



**WORLDVIEW  
RETHINK™**



**LEADER'S GUIDE**

FOR

**THE**  
**S**TRANGER  
on the Road to Emmaus

Published by GOODSEED® International

**WORLDVIEW RETHINK**  
LEADER'S GUIDE  
FOR  
**THE STRANGER ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**  
Based on Edition 5

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Published by GOODSEED® International  
P.O. Box 3704, Olds, AB, T4H 1P5, Canada  
Email: info@goodseed.com

ISBN: 978-1-890082-86-4

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Guide summarizes the input of many who have used *THE STRANGER ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS* in evangelism and discipleship. They are too many to mention.

The whole GOODSEED team in one way or another has had input, working on various aspects of the Guide. However, special recognition needs to be given to David Cross who spent hours distilling input and creating a resource that reflects the experience of many. Thanks also to Rachel Bader who spent long hours formatting and reformatting the book until this robust tool began to communicate with simplicity.

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# STEP ONE: GETTING PREPARED

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Facing hurdles that have never before been encountered, Christians are finding that the traditional worldviews of Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants are undergoing dramatic changes. At the same time, the influx of new cultures with unfamiliar belief systems signifies that God is bringing new mission fields to our doorstep.

So, how do we respond? How do we communicate the unchanging truth of God's Word in a changing world? How do we get our world to rethink their worldview from a biblical perspective?

**The Worldview Rethink Curriculum** is a unique course of studies designed for the needs of today. Emphasizing that the power of the Gospel is directly related to having a clear understanding of its message, the **Worldview Rethink** begins by laying a solid

foundation, directing the learner to the opening pages of Scripture. It then progressively introduces new truth based on previously understood truth.

This course is not meant to be a "been-there-done-that" experience which, when completed, is soon set aside as one's focus shifts to another study. Rather, the thrust of this course is preparation for a lifestyle of sharing with others—to being an ambassador for life. As such, it is going to require a significant investment on your part for a life-long endeavour. However, it is well worth the time and effort. It is going to make a difference for eternity to those who respond in simple trust to a clear explanation of the Gospel message.

**The Worldview Rethink Curriculum** is a comprehensive package made up of several resources that allow considerable latitude in teaching the course.

# WORLDVIEW RETHINK ROAD MAP

START HERE

GET READY

ATTEND

## WORKSHOP

Attend a seven hour Worldview Rethink Workshop if possible. The training you receive is worth the investment of time. See [www.goodseed.com](http://www.goodseed.com) for Workshop schedules.

## UNDERSTAND



### WHAT?

A promotional DVD trailer, giving a succinct overview of Worldview Rethink.



### WHY?

A single-session DVD explaining the rationale and background to Worldview Rethink.

## EXPERIENCE



## SEE, HEAR & UNDERSTAND



Read **THE STRANGER** (p. 23 ff.), watch **THE INTERACTIVE DVD\*** and answer **THE WORKBOOK** questions. Make sure your answers are correct, as you will be using this **WORKBOOK** with your students.

This exercise takes you through the lessons as if you were a student, putting you in his shoes. It is important to know where the lessons are headed and to be able to say that you have “done it.”

\***THE INTERACTIVE DVD** is located inside the back cover.

## LEARN



### HOW?

This DVD includes common Q & A's leaders ask about Worldview Rethink. Do not shortcut this part of your education.

## PRINT

### RESOURCE CD



**PROMOTIONAL RESOURCES:** As you scan the supplied posters, flyers and advertisements, think of your target audience. Select the resource that best suits your purpose. Remember, the most effective means for reaching the unchurched is one-on-one.

**VISUAL AIDS & TEACHING RESOURCES:** Print a **Time Log**. It will help you plan the number of sessions you need to complete the course. Several printable visual aids are also on the disk.

GET SET

REVIEW

INTRO TO LEADER'S GUIDE

Read pages 8 to 20.  
These pages will help you make sense of each icon.

DECIDE



VENUE

- Free of distractions
- With a coffee table for visual aids
- With a TV or computer if using the INTERACTIVE DVD

PREPARE

BEFORE EACH GET-TOGETHER



Using the **Time Log** (See Resource CD), determine how many sections in THE STRANGER you will cover in the allotted time. Ignore Chapter divisions. It may mean you will only do a partial Chapter.



Based on the content you plan on covering, assemble the corresponding **visual aids** as indicated at the beginning of each chapter (a full list of these resources is found on page 20). If needed, review THE INTERACTIVE DVD to remind you how to use each visual.



Consult the **Leader's Notes** appropriate to the content you will be covering (see page 305). **DO NOT** teach this material to your student. It is only for your benefit, to give you confidence in what you are teaching.

GO





MAKING  
SENSE OF

# THE TOOLBOX

SAMPLE PAGE

## CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 A PARADOX
- 2 ATONEMENT
- 3 TWO BY TWO
- 4 BABEL

Chapter 5 Visual Aids					
SECTION	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	Supplied by Leader	
1	Coin		Weigh Scale (3D Alternative)	Cup of Water	
	Sign: Perfectly Just			Certificate of Debt #1 (See <b>Resource CD</b> )	
	Sign: Perfectly Loving				
	Weigh Scale				
2	Altar/Ram	Fig Leaf		Certificate of Debt #1 (See <b>Resource CD</b> )	
	Heart/Covering	Sheep (3D Alternative)		Branch	
	Garden Produce	Puzzle (incorrect)			
3	Ark				
4	Tower of Babel				



**A**

Every chapter in the GUIDE begins with a list of **visual aids** used in teaching each section. There are four visual aid **ToolBoxes**, as described below. ToolBoxes 1, 2 and 3 are available from GOODSEED. (Visual aids in ToolBox 3 can be purchased as separate items.) If you do not have access to any or all of these visuals, you may use in their place the corresponding video clip found on the DVD that accompanies this Guide.

**B**

The **Basic ToolBox** includes easy-to-assemble visual aids.



The **Intermediate ToolBox** provides additional visual aids including 3D versions of some found in the Basic ToolBox.



The **Advanced ToolBox** includes 3D visual aids used in teaching larger groups or where the leader wishes to enhance the understanding of a student. These powerful visual aids bring a dimension to the story that is well worth the extra expense.



**Supplied by the Leader**, these items are readily available in the home. Some are used with visual aids found in the Basic ToolBox. Other helps are provided in PDF format on **The Resource CD**.

**C**

Visual Aids assist—

- **Comprehension:** They clarify the meaning of the text.
- **Retention:** They act as “velcro on the brain”—helping the student remember what is being taught.
- **Review:** After their initial use, visual aids help in review, either at the beginning or completion of a lesson.

MAKING  
SENSE OF

## THE VISUAL AIDS

A



The **ToolBox** icon flags the leader to the use of a particular **Visual Aid**. As each visual is introduced, it is vital to have the students' attention—they need to be looking at you. The word *(Attention!)* is to remind you to connect by using such phrases as:

- *"Look up here..."*
- *"Do you remember...?"*
- *"Let's pause for a moment and think about this..."*

B



Coupled with the use of the **ToolBox** icon is the **wrench**. This identifies the point in the text where the visual is to be used. In most cases, there is an accompanying note that can be read verbatim or ad-libbed.

C



The **ToolBox**, in some instances, will have more than one number indicating that there are enhanced versions of the same visual aid available in other ToolBox kits (usually 3D alternatives).

SAMPLE PAGE

CHAPTER FOURTEEN ♦ 233

Death in its three aspects ruled man's life, and he could do nothing about it. Man had no choice as to whether he wanted to die or not. It was a bitter, potent reality that all faced; that all shared; that all who thought soberly, feared. With absolute, utter finality, the Scripture clearly states ...

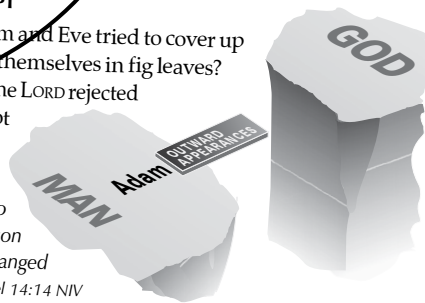
... a person shall die for his own sin.  2 Chronicles 25:4 NKJV

These word pictures help us understand just how far removed from God mankind had become as a result of Adam and Eve's sin. Man was faced with that age-old question: **How can we get rid of our sin with all its consequences and gain a righteousness equal to God's righteousness so we can be accepted back into his presence?**

**A DESPERATE ATTEMPT**

Remember how Adam and Eve tried to cover up their sin by clothing themselves in fig leaves? We saw that though the LORD rejected their efforts, he did not leave them in a lurch. Rather, he ...

... devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him. 2 Samuel 14:14 NIV




The LORD used these events to teach Adam and Eve, as well as us, universal principles that apply to all mankind.

**ACCEPTANCE**

Just as Adam and Eve could not make themselves acceptable to God by fixing up their outward appearance, neither can we be accepted based on our externals. We may impress others with what we are on the outside, but God knows what we are really like.

We saw that God provided Adam and Eve with a way of acceptance, but on different terms. The Bible says that ...

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.  Genesis 3:21 NASB

The significance of this little verse would be overlooked if it wasn't for other parts of the Bible explaining it. So what does it mean? What would Jesus have told the disciples? Very simply this: Just as an animal had to die to clothe Adam and Eve in acceptable clothing, so Jesus had to die to make us acceptable in the presence of God.



**Cup (Empty)** (Attention!)

Remember the spilled water? Just as we were certain that one can't recover water that is spilled on the ground, so we can be certain that all will die.



**Ram/Sheep**

(Attention! Then continue reading.)

MAKING  
SENSE OF

# THE INTERACTIVE DVD

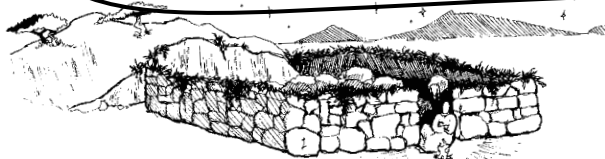
SAMPLE PAGE

## 2 THE WAY



**Sheepfold** (Attention!)  
Point out relative aspects of this visual aid as you read this paragraph.

Often Jesus used common day-to-day experiences to illustrate spiritual truth. In this story, Jesus began by reminding his listeners of the sort of pen in which sheep were kept. The enclosure was constructed using stones, upon which thorny vines were encouraged to grow. The purpose of these brambles was to dissuade wild animals or thieves from crawling over the wall. The pen had only one entrance. During the day, the shepherd would lead his flock out to the pasture for grazing. At night, the flock would be returned to the fold and the shepherd would sleep in the entrance. No one could enter and the sheep could not leave without disturbing the guardian. The shepherd's body literally became the door to the pen.



Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep."  
*John 10:7 NIV*

Jesus compared those who trust him as being sheep, safely secured in the sheep pen.

"Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved."  
*John 10:9 NLT*

Jesus said that *he* alone was the gate—there were no other doors. It was only through *him* that one could be *saved* from the terrible consequences of sin. It was only through him that one could have eternal life.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."  
*John 10:10 ESV*

Thieves do not care about the welfare of sheep. The Bible calls them false teachers. Often they use the Bible to feed a power trip or thicken their wallets. These *thieves* fabricate a way to earn eternal life—a way that appears good, but still ends in spiritual death.

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.  
*Proverbs 14:12 NIV*



A



A DVD icon in conjunction with background shading of text, signifies content taught on **THE INTERACTIVE DVD** that accompanies this Leader's Guide inside the back cover. This DVD can be used in place of the same text being read by the leader or student. The DVD clips often show the value of using visual aids in teaching. Other times the DVD provides footage filmed in Israel, Egypt, Jordan or elsewhere. The icon includes an identification number corresponding to the chapter as well as the length of the specified video segment (minutes:seconds).

B



The visual aids may be used either as supplements to, or in place of **THE INTERACTIVE DVD**.

**NOTE:** As a leader, it is **important** that you watch the DVD prior to your study, to assist you in learning the proper use of the visual aid. Even if you don't use the visual aids and use just the DVD, it is good to know how to use the ToolBox in review.

C



In many instances, **THE INTERACTIVE DVD** provides supplementary material not included in the book.



Where the content of the DVD may not be readily apparent, a brief summary will be given in a **Leader's Note** (p. 305 ff.).

Use of **THE INTERACTIVE DVD** offers some distinct advantages:


- It relieves some of the demands off of the leader, allowing one to collect one's thoughts in anticipation of the material that is about to be covered.
- It helps maintain a student's interest by utilizing another form of teaching.
- It aids in the use of some visual aids that otherwise are very difficult to communicate clearly and effectively.

MAKING  
SENSE OF

## THE COMMENTS &amp; LEADER'S NOTES

A



**Comments** are provided as “teaching tips” for the purposes of clarification, emphasis, or illustration. A corresponding small icon identifies in the text where the comment is to be made. 

Comments can be read “as is” or ad-libbed. Be careful to avoid too much elaboration.

B



These icons direct you to the **Leader's Notes** beginning on page 305. It is important that these notes be carefully reviewed prior to each new session.

They include ...

- Tips for teaching
- Background information
- Additional Scripture references

These notes are grouped according to **chapter, section** and **sequence**.

**NOTE:** Leader's Notes are not part of the lesson taught to a student. They are there to assist the leader so that the main content can be taught with confidence. Once again, **DO NOT** make the Leader's Notes part of your regular lesson.

# SAMPLE PAGE

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN ♦ 223

Pilate instructed the chief priests and Pharisees to seal the tomb. Ropes would have been stretched across the large stone door and fixed in place with moist clay. The clay would then be imprinted with a signet ring. Any tampering with the rock would be immediately apparent.

### SUNDAY

The guard was set in place on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. On Sunday while it was still dark...

*... there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.*

*Matthew 28:2-4 NLT*

It took only a glance for these rough and rugged soldiers to know they were no match for this one angel. The last phrase in the above passage is a first century way of saying they passed out from fear! But they weren't the only ones shaking. The whole realm of evil must have been in chaos. It's not hard to imagine what it was like—Satan in confusion, shouting jumbled orders as demons scrambled in disarray. What a shock! Who would have dreamed that the tomb could be empty. Jesus had obviously come back to life. Impossible!

### IN THE MEANTIME ...

*... Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought aromatic spices so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, at sunrise, they went to the tomb. They had been asking each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"*

*But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled back.*

*Mark 16:1-4 NET*

Mary Magdalene apparently turned away in shock and dismay at the initial sight of the open tomb. She probably assumed the obvious—Jesus' body had been vandalized. Sobbing, she turned and ran to tell the disciples. But Mary and Salome pushed forward and entered the tomb.

*And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed.*

*And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him."*

What made the seal so certain was that it represented all the power of imperial Rome enforcing its authority.

CH 13  
3.4

## 58 ♦ CHAPTER FOUR

That's the natural outcome of choosing sides. Adam and Eve had abandoned their friendship with God and joined Satan. They had rejected a pure, perfect world to experiment with a forbidden one.

**A BROKEN FRIENDSHIP**

But such a choice has ramifications. As we saw before, *breaking a law has consequences*. The Scripture teaches us that sin's effects are very costly. Adam and Eve's defiant choice to follow Satan's lies opened a vast gulf in the relationship between God and man. A perfect God could not allow mixed loyalties, half friendships or partial betrayals. Unless there was trust, no relationship could exist. The friendship was over.



*Therefore God gave them ... the sinful desires of their hearts ... They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things [Satan] rather than the Creator—who is forever praised.<sup>2</sup>*

Romans 1:24–25 NIV

**FIG LEAVES**

*Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked...*

Genesis 3:7 NKJV

Adam and Eve immediately sensed that something was wrong. They had feelings they had never experienced before—very uncomfortable ones—called guilt and shame. They were devastated. The Bible says they were afraid and for the first time they realized they were naked. Casting their eyes around for a solution ...

*... they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.*

Genesis 3:7 NKJV

Perhaps they thought that if they fixed up their outward appearance, God would never notice that things had changed on the inside. They would just gloss things over and pretend that everything was okay. It was man's first attempt to make things right in a world gone wrong.





**A****Option One: Solo Teaching**

A “one-on-one” format is preferred to teaching “two-on-one.”

Unless one is very familiar with the material, use of *THE INTERACTIVE DVD* is highly recommended for an individual assuming sole responsibility for teaching. Use of *THE STRANGER VIDEOBOOK* is another option.

**B****Option Two: Team Teaching**

The possible use of alternate teaching roles is marked by **Red Vertical Bars** in the margin—indicating when a second person assisting in teaching would be responsible to read.

The lead teacher:

- introduces lesson material.
- keeps the session on track.
- determines if supplementary comments are appropriate for the time available.
- introduces the majority of the visual aids.
- handles the “wrap-up.”
- answers questions.
- views this as an opportunity to mentor.

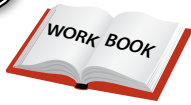
The assistant teacher:

- keeps a **Time Log**—recording the start and stop times for each section (available on **The Resource CD**). This helps budget time for future studies.
- ensures that the appropriate visual aids are ready for use by both leaders.
- views this as an opportunity to learn.

MAKING  
SENSE OF

## THE WORKBOOK &amp; UNDERLINING

A



Do not think of the **WORKBOOK** as a quiz. Rather, it:

- Provides opportunity for discussion and clarification.
- Assures each student of his own comprehension of each lesson.
- Touches on common responses heard on the street.

This has been strongly recommended by those who have taught this material.

B

### Alternatives for using the **WORKBOOK**

**Option One:** After the first study, assign the **WORKBOOK** as homework. This requires the student to go home and process the information a second time. At the beginning of the next study, the answers are reviewed to ensure that there is no confusion or questions.

- This is the preferred method in that it allows the students to think through the material several times—reinforcing their understanding of the lesson.

**Option Two:** Each chapter is comprised of several sections. At the end of each section, take time to complete the **WORKBOOK** questions. This only takes a few minutes and helps cement in the mind of the student the most important element of the lesson. This will add 3-5 hours to the overall study time.

This option would be recommended if the student:

- is unable to do the homework on his or her own time.
- seems to be having problems comprehending each lesson as you progress.
- speaks English as a second language. (It will help his English comprehension.)
- is viewing *THE STRANGER VIDEOBOOK* exclusively.

C

**Red Underlining** signifies key statements to be highlighted by the student when directed to do so by the leader. Precede reading the sentence with these words, *“Underline this,”* or *“Highlight the next two sentences.”*

These highlighted statements will be helpful as the student responds to questions in the **WORKBOOK**. This will be particularly true of international students.

If this is a distraction to the student, then discontinue highlighting.

SAMPLE PAGE

CHAPTER FOUR ♦ 59

There was only one problem with the *fig leaf* solution: it didn't work. The condemnation remained. Having a good outward appearance did not remedy the inner reality. Perfection was gone. Feelings of guilt churned within. The gulf was still there.

*And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*  
Genesis 3:8 NKJV



Only guilty people hide—one doesn't hide from a friend. A barrier now existed between God and man. The friendship was over.



Is God Picky?

Some may say, "But the sin was over such a little thing—just a bite of fruit!" True. God had not put a big stumbling block in man's path. Indeed, it was no stumbling block at all. There were dozens of trees from which Adam and Eve could have freely eaten. This was the smallest of possible tests, but it defined man as being human—as having a free will.

Suppose a young lady met a fellow who seemed to be the nicest person on earth. He showed real love for her—going out of his way to do special things for her, comforting her when she hurt, sharing in her humour, telling her he loved her. Then she found out he had no choice—that he was programmed to be loving... well, it would be a terrible disappointment. It would all seem so artificial, so meaningless, so empty. And it would be.


Man was given a choice, a simple one, which was very easy to keep. But this one choice made a huge difference. Having this choice: *to eat or not to eat*  
*to obey or disobey*  
*to love or not to love* ... defined man as human.

Man was not a robot. Man was able to love by his own free choice. Adam and Eve's love for each other was real, not artificial. And their initial obedience and love for God was genuine as well.

Although the test itself may have seemed a small concern, it is a serious thing to disobey the LORD in even the smallest of matters. The Bible says that God is perfect—he is holy and righteous—he cannot tolerate even the least of sins. It states explicitly that to disobey is wrong. It is sin. 1 Samuel 15:23

MAKING  
SENSE OF

## THE MASTER LIST OF VISUAL AIDS

1	2	3	4
Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	Supplied by Leader
001 Paddle	Three Puzzles: Pieces not Assembled Incorrectly Assembled Correctly Assembled	Sheep—Large size (3D Alternative)	"Live" Branch
002 Coin		Weigh Scale (3D Alternative)	Cup of Water
003 Sign—Perfectly Loving		Clothes Basket	Tabernacle Model
003 Sign—Perfectly Just	Papyrus	Tabernacle Furniture	Scissors
004 Weigh Scale	Scroll	Cloaks: White Green Dirty White Black Red	Mirror
005 Altar	Fig Leaf		Perfume
005 Garden Produce	Fruit/Veggies (3D Alternative)		White Paper Bag
005 Isaac	Rat, Black—Medium Size		Gold Nuggets & Trash
006 Heart	Sheepskin (Synthetic)*		Water Bottle & Cleaning Fluid*
006 Heart Covering	Sheep—Medium size (3D Alternative)		Blank Sheet of Paper
007 Ark	Chain		Small Gift Box—Wrapped
008 Tower of Babel	Luxury Toy Car*		 <b>RESOURCE CD**</b>
009 Firstborn	Gavel	Certificate of Debt #1	
009 Lamb (Live)	Award	Certificate of Debt #2	
009 Lamb (Dead)		Certificate of Debt #3	
009 Passover Door		Certificate of Debt #4	
010 Stone Tablets		Corrupted & Uncorrupted Paragraphs	
011 Man [with Knotted String]		Sheepskin Template*	
012 Weigh Scale (Gold/Trash)		Manjui Illustration	
013 Priest		Tabernacle Poster	
014 Man [with 009 Lamb (Live) or Sheep—Medium size (3D Alternative)]		Temple Poster	
015 Serpent on Pole		The Book of the Dead*	
016 Dagon*			
016 Dagon (Broken)*			
017 Sheepfold			
017 Sheep (12)			
017 Shepherd			
018 Cross & Tomb			

\* Greyed out items are not used in teaching THE STRANGER. They are included in the Visual Aids for teaching BY THIS NAME OR ALL THE PROPHETS.

\*\* NOTE: The Resource CD also includes promotional resources not considered as visual aids.

# STEP TWO: GETTING STARTED

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## Needed by the Leader:

- Bible
- This STRANGER LEADER'S GUIDE with the accompanying INTERACTIVE DVD
- THE STRANGER COMPANION WORKBOOK (completed)
- The appropriate visual aids for each session
- A pen or pencil

## Needed to be given to each student:

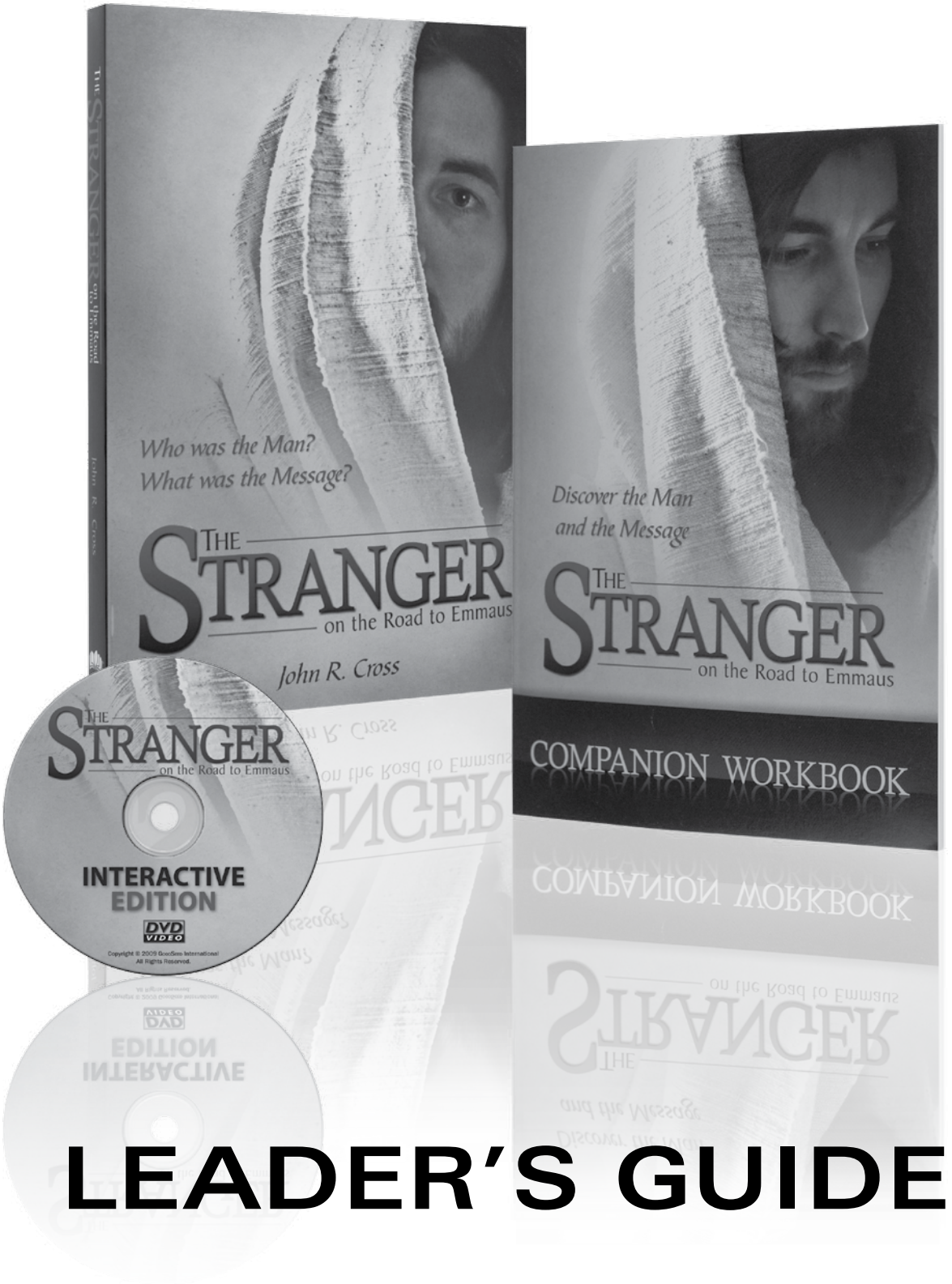
- THE STRANGER ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS—INTERACTIVE
- THE STRANGER COMPANION WORKBOOK
- A pen or pencil for the WORKBOOK
- A highlighter to underline in THE STRANGER
- A Bible, if student does not have one

Though opening in prayer may be meaningful to believers, for others it can be intimidating and uncomfortable—they have no one to pray to. Worse yet, some may feel comfortable praying, indicating in their minds that everything is “right” with God. A prayer may give them a false sense of security. (The same could be said of singing.) We recommend that you pray before your students come, and then begin the lesson not long after they arrive.

You can start with the words, *“Well, we are here to find out what the Bible says about itself. So let’s begin. Each one will have a textbook and a workbook. These books will walk us through a very condensed overview of the Bible.”*



# WORLDVIEW RETHINK™



# LEADER'S GUIDE

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To maintain ease in reading and remain consistent with the Bible text chosen, in most cases I have used small initial letters for pronouns and certain nouns that relate to God. In areas where there might be confusion about who is being referred to, I have used capital letters consistent with traditional grammar rules.

All Bible portions are italicized and indented. Where Scripture text is boldfaced, an emphasis has been added. Square parentheses in the Scripture text indicate additions for explanatory purposes.

“THE STRANGER ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS” introduces the reader to nine different translations of the Bible. None of the translations differ on content communicated nor affect the accompanying commentary.

### About the Bible:

*...And let the one who hears say: "Come!" And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wants it take the water of life free of charge.*

*I testify to the one who hears the words of the prophecy contained in this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.*

*And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are described in this book.*      *Revelation 22:17–19 NET*

## PREFACE

It's not easy to write an objective book about the Bible. By its very nature, the Bible demands a response. Unfortunately, people's responses have been determined under less than ideal settings.

Many of us have experienced religious zealots, who cram shattered fragments of Bible down our throats with the predictable effect of stimulating the spiritual gag reflex. This has left people inoculated with just enough Bible information to create misunderstanding, but not enough to generate true comprehension. On such a basis, many have chosen to *reject* the book rather than *accept* it. Most try a neutral platform—they avoid it altogether.

With the above in mind, I've endeavored to stay away from that *preachy* tone that sets one's teeth on edge. I've worked to explain the Bible clearly, allowing it to speak for itself—to say what it says—letting you draw your own conclusions. Some may accuse me of losing objectivity because I've communicated the Bible as being true. I felt that was a risk I must run, as the Bible itself makes that claim. To do otherwise would not be true to the text. Indeed, I've tried to capture the spirit of the narrative to make it interesting as well as clear.

Secondly, I was determined to not *water down* the message. Where the Bible demands a choice, I've tried to illustrate that choice clearly. The Bible is quite direct about what it has to say and I've endeavored to reflect that reality by shunning any sort of vagueness. In keeping with this, I've avoided the confusion of being politically-correct at the expense of the message. Initially, I was perplexed at knowing how to express some words in our gender-neutral society. I eventually gave up on *humankind* and went with the traditional *mankind*.





As with any book, some may find it easy in the first few pages to decide that "it's not for me." I wish to challenge those who are inclined that way, to read the entire volume before deciding what to believe about the Bible. There was a time when I too would have thrown the Bible out with the proverbial bath water—but then I was challenged to pause and look again. I'm still looking, and continue to marvel over this *Book of all books*. There is a good chance you will too.

# CHAPTER ONE

**1** PROLOGUE

**2** GETTING THINGS STRAIGHT

**3** A UNIQUE BOOK

Chapter 1 Visual Aids					
SECTION	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	Supplied by Leader	
1					
2		Puzzle (loose pieces)		Bible	
		Puzzle (incorrect)			
		Puzzle (correct)			
		Clothes Basket			
3		Scroll		Corrupted & Uncorrupted Paragraphs (see <b>Resource CD</b> )	
		Papyrus			

# 1 PROLOGUE

The year—circa 33 A.D.

The sun burned midday hot. All was quiet. Even the birds refused to sing in the oppressive heat. Cleopas kicked a clod of dried mud from the dusty road, drew a large breath and blew out his cheeks in a weary sigh. Squinting into the haze, he could barely make out the next ridge. Beyond that lay Emmaus—home. Sunset would be on them before their arrival. Normally they would have left Jerusalem sooner—after all, it was a three hour walk—but the events of the morning had kept them hanging back, wishing for more concrete news. Emmaus wasn't much of a town, but today it seemed very attractive. Any place but Jerusalem, with its yelling rabble, its Roman cohorts, its governor—Pontius Pilate.

Cleopas' heavy thoughts were jerked back to the present as his irritated companion asked a question for the second time. The two of them had been discussing the day's events—the last few years' events—until it seemed no detail could be dissected more. Cleopas was tired, but more than that, he was confused by all that had transpired in Jerusalem. These days, it seemed, life held more questions than answers. Trudging down the hill they rounded a bend. It was then they met the stranger.

Hours later, the same day, the same night, when the two of them stood hot and sweaty before their friends back in Jerusalem—for it was there they had rushed—they couldn't give a good answer as to how the stranger had joined their twosome. At first, Cleopas thought he had stepped out of the shadow of a big boulder, but that didn't jive with his friend's explanation. The bottom line was, they just weren't sure where he had come from. Lamely, Cleopas had said that the stranger had “kinda, well just sort of—appeared.” That had been met with some derisive statements about the heat and too much sun.

But of one thing they were sure. The stranger had taken that ancient collection of books—the Bible—and starting at the very beginning, over the next several hours, had explained it in a way that made incredible sense. The stranger's message had driven all despondency and doubt from their minds. So thrilled were they by their new understanding that they had hurried all the way back to Jerusalem to tell their friends about THE STRANGER.

**NOTE:** The page numbers of this LEADER'S GUIDE DO NOT coincide with the page numbers of THE STRANGER book, as seen inset on each page before you. Keep this in mind as you direct your students in their copies of THE STRANGER.




## 14 ♦ CHAPTER ONE

Somehow, somewhere, they too needed to hear this message—the message they had heard ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS.

So just what did THE STRANGER say about the Bible—a book that has puzzled so many—that made so much sense? That is what this book is all about. And to understand it clearly, we will do what THE STRANGER did—start at the very beginning.

## 2 GETTING THINGS STRAIGHT

When you stop and think about it, it's entirely reasonable—indeed, just plain logical—to take a few hours out of your entire life to gain an understanding of the Bible. After all, the Bible has some very profound things to say about life ... and about death. 

For centuries it has been a best seller. Anyone who claims to be the least bit informed should understand its basic content. Unfortunately, the Bible has fallen into disrepute, not because of what it says, but because some very prominent men and women, who claim to follow the Bible, have made some of the worst choices in life.

But the Bible has not changed. And despite what the hypocrites or critics say, it does make good sense to know it for **yourself**—  
 ... for **your own** peace of mind,  
 ... for **your own** life and death's sake.

### Bible (Attention!)

4

This study guide summarizes the central message of the Bible. To help us keep that in mind, I'm going to place a Bible in front of us. (*Open and place a Bible in front of your students. A Bible without study notes is preferred.*)



CH1  
2.1

### Three Puzzles (Attention!)

(Scatter **loose puzzle pieces** on the table.) The Bible covers many diverse topics. Each of these pieces represents a topic. The big pieces represent large topics that are discussed at great length. The little pieces represent small topics, mentioned only briefly.

Some people, in an attempt to understand the Bible, put it together as they see fit. (*Hold up **incorrect puzzle**.*) What they end up with appears feasible — it may even seem “right.” But this is the way it is supposed to look. (*Hold up **correct puzzle**.*)

You don't want this (*point to the **incorrect puzzle***) when this (*hold up the **correct puzzle***) is what the designer of the puzzle intended. So it is with understanding the message of the Bible.

1-A

6:14

2

### A PUZZLE

In many ways, the Bible is like a puzzle. By this, I do not mean that its message is hidden, but rather that to understand the Bible accurately, the biblical pieces must be put together in the right way. We can do this by applying four basic principles of learning.

#### 1. The Storytelling Principle

The first principle is especially important when learning history or reading a story. Simply put, it's this—start at the beginning and move sequentially through to the end. That may seem obvious, but many people tend to read the Bible in bits and pieces, never taking the time to tie them together.

In this book we will cover key events, stringing them together in logical sequence—like hanging laundry on a clothesline. Since this overview is far from comprehensive, expect some gaps on the line. If you wish, the gaps can be filled in later, after you have the overall picture.



## CHAPTER ONE ♦ 15

Although this clothesline cannot include every story, the events we do study will tie together in one continuous message. If you are a typical reader, by the time you have finished this book, the Bible will make remarkable sense. Whether you believe it or not is entirely up to you. I sincerely hope you will, but that is your choice. My job is to help you understand it clearly.



## 2. The Mathematical Principle

The second principle is one we use all the time. To learn any new concept, it helps to build from the foundation up—to *move from the known to the unknown*. You don't start children in kindergarten by teaching them algebra. Rather, you begin with basic numbers, and move from the simple to the complex. If you skip the fundamentals, even rudimentary algebra will be beyond your grasp.

It's the same way with the Bible. If you neglect the foundations, your biblical understanding will incorporate some unusual ideas, resulting in the message being confused—the puzzle will present the wrong image. In this book we begin with the basics, and progress through each chapter, building on previously gained knowledge.

## 3. The Priority Principle

This third principle—*major on the majors*—should be applied to any learning situation where the content is unfamiliar to you. The idea is to learn the most important points first.

The Bible covers an incredible array of topics, but not all are of equal importance. In this book we will focus on one major theme—the most significant theme in the Bible. Once you understand it, the Bible will make profound but simple sense.

## 4. The Clarity Principle

The fourth principle is of critical importance. *Don't mix your subject matter—stick to one theme at a time*.

The Bible addresses many different issues. It might be compared to a cookbook with its many diverse recipes. Traditionally, the Bible



### Clothes Basket (Attention!)

Notice the gaps in the line. We can't cover every story so some of the stories will be left off the storyline. In a sense, those stories remain in the clothes basket. (Hold up **clothes basket**.)

Feel free to ask questions but if they concern stories off our "clothesline," we will write them down and save them in the "basket" until the end. (*Pretend to write a question on a note pad, then put it in the basket.*) After we finish the book, we can go back and fill in the gaps.

CH1  
2.2

CH1  
2.3

has been broken down into topics, such as God, Angels, Man, and Prophecy. The intention was to create better understanding, but one needs to be careful. Some people, finding certain similarities between topics, attempt to combine the ideas, often resulting in a distortion of the original meaning.

It's like jumping from a pickle recipe to a pie recipe because they both share the initial letter "p." If you begin by making pickles and end with the pie recipe, you will bake the pickles until they are well-browned! Both may start with the letter "p," but combined they make bizarre food!

The mixing of various topics is one of the contributing causes as to why we find so many different church groups, religions and cults, that to varying degrees hold the Bible as their book. The pie has been mixed with the pickles. The puzzle has a jumbled picture. In some cases, the confusion is minor. In other situations, the mix-up has had catastrophic results. 🔧

In the Bible, if you unintentionally leap from one topic to another, the end result will be confusion—your puzzle will be disjointed. To avoid this biblical chaos, we will stick to one *theme*. 🔧

#### Incorrect Puzzle (Attention!)

What they end up with is confusing. (Hold up incorrect puzzle.)

2

#### Correct Puzzle (Attention!)

At the end you want to have this. (Hold up correct puzzle.)

2

CH1  
3.1

CH1  
3.2

CH1  
3.3

1-B  
2:26

## 3 A UNIQUE BOOK

There is no doubt about it; the Bible is a unique book. Actually, it's a collection of books, sixty-six in all. One author, in writing of the Bible's uniqueness, put it this way:

Here is a book:

1. written over a 1500 year span;
2. written over 40 generations;
3. written by more than 40 authors, from every walk of life—including kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, scholars, etc.:

*Moses, a political leader, trained in the universities of Egypt*

*Peter, a fisherman*

*Amos, a herdsman*

*Joshua, a military general*

*Nehemiah, a cupbearer*

*Daniel, a prime minister*

*Luke, a doctor*

*Solomon, a king*



## CHAPTER ONE ♦ 17

- Matthew, a tax collector*  
*Paul, a rabbi*
4. *written in different places:*  
*Moses in the wilderness*  
*Jeremiah in a dungeon*  
*Daniel on a hillside and in a palace*  
*Paul inside a prison*  
*Luke while traveling*  
*John on the isle of Patmos*  
*others in the rigors of a military campaign*
  5. *written at different times:*  
*David in times of war*  
*Solomon in times of peace*
  6. *written during different moods: some writing from the heights of joy and others from the depths of sorrow and despair*
  7. *written on three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe*
  8. *written in three languages: Hebrew..., Aramaic..., and Greek...*
  9. *Finally, its subject matter includes hundreds of controversial topics. Yet, the biblical authors spoke with harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation. There is one unfolding story...<sup>1</sup>*

This *one unfolding story* is what we want to look at—simply and without theological jargon. By far the most unique thing about the Bible is that it claims to be God's own words.

**GOD-BREATHED**

Often referred to as Scripture, the Bible states that ...

*All Scripture is God-breathed...<sup>2</sup>* *2 Timothy 3:16 NIV*

The whole concept of God *breathing out* Scripture is a study in itself. Just as when one exhales his breath, and that breath comes from his innermost being, so ultimately all Scripture is to be viewed as the very product of God himself. God and his words are inseparable, which is one reason the Bible is often referred to as *God's Word*.

Highly simplified, it can be looked at this way. God told men what he wanted recorded and those men wrote it down. Most of these men were called *prophets*.

*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets...*

*Hebrews 1:1 NIV*

Today, we think of prophets as those who foretell the future, but in Bible times a prophet was a messenger who passed on God's



Whenever you see the text indented and italicized, like this, these are direct quotes taken from the Bible. Their location in the Bible is given in the small text at the end of each quotation, however we will not be reading these Bible references as we continue in our study.

CH1  
3.4

18 ♦ CHAPTER ONE

words to the people. Sometimes the message had to do with future events, but more often than not, it was concerned with daily living. God guided the prophets in such a way that what was recorded was precisely what he wanted written. At the same time, God allowed the human writer to record *His Word—God's Word*—in the prophet's own unique style, but to do so without error. These men were not free to add their own private thoughts to the message.

*...you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along...*  
 2 Peter 1:20–21 NIV

The phrase *carried along* is used elsewhere in the Bible in reference to the transporting of a paralyzed man.<sup>3</sup> Just as a disabled man could not walk by his own power, so the prophets did not write the Scripture at their own inclination. The Bible is clear on this point—it was God's message from beginning to end.

CH1  
3.5

CH1  
3.6



**Scroll/Papyrus** (Attention!)

Here is a scroll. (*Hold up the **scroll**.*) Scrolls were the forerunner of today's books.

This is papyrus. (*Hold up the **papyrus**.*) Under the right conditions, papyrus is very durable. Papyrus sheets would be glued together into a long page and then rolled up to create a scroll.

CH1  
3.7



**Corrupted & Uncorrupted Text**

(If in a group, pass out the "corrupted" / "uncorrupted" texts. Ask the students to determine the middle word in the copy they have received. If they're holding the "uncorrupted" one, the word will be "letters." (Because some will have a "corrupted" version, there will be some discussion as to which is correct.)

**Q** "How can we know which copy is correct?"  
**A** "We need to compare it to the original—here in **THE STRANGER**."

(For effect, take one of the "corrupted" handouts, crumple and discard it.) Any Scripture that was not copied correctly was destroyed.

The early scribes not only verified the middle **word** but they also checked the middle **letter** in order to ensure accuracy in their transcription of the Scriptures.

**EXTREME ACCURACY**

The prophets wrote God's words on a scroll, usually an animal skin or paper made from plant fiber. The originals were called *autographs*.<sup>1</sup> Since the autographs had a limited life span, copies were made of the scrolls. But the writers' awareness that what was being recorded was God's own Word resulted in one of the most remarkable reproduction jobs ever done. In writing the Hebrew text...

*They used every imaginable safeguard, no matter how cumbersome or laborious, to ensure the accurate transmission of the text. The number of **letters** in a book was counted and its middle letter was given. Similarly with the words, and again the middle word was noted.*<sup>4</sup>

This was done with both the copy and the original autograph to insure that they were exactly the same.<sup>2</sup>

These scribes were so accurate in their transcription that, when the Dead Sea Scrolls were found (written in 100 BC), and

**Dead Sea Scrolls**



100 BC

essentially no change  
in 1000 years  
of making copies

**Previous Oldest Manuscript**



900 AD

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compared with manuscripts resulting from centuries of copying and recopying to a period of time 1000 years later (900 AD), there were no significant differences in the text.<sup>5</sup>

Josephus, a Jewish historian from the first century A.D., summed it up for his people when he stated ... *how firmly we have given credit to those books of our own nation, is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it becomes natural to all Jews ... to esteem those books ... divine.*<sup>6</sup>

These men were absolutely convinced that to meddle with the text was to tamper with God. We have ample reason to be assured that what we have today is essentially the same as what the prophets wrote.

Truly, the Bible is a unique book by any standard. No wonder the Bible is ... *the most quoted, the most published, the most translated and the most influential book in the history of mankind.*<sup>7</sup>

### OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

As we begin to navigate through the Bible, it may be helpful to know that the Scriptures are divided into two major sections—the Old Testament and New Testament. Historically, the *Old Testament* portion was further sub-divided into another two<sup>8</sup> categories:

1. the Law of Moses (sometimes referred to as *The Torah, The Books of Moses, or The Law*)
2. the Prophets (Later on, a third section called *the Writings*, was sub-divided out of *the Prophets*.)

In the Scriptures, the phrase, the law and the prophets, is a way of referring to the entire Old Testament—a part which comprises approximately two-thirds of the Bible. The remaining one-third is referred to as the New Testament.

### GOD'S WORD

Remembering the biblical categories is not critical. The important thing to keep in mind is that the Bible claims to be God's Word—His message to mankind. We are told that through its pages we can become acquainted with God. Such a claim should cause even the most indifferent person to pause and consider what it has to say.

Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm ... Psalm 119:89 NKJV

