You can't improve upon that." You are right.**

But there is more to the Bible than those few verses. In fact, let's look at Paul's Roman's Road.

Read Romans 1 through chapter 3:22—all the verses skipped over in the Roman's Road. As you read, write down what Paul taught the Romans about God, man, and sin before he ever wrote Romans 3:23 in the table on the next page.



<i>Essential Gospel Element</i>	<i>Reference in Romans</i>	<i>What is taught about Essential Gospel Element</i>
<i>God</i>		
<i>Man</i>		
<i>Sin</i>		



### ***Picking the Harvest for Living***



5. Don't despair! I'm not trying to slam or take away your favorite gospel presentation. In fact, it still works (as you say, it is God's Word!) with people who have a basic Bible foundation and belief system (worldview). But what I am saying is that **people today need more Bible!**

In the next chapter you will learn what we can do to help when we are dealing with people down in the tilling stage. Until then, thank the Lord that He gave us the entire Bible and "all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory." (2 Peter 1:3)  
There is more to the gospel than the Roman's Road.

### —What Do They Need to Know? (Part 2)



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



1. Read pages 125 through the first  $\frac{3}{4}$  of page 127 of *Chapter 10*.



#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



2. Then do the exercise on page 128. (If you like, you may do the exercise below instead of writing in the book. The text of Luke 24:13-27 is written in the book. If you have not read it, or would like to read it in a different version before doing the exercise, please do.)

*Please do the same exercise, writing in the box what you think Jesus would have shared from the Old Testament before going on.*

Did you come up with different stories than the group in the book? It's fascinating to think about which stories Jesus might have used during that period of a couple of hours or so. **Talk with someone about the stories you think Jesus would have used and why.**



3. Read the rest of **Chapter 10** (pages 127-138.) Can you differentiate between systematic theology and biblical theology? Summarize them both in your own words.

*Systematic Theology:*

*Biblical Theology:*

*Both disciplines have value and are useful. A biblical theology approach is better suited to help people from some worldviews to understand the gospel (e.g. postmodern and tribal peoples). In fact, with many people from various worldviews, it is helpful to share the gospel in a chronological Bible teaching/telling approach because people know so little about the living God of the Bible.*

By teaching significant portions of the Bible from beginning to end, people can put the pieces together or connect the dots so that they **understand** (*sunimi*). Then they will be willing to **embrace** (*paradechomai*) the gospel. Only then can we be confident that they will **retain** (*katecho*) it.



### **Picking the Harvest for Living**



4. If you have not yet seen *The Story of Hope*, consider getting it and using it to share the gospel with your family member, friends, and neighbors. Go to [www.goodsoil.com](http://www.goodsoil.com) to order your copy (ies). You will also find other chronological Bible teaching and telling resources there that can help you in your evangelism efforts. You will find tools for teaching groups (such as Power Point programs and illustration visuals) and tools for individual witness (such Chrono Bridge cards and images for your cell phone, ipod, or MP3 player). Get some good tools and start using them.

**As you peel worldview onions using entry questions and moving through investigative questions, you will want to start having conversion discussions. You'll want to be well-equipped, so get some tools and practice with them.**

Other places you can find good chronological Bible teaching materials are [www.goodseed.com](http://www.goodseed.com) and [www.ntm.com](http://www.ntm.com).

### —How Can We Help Them?



#### Preparing the Soil of the Mind



1. Read pages 141 through the bottom of page 143 of *Chapter 11*. What are our roles as evangelists in reaping stage of evangelism?

- 
- 
- 



#### Planting the Seedlings of Learning



2. Continue reading the bottom of page 143 through the middle of page 144. Then do the exercise by looking over the two-page spread below and answering the questions.

### Eight Essential Truths Emerge

### Out of The Bible's Story of Hope

<h4 style="text-align: center;">GOD</h4> <p><i>What have we learned about our Creator:</i></p> <p>The God of the Bible has always existed and will continue to exist forever. Because He is eternal, God referred to Himself as the "I AM" (Yahweh or Jehovah) which is translated in our Bibles as LORD.</p> <p>By simply commanding it into existence, God created the world and everything in it. In its original condition, God's creation was perfect.</p> <p>Throughout the Bible, this Creator-God</p>	<p>continually demonstrated that He is all-powerful.</p> <p>In contrast with false gods, the true God is perfectly holy (totally without sin).</p> <p>As the Creator of mankind, God gave men and women clear commands to obey.</p> <p>God is a righteous and fair judge who must and will punish disobedience.</p> <p>God loves us even when we disobey Him.</p> <p>Which of these truths about God would you like to understand better? Circle one or more.</p>	<h4 style="text-align: center;">MAN</h4> <p><i>What have we learned about mankind:</i></p> <p>Human beings (people) are uniquely created by God, in His image. As such, we were given some qualities and abilities which God's other creatures did not receive.</p> <p>These special qualities and abilities equip us to be caretakers of God's creation, a role that God has assigned to us.</p> <p>God loves all human beings and desires that</p>	<p>we be in perfect fellowship with Him and enjoy His presence.</p> <p>Not only did God give us the responsibility and ability to obey Him, He also gave us the capacity to disobey.</p> <p>Because God made us and owns us, every human being is accountable to Him.</p> <p>Human beings were created with a material body as well as an immaterial spirit.</p> <p>The spirit of man will never cease to exist; it will live forever in a resurrected body.</p> <p>Which of these truths about mankind would you like to understand better? Circle one or more.</p>
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GOD	MAN	SIN	DEATH	CHRIST	CROSS	FAITH	LIFE
-----	-----	-----	-------	--------	-------	-------	------

#### Spiritual Death

<p><i>The Bible says: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6)</i></p>	<p><i>Our Faith Response: From the Bible we learn that one, and only one, true eternal and holy God exists, that He is our all-powerful Creator and just judge, and that we are accountable to Him. Do you believe this?</i></p>
---	--

#### Eternal Life

<p><i>The Bible says: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being." (Genesis 2:7)</i></p>	<p><i>Our Faith Response: From the Bible we learn that we are made by God, loved by God, and that God deserves our full obedience. Do you believe this?</i></p>
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How do you think the Chrono Bridge helps to clarify?

How do you think the Chrono Bridge helps to personalize?

How do you think the Chrono Bridge helps to persuade?

3. Finish reading the chapter (pages 144 to 152) watching for how the answers you wrote above compare with the answers the workers in Europe gave.



### *Picking the Harvest for Living*

4. The Chrono Bridge is a great tool to help people come to the point of embracing the gospel. The chronological Bible study approach (like *The Story of Hope* and others) builds understanding. The Chrono Bridge leads people to make the story their own. Go to [www.goodsoil.com](http://www.goodsoil.com) and order some tools to aid you in helping people to embrace the gospel. One I have not mentioned yet is a DVD showing a man taking another through the Chrono Bridge to Life. It is a great teaching tool.

5. Begin memorizing at least one verse for each of the essential gospel elements in the Chrono Bridge. Choose one from the options below or another verse that you believe teaches that principle.

God	Man	Sin	Death	Christ	Cross	Faith	Life

Practice using them as you “walk” through the Chrono Bridge to Life. Be ready and use the presentation and the verses with someone who is on the upper half of the Good Soil E & D Scale. On the lower half of the scale, build their understanding by sharing God’s story (chronological Bible teaching or telling).

—Then What?



### Preparing the Soil of the Mind

1.

Read pages 141 through the bottom of page 143 of *Chapter 11*. What are our roles as evangelists in reaping stage of evangelism?

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### Planting the Seedlings of Learning

2.

This is a short chapter without a lot of new material to learn. The main points are these:

- As with the Luke 8 passage, we want to help new believers retain the gospel; to hang on to it as a new way of life and not let go.
- The positive numbers on the scale demonstrate spiritual growth.
- Ten significant growth topics for new believers are shared.

3.

Go to [www.goodsoil.com](http://www.goodsoil.com) and click on the “Resources” tab. There you can scroll down, looking for *The Way to Joy* discipleship training book. Click on the picture of the book for more details. This is a good option for follow-up discipleship for new believers. There are other good possibilities out there as well. Just be sure to follow up new believers with some kind of discipleship tool. The Navigators ([www.navigators.org](http://www.navigators.org)) are a good ministry that produces discipleship materials.

4.

Read through the book of Colossians with this page, a pen, and extra paper close by. As you read, look for and make a note of every time Paul touches on one of the subjects dealt with in *The Way to Joy* (listed in the graph below) and every time Paul touches on any other subject you think might be important for a brand new believer to learn.

Lesson 1	The Joy of Hope:	God's Eternal Plan
Lesson 2	The Joy of Eternal Life:	Salvation
Lesson 3	The Joy of Confidence:	Assurance and Security
Lesson 4	The Joy of Guidance:	God's Word
Lesson 5	The Joy of Communion:	Prayer
Lesson 6	The Joy of Empowerment:	The Spirit-Controlled Life
Lesson 7	The Joy of Purity:	Personal Holiness
Lesson 8	The Joy of Sharing:	Witnessing
Lesson 9	The Joy of Fellowship:	The Local Church
Lesson 10	The Joy of Purpose:	God's Plan for You

References in Colossians:

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Other subjects you think should be covered with which Paul deals in Colossians:

References:

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Now you have the start (at least the beginnings of an outline) of a discipleship tool using only one book of the Bible. Colossians is rich in teaching what new believers need. Let me know if you develop something from Colossians or another tool for discipleship by writing to me through [www.goodsoil.com/gainingground](http://www.goodsoil.com/gainingground). Consider going to [www.cultivate.goodsoil.com](http://www.cultivate.goodsoil.com). Cultivate is a forum/blog site that is dedicated to helping people develop their worldview-relevant evangelism and discipleship skills. You can ask questions, comment on the blogs, or ask for help. Visit the site and let us know what you are doing.



### ***Picking the Harvest for Living***



#### **5. Read the *Epilogue* (pages 165-166).**

Notice that one of the most important principles the gang learned was to “be ready to initiate conversations that may become redemptive relationships wherever we are.” (page 166)

Commit to that, as Greg and Diana did. Whether you are at home in America, Europe, Africa, Asia, or South America, be ready to initiate conversations. Whether you are travelling on a plane, or bus, or taxi be ready to initiate conversations. Whether you are shopping, developing a friendship, or building a house—commit to initiating conversations that God may turn into redemptive relationships as you peel onions and share your faith.