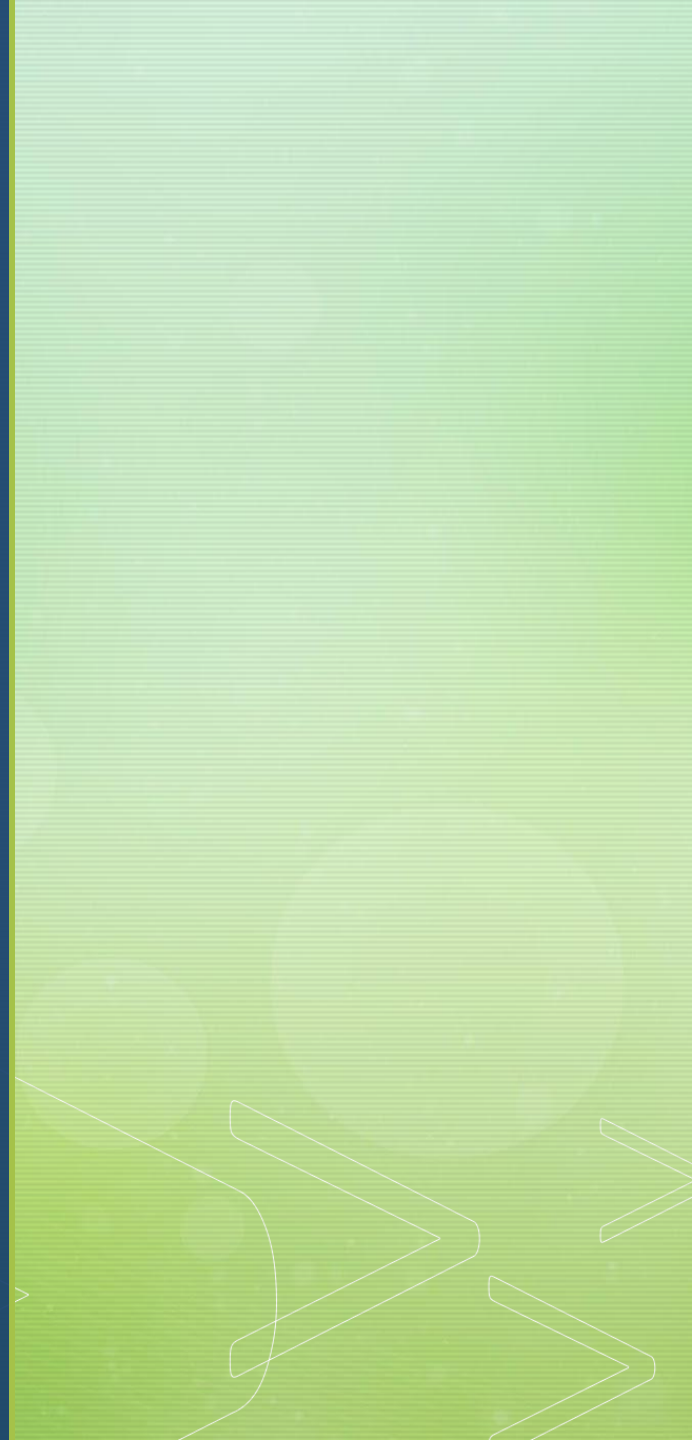


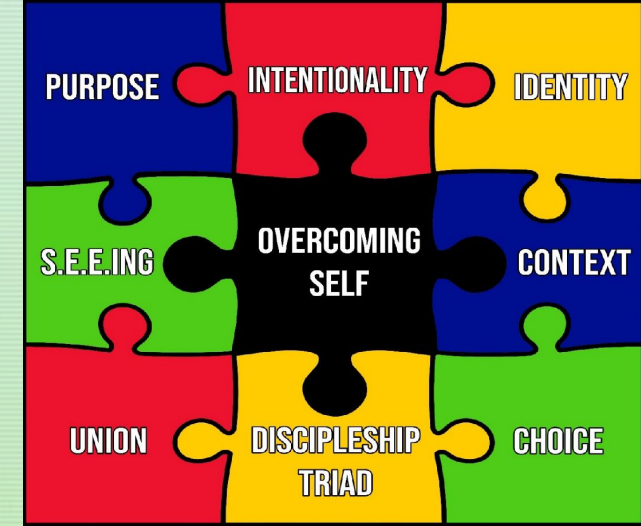
The Strategic Discipleship Workbook

# Session Six: Context



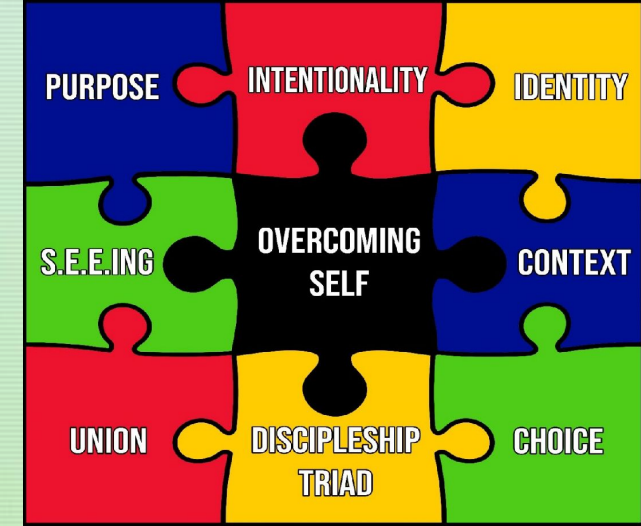
# Understanding Context

- The way we are wired: We understand *everything* by its Context.
- Our “Story”: Sense of self, communication w/others, understanding of community, relationships, meaning, daily events, and...*drumroll please*...eternal purpose and destiny. It is the only way we know how to think and relate.
- We are not all born with the same Context for understanding, therefore we cannot have the same Context as we grow, age, and mature.
- “All the world’s a stage”: Context is a backdrop & story plot tying us to the Director’s Vision.
- The Boat Exercise and vision as Context.
- He has put all things into your hands: Our “Life Story” is a write-your-own-ending mystery.
- Read last paragraph, pg. 60 together.
- Papa is the original Storyteller, and He has passed on His creative DNA to us.
- Where do we get the raw material for our story?
- Our Story, but His life.



# D1: The Role of Assumptions

- Assumptions makes going through life on autopilot possible, frequently by-passing conscious decision-making.
- Comment: “Auto-Pilot Bypass Mode” is the strategy of those whose preferred method of aiming is to shoot from the hip and those who don’t want to be bothered by the *business* of living so that they may enjoy the *entertainment* of living.
- Confirmation Bias: “We see best what we expect to see, what agrees with our assumptions. We see poorly or not at all what we do not expect & does not agree with our assumptions.”
- Discuss: “How could Confirmation Bias work for/against our discipleship quest? How would it affect us if our unexamined assumptions have their origin in emotional pain or abuse?”
- The value of examining our assumptions in discipleship is that our behavior & attitudes are herded in predetermined directions by assumptions running in the background of our mental programming. Buried assumptions/filters, often in the form of vows, keep us from experiencing fresh revelation & impede growth because the new information from the Holy Spirit does not match what we have already accepted as “the way church is done.”



# Why Are Assumptions Useful?

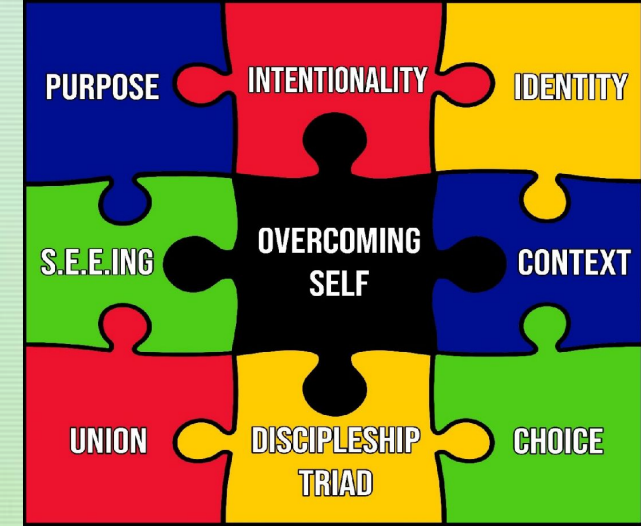
- Shortcut decisions to enable more efficient (not necessarily more effective or accurate) response to multiple, simultaneous stimuli
- Filter extraneous information to limit overload
- Limit time needed to make certain decisions by relegating them to “settled” status, and therefore enabling an automatic response
- Serve as points of agreement for like-minded people
- Serve as a gatekeeper to let in information with which we agree, and keep out information with which we disagree
- Help us form expectations that serve to interpret facts (e.g., “We see best that which we expect to see,” and, “We understand most what we have already accepted”)
- Work invisibly (in our subconscious or unconscious mind) unless/ until the host sets about to uncover their own assumptions

# Examples of Background Assumptions

- Is God active in the world and in the experience of individual believers?
- Is there a “Grand Plan” (God’s Program) directing history and the Church? How does it affect you?
- What are the implications of the dynamic interaction of God’s Program and your experience?
- Is the reason for existence and the meaning of life knowable? What do you assume to be the meaning of all life in general, and “your life” in particular?
- What is the interaction of God’s Will and your will? Are there implications for your experience?
- What is Sovereignty? To whom does it apply and in what measure? Is God sovereign or are you?
- Is the eternal dimension real? If yes, can we access and interact with it, and how?
- Who decides what is “good” and what is “evil”? How does your answer jibe with Genesis 3:5?
- What did Jesus mean when He prayed for us Oneness with Him and the Father? What “rules and parameters” apply to that Oneness, either eternal or time/space/matter (T/S/M)? What does that portend for our thinking of ourselves as Independent Selves?
- From where did your spirit-being originate, and where is “home”? What are the implications of your assumption? Do you simultaneously exist in two dimensions, T/S/M and the eternal?
- When/How were you “chosen in Him since before the foundation of the world”? When/How was your name “written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (**Ephesians 1:4, Revelation 13:8 and 17:8**)?
- What is the role of “the flesh” and “self” in our T/S/M experience? What makes “me,” me?
- Who is your Father, and when did He/he become Father? Can you choose your father?
- Is there an ultimate/final goal of life? If yes, what is it and how do you achieve it?

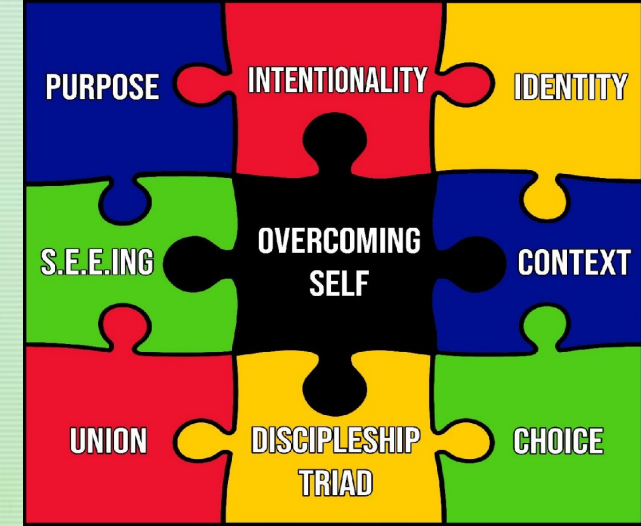
# Positive Context Guides

- “Life is a classroom.”
- **Proverbs 25:2**, “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter.”
- **Colossians 3:3**, “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- **Hebrews 12:2**, “looking unto Jesus...who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross”
- **Galatians 2:20**, “My old identity has been co-crucified with Christ and no longer lives. And now the essence of this new life is no longer mine, for the Anointed One lives his life through me—we live in union as one! My new life is empowered by the faith of the Son of God who loves me so much that he gave himself for me, dispensing his life into mine!” (The Passion Translation)
- **Revelation 19:7**, “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”



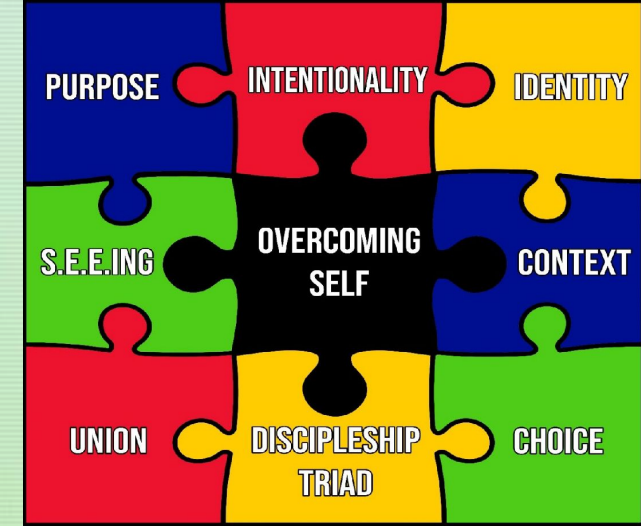
# Positive Context Guides (cont'd)

- **Philippians 2:12**, “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”
- **Romans 8:28**, “All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His Purpose.”
- **Luke 9:23-24**, “<sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.’”
- **Revelation 3:21**, “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”
- **Psalms 84:5**, “Blessed is the man whose heart is set on pilgrimage.”
- **John 18:36**, “Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight...but now My kingdom is **not** from here.’”



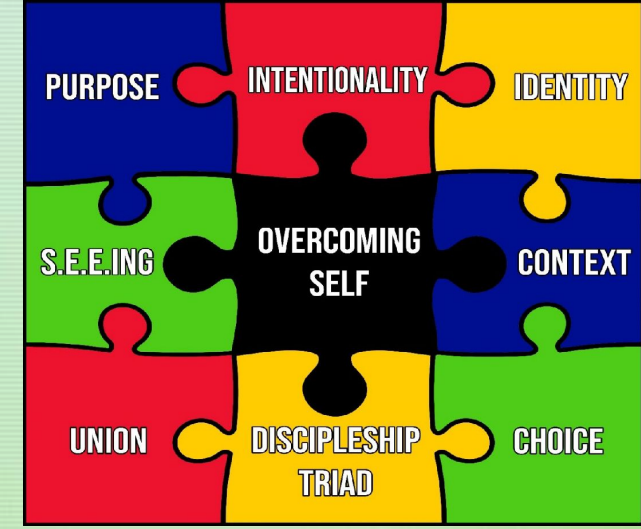
# Negative Context Guides

- “Life for its own sake”
- “Self as God”
- **Genesis 3:5**, “you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
- **1 Corinthians 1:18**, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”
- **1 Corinthians 2:14**, “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”
- “Truth changes as culture changes.”
- **If you do not choose your own context, one will be chosen for you by the world system!**

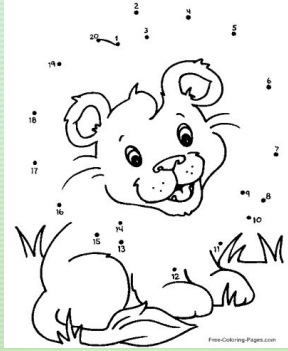




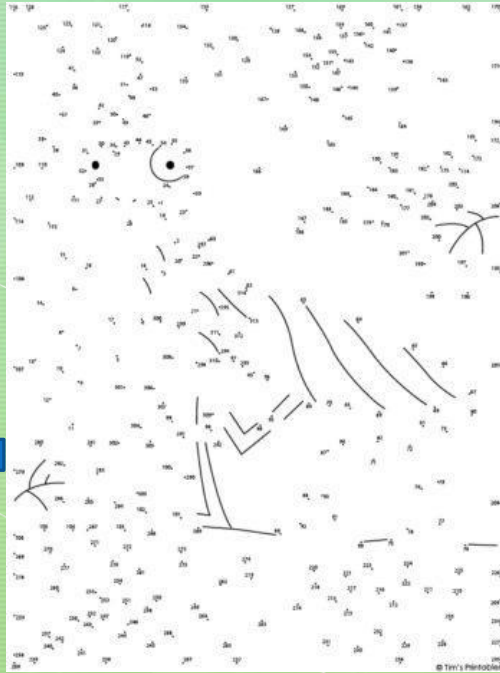
# Connecting Dots, Context, & Complexity



“Child”

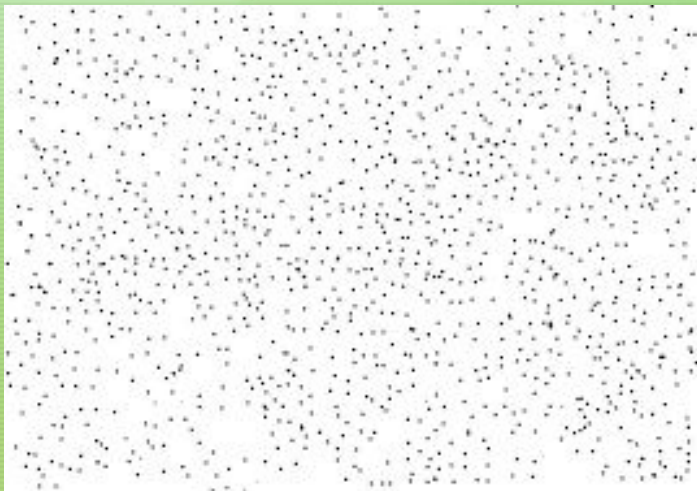


“Adolescent”



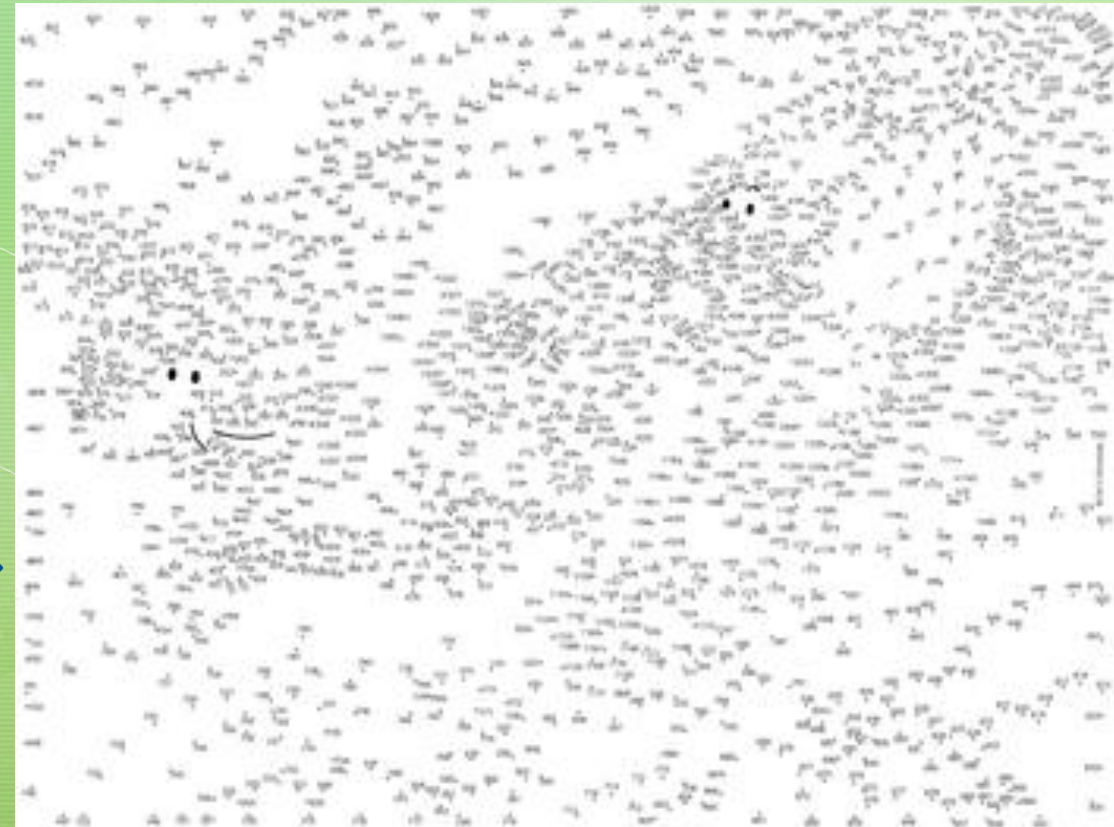
Context and Riddles/Mysteries:  
“You walk into a square room...”

At What Stage Are You?



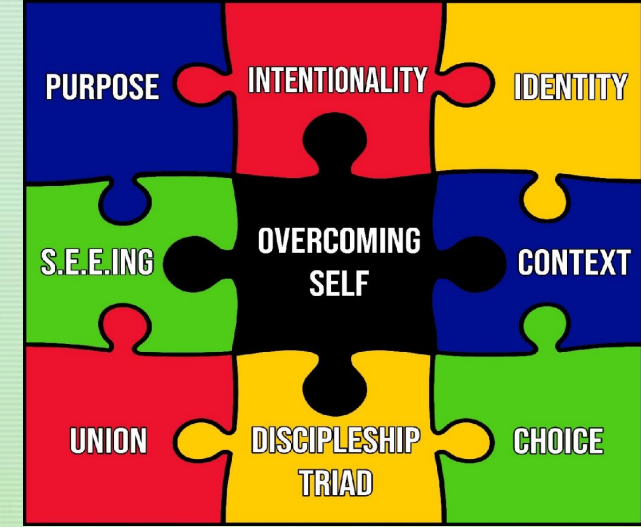
“Young Man”

“Father”



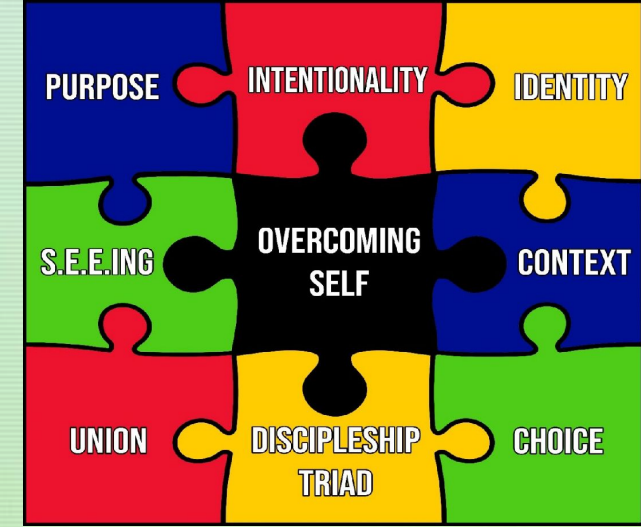
# Day 2: Five Context Elements

- These five elements are the primary components that define the backdrop of our real-life drama: 1) Purpose, 2) Perspective, 3) Path, 4) People, and 5) Passion.
- These make excellent journaling outline headings!
- Discuss: Circumstances are like test questions—*they are what they are*. However, the Kingdom curriculum that we are learning, and the transformation we are experiencing is trained in us by our *response to them*.
- The question a serious disciple **never** wants to have to ask: “*How did I get here???*”
- Read together and discuss the last paragraph on pg. 64.
- Have you ever had a “came to himself” moment? How do you ensure that you never forget such a moment and regress?



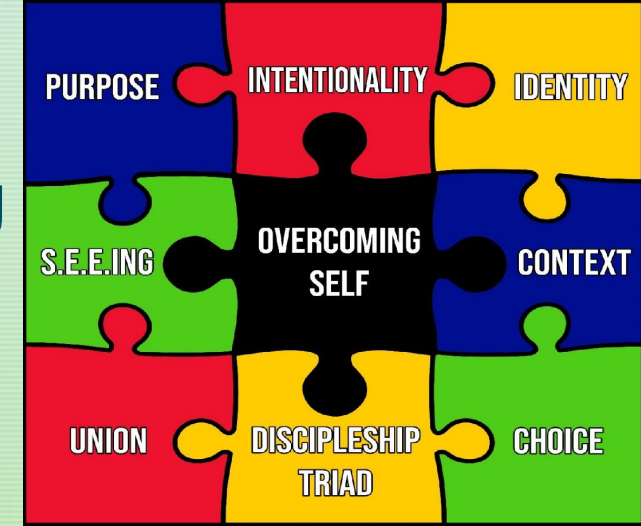
# D3-4: Context Elements Detailed

- Prov. 4:23, “Guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” What is your heart? (Hint: **Not** your emotions!)
- To guard my heart is to guard my consciousness and my affections, filter what is welcomed and hangs around in there, and is the place from where I perceive and interpret the outside world.
- Guarding your heart is accomplished in two aspects: 1) Controlling the environment to which you expose your mind, will, and emotions to the extent possible; and 2) Controlling the access of the external environment to your internal environment.
- Purpose is not living “life for its own sake” (LFIOS). That is purpose serving *me* rather than *me* serving *my Purpose*. LFIOS focuses on no higher purpose than *to collect and enjoy day-to-day experiences*. It is “living **a** good life” and “**the** good life,” and with *my* happiness, stuff, career, religion, family, social standing, and even “*my* ministry” as the goal.
- **WARNING!** LFIOS activities/accomplishments will not transfer from this reality to the next.
- LFIOS is difficult for believers to see, much less be free from, because it is so prevalent in this reality that it is recognized as “the way to do life” in this world.



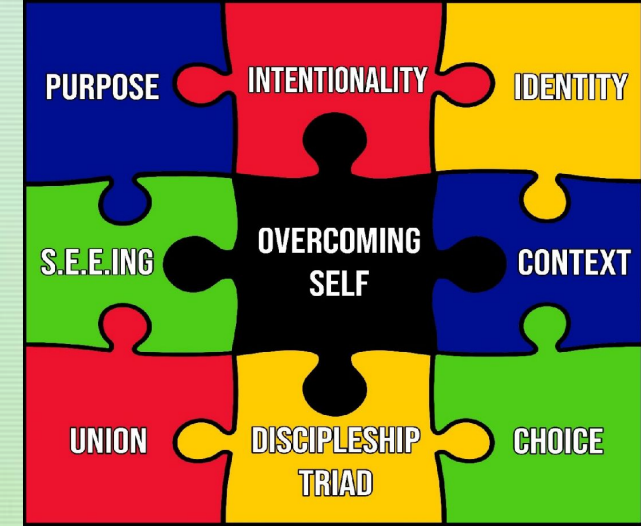
# D3-4: Context Elements Cont'd

- The function of other people in the world is for you to practice laying down your life for them! People are the target of the “deny [your]self” actions required by Jesus in **Matthew 16:23**.
- Discuss: “God comforts or afflicts us with people according to our needs.”
- What does this mean?: “Until we make it a discipleship *habit* to remember the People Context, positive *and* negative people interactions will hold power over us.”
- “Life is a classroom” (LiaC) as a Perspective component of Context
- LiaC is the “boots on the ground” struggle of our 50,000’ Purpose overview. It is the place where ‘high ideals’ are converted into “everyday ordeals.”
- OMG moment: “When we continually view our circumstances as learning opportunities instead of just another beatdown, we enable transformation into His image. It is a healthy “self” focus, one that emphasizes attention on ourselves as a transitional state, and only until we learn the lesson.”



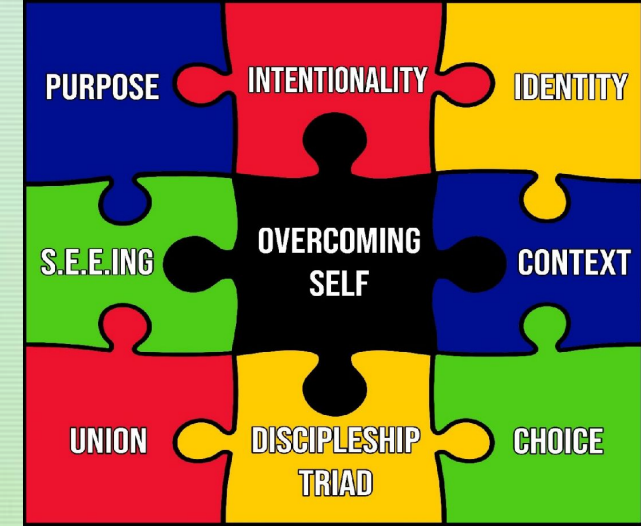
# D3-4: Context Elements Cont'd

- “If People are the “deny [your]self” Context Component of **Matthew 16:23**, our Path constitutes the “take up [your] cross” component.
- Our “Path” through the wilderness of life is as specific for us as our fingerprints” Read **Psalm 139:2-4** together.
- Path = Consistent Themes.
- **Remember:** You’ve been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20) and, therefore, have no life that belongs to you, but you do have a personal Path. You have no life that is exclusively yours, but you do have an exclusive Story!
- OMG moment: “When we continually view our circumstances as learning opportunities instead of just another beatdown, we enable transformation into His image. It is a healthy “self” focus, one that emphasizes attention on ourselves as a transitional state, and only until we learn the lesson.”
- Passion is another of those words the world has diluted by wrong and overuse (like awesome, literally, . It means, “An idea/concept that irresistibly motivates us to action.” It has nothing to do with emotion!
- Sometimes our true passion is not what we think it is. Criteria: No *movement*, no *passion*!



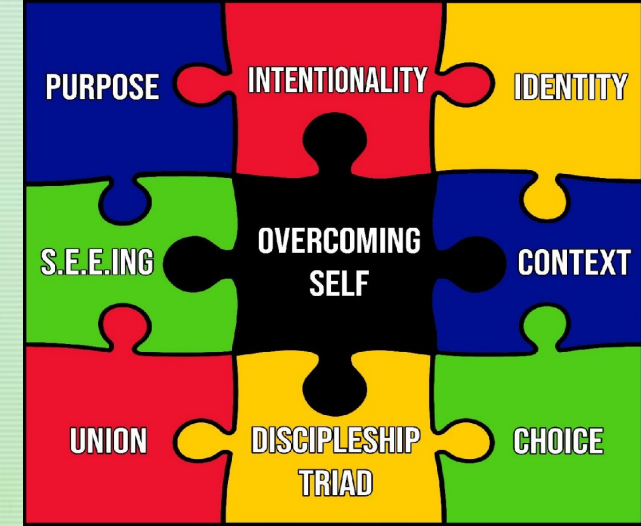
# D5: Eternal Context for Life

- Our struggle is to maintain an unnatural, other-worldly mindset centered on our true home and ultimate destination.
- Jesus declared “My Kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36); so, if we are to meditate on & understand His Kingdom, we have to become comfortable with other-worldly Context.
- *“Think about it: How would having a mind, will, and emotions fixated on this current world prepare us for the next? It cannot and it will not.”*
- *“Seeking the mysteries of the Kingdom and Papa’s Program is the *uber*-Context element; that is, it must be embraced to trigger and activate the other five we have studied.”*
- *“The ‘veil torn’ (Matt. 27:50-52) life-Context is *huge* for us. It means that there is no longer an artificial impediment to returning home. It means that we have a *standing* invitation in two senses: 1) our “standing” in Papa’s grace by Jesus’ blood is our authority and passport between realms; and, 2) we have a “standing invitation” to visit home through the veil whenever we choose—and ultimately to pass through the veil of the flesh to take up permanent residence there once this wilderness pilgrimage is complete.*



# D5: Eternal Context for Life (Cont'd)

- Our justification by His blood is only the initial step—there is much, much more to our “saved by His life” process (**Romans 5:10**).
- **John 3:1-5**, Jesus explained the mystery to Nicodemus. He made it clear that our new birth happens in two stages: First, we see the Kingdom, then we *enter*.
- “New birth and the resulting citizenship are into a different dimension, one of spirit. That is why Jesus came—to make a way and to take us home.”
- “We *cannot* have more than one hometown—it just does not work that way however much we try to bend rules and force it. Pursuing Papa’s mysteries is not some “woo-woo,” tin-foil hat activity. It is learning the rules and ways of our hometown.”
- “Pursuing Papa’s mysteries is not some ‘woo-woo,’ tin-foil hat activity. It is learning the rules and ways of our hometown. ‘Supernatural’ just means natural in some other reality. Faith is ‘the realization of things *hoped for*, the confidence of things *not seen*’ (**Hebrews 11:1**). Faith’s definition features its other-worldly ‘things not seen’ substance.”
- Mysteries are hidden for a reason: His endorsement of our “treasure hunt” process.



# Next Week: Choice

