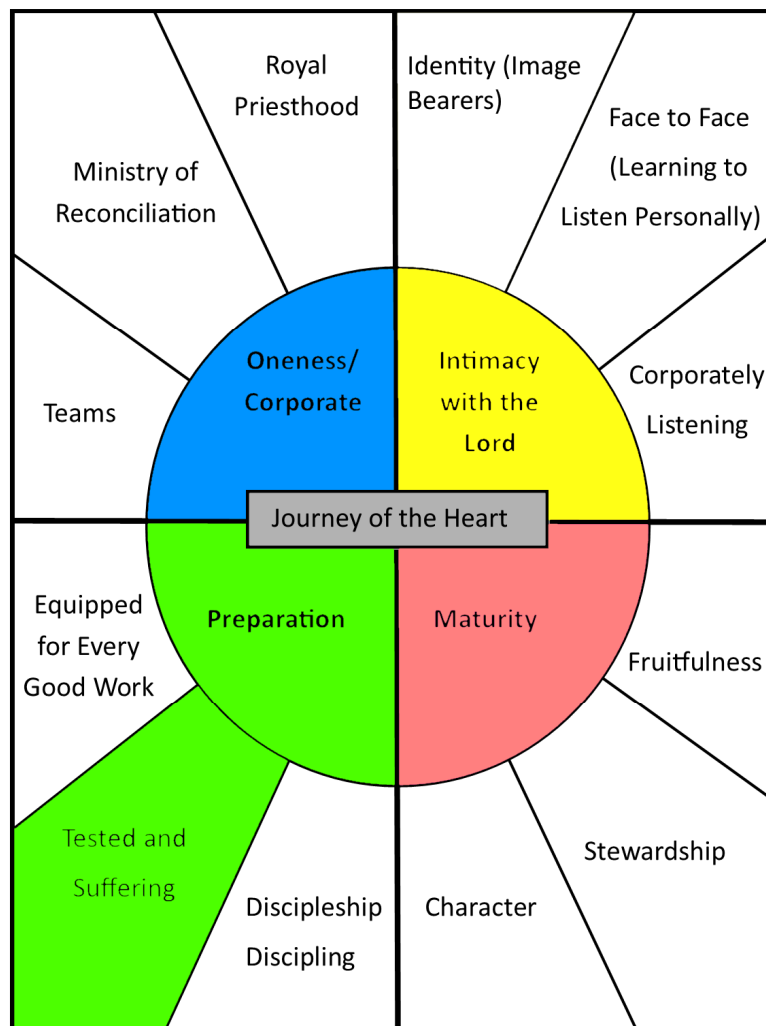


TESTING AND SUFFERING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To learn as Christ did, that suffering is a sacred trust when viewed properly, and to learn how to steward suffering.
- ❖ To recognize the resources that have been received for navigating this kind of season.
- ❖ To recognize the work of the Spirit in the midst of suffering and trials.
- ❖ To recognize how to walk alongside others in the midst of suffering Jesus' way and not in our own strength.



SCRIPTURE MEDITATION:

- Romans 8:18-39
- James 1
- I Peter 4
- I Peter 5:1-11 and 2 Timothy 2:1-13

WEEK 1

1. Do you recognize any coping mechanisms you have developed in order to deal with extended suffering? How is trust developed or destroyed in extended trials/suffering?
2. How have your coping strategies changed as you rely on Christ in suffering?
3. Who has helped sustain you in a long-term trial? (Your Aaron and Hur) How did they do this?
4. How does resurrection power help with the “fellowship of His suffering” in your life?

WEEK 2

1. How can it be true that we are shielded by God’s power, and at the same time we suffer grief in our trials? (1 Peter 1:3-9)
2. When has the Spirit allowed suffering to enter your life in order to bring about reconciliation?
3. Do you recognize the ways you are being tempted in the midst of suffering?
4. How do you return to joy when experiencing trials and suffering?

WEEK 3

1. How have you armed yourself as Christ did for suffering? How have you armed yourself with the *willingness* to suffer as Christ did?
2. How is the character of God reflected in the way you endure suffering?
3. Do you struggle with patterns of fear, shame or guilt as a result of a trial or suffering?
4. Who has been a Christ-like model of suffering for you?

WEEK 4

1. How has suffering influenced decisions you have made in leadership?
2. Are you comforted or dis comforted by the idea that suffering is part of your spiritual journey?
3. Have you walked alongside someone who is suffering? What did this look like and what did God teach you through it?
4. How well does the Body of Christ (church) endure suffering together? What coping strategies have been put in place that are not helpful to those suffering?

BONUS QUESTIONS:

1. How have you experienced the Spirit shaping your heart to reflect the same willingness Christ modeled? Where are you most likely to resist Him in the process?

2. How has endurance been developed in your life? How has the fruit of patience/long-suffering been developed in your character?
3. Where/how has the Spirit expanded your understanding or access to weapons which are not listed in Ephesians 6?
4. How can you gather all the lessons you have learned from suffering for your guidance and to share with others?