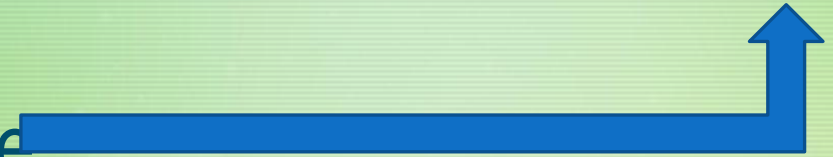
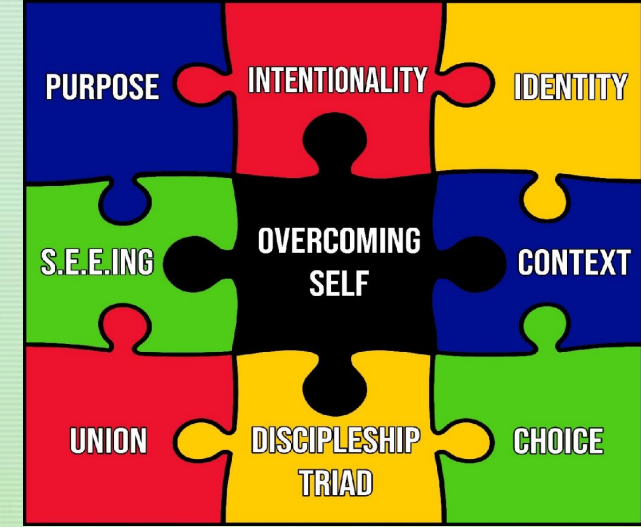


The Strategic Discipleship Workbook

Session Seven: Choice

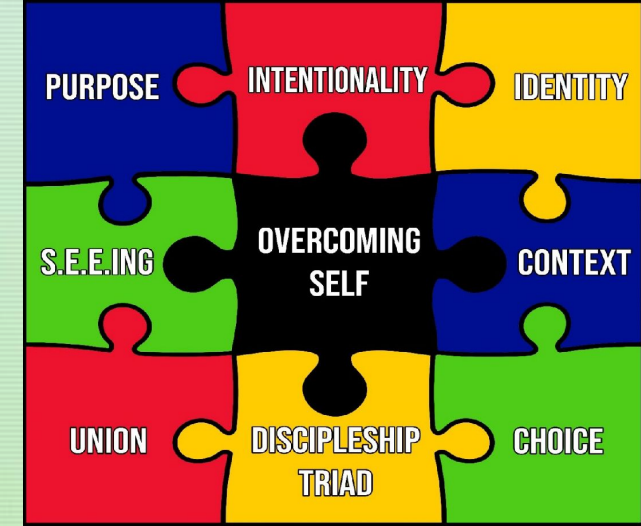
Fill in the Blank:

- Life is a series of _____.
- Who wants to take a stab at it? “What is the relationship of this week’s discipleship element—Choice—to each of the other puzzle pieces?”
- Quote: “We are very keen to assert our belief in freedom of Choice. Sometimes, though, we are not so keen to understand the ramifications of having such freedom.”



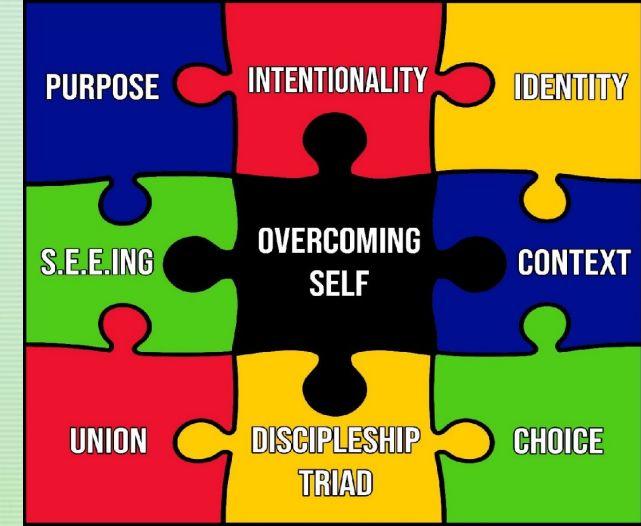
Understanding Choice

- Autopilot, Assumptions, and Choice.
- Spiritual Mind options are not Autopilot friendly. Why not?
- Step 1: Recognizing that we have choices. Question: How does “the flesh” bully us? First Choice: Be the “chooser,” not a “choosee.”
- Rubber meets the road: Making Choices is the business of discipleship.
- One accurate functional definition of “life”: “A series of Choices that determine future Kingdom responsibilities.” **How?**
- The nature of Choice and define the process as one over-arching/governing Choice of “Carnal Mind vs. Spiritual Mind” (CMvSM) with many, many daily manifestations.
- Read Romans 7:19. The Choice Space is where the “will to do” and the “that I practice” are merged—**OR NOT!**
- The power struggle in the Choice Space is between Independent Self and Union Self.



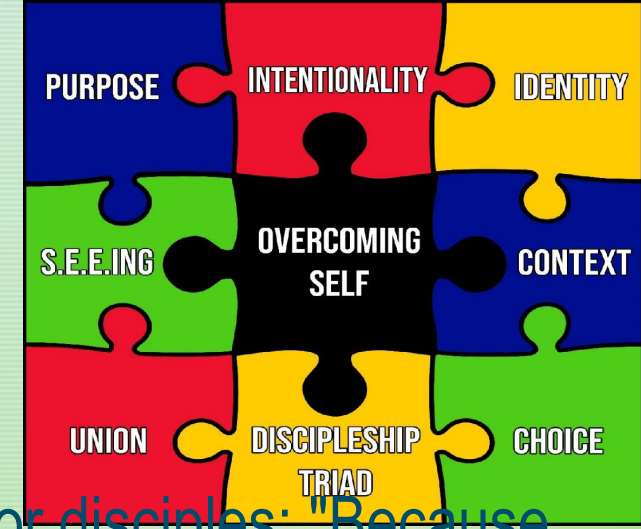
Choice As Transformation Mechanism

- The age-old question: “Are we ‘puppets’ or ‘free moral agents’?” (Romans 6:16-18)
- Freedom of Choice = Limited Sovereignty
- Read John 13:3: “All things into your hands!”
- Read Romans 5:9-10: We are justified by His Blood, but we are saved by His life!
- Read Colossians 1:27, and Romans 8:28-30. Papa has predestined the *process* of salvation by the transfusion of His life into ours. He has neither guaranteed glorification nor made our Choices unnecessary. The process makes our Choices possible and profitable.
- What is the Carnal Mind? **Romans 8:5-6**, “⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” The carnal mind is not primarily sinful but primarily obsessed with things pertaining to our flesh “container” and this Time/Space/Matter world. It is self-centered, self-preoccupied, self-doting, self-interested.



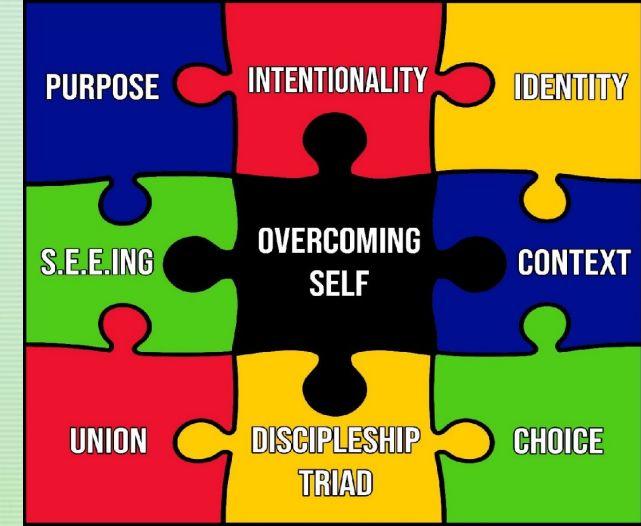
Nature of the Carnal Mind

- Discipleship is all about the Choice Space; and the Choice Space is all about whose voice you elect to obey, carnal or spiritual mind.
- The nature of our flesh/carnal mind to relate to the world around us *only* on the basis of our five senses—that's the flesh's reality.
- **Romans 8:7-8**, why the carnal mind is not an acceptable mindset for disciples: "Because the carnal mind is *enmity* against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." The flesh and Carnal Mind are a matched set—when you get one you get the other.
- Last 15-Minutes, pg. 89: "Our bodies are hard-wired to depend on our senses for survival, and all that lies beyond the five senses is suspect and non-reality as the flesh defines it. This strong bias related to our senses gives rise to disbelief—an *active bias/antagonism against* matters of spirit that cannot be measured or necessarily observed in the same manner. Here, I risk oversimplification, but this bias is the chief source of our spirit vs. flesh conflict at its most fundamental level. Scripture calls this conflict "enmity." It is present in all human beings until, and unless, the person makes an affirmative decision to suspend disbelief. Said another way, no one can believe until the flesh's natural disbelief is intentionally counteracted and the carnal mind is transcended. (Enmity: a feeling or condition of hostility; hatred; ill will; animosity; antagonism.)"



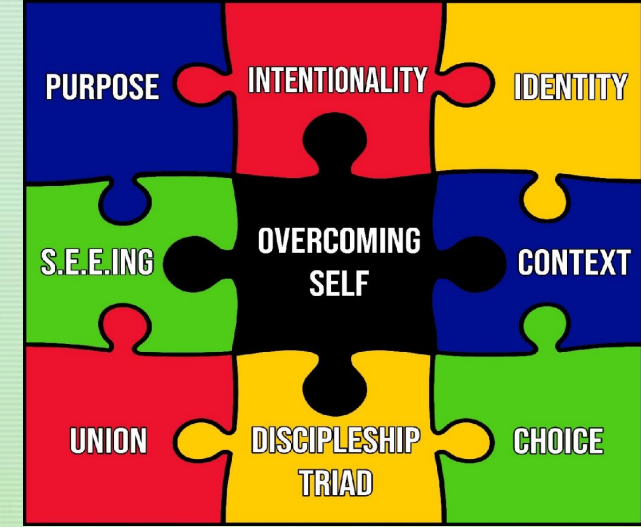
D1: The Choice Space Explained

- Visual model to aid understanding.
- "...[A] virtual space between the carnal mind on one side and the spiritual mind on the other while we stand in the middle scratching our head, working through our rationalizations, and contemplating the choice between two opposing alternatives.
- What is a "model" in this application? "A visual representation of an abstract idea."
- **"Romans Chapters 5-8, Paul lays out the 'between our ears' dilemma that plays out in daily life—even his! It boils down to the disconnect that we identify with the values, ways, and character of the Kingdom and accept them as good, right, and perfect, but then we make choices that do not match our espoused values."**
- The *first* skill we need to improve is recognizing when life and circumstances present us with a Choice to make.
- Living obliviously to our choice-making responsibility *always* results in defaulting to our carnal mind.



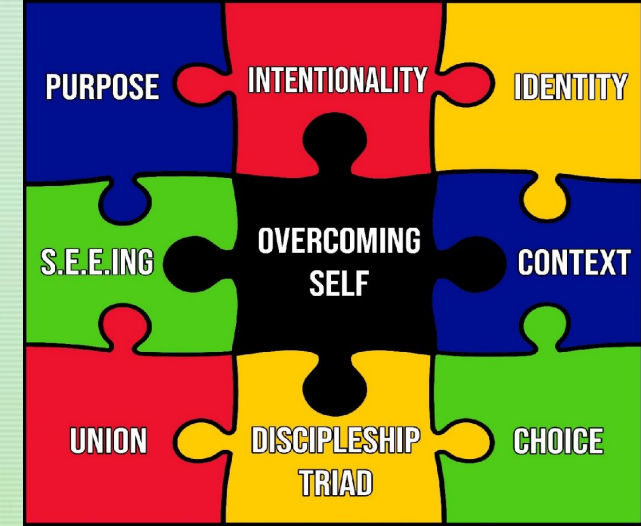
How Choice Interacts w/ Trust

- Principle: Choice follows Trust. It's possible to trust and not follow, but it is not possible to consistently follow where you do not trust.
- Functional definition of Trust: Form of expression of our personal security that *invests our* confidence in another's commitment to integrity. It is hope turned personal and given a name.
- Trust is a *predisposition to cooperate, even obey*, based on confidence that the other has one's well-being at heart.
- Natural gravitational pull is toward self-trust, trust in man, and/or flesh-trust perspectives.
- Trust in God is *always perceived* as a risk in our time/space/matter (T/S/M) reality until we faithfully persevere to build the strength of our grip on the eternal.
- “We do not need to be evil, depraved, or atheistic to live under the life curse of self-trust; we just have to be unintentional, unplanned, or apathetic in our response to God, and we will naturally gravitate toward the negative. Such is the nature and influence of the flesh—its natural activity is to corrupt, its natural interest in all things egocentric, its natural state is *unbelief*.”



The Choice Space Model

- The Choice Space is about developing the skill to: 1) recognize when choice opportunities exist; 2) see the choices from both the carnal and spiritual mind perspectives; and 3) habitually choose the spiritual mind action.



Independent-Self vs. Union-Self Continuum



Independent Self

Union Self

-

- "My life"
- "Life for its own sake"
- Thirst for recognition
- Pursuit of happiness, possessions, etc.
- Identity = sum of all fleshly factors
- Hopes in this life
- Trust in power
- Trust in riches
- Grasping
- Focus on problems
- Eyes on circumstances
- Eyes on the world
- Uncontrolled thoughts
- "Hope" for hope
- Seeks comfort
- "Entertain me!"

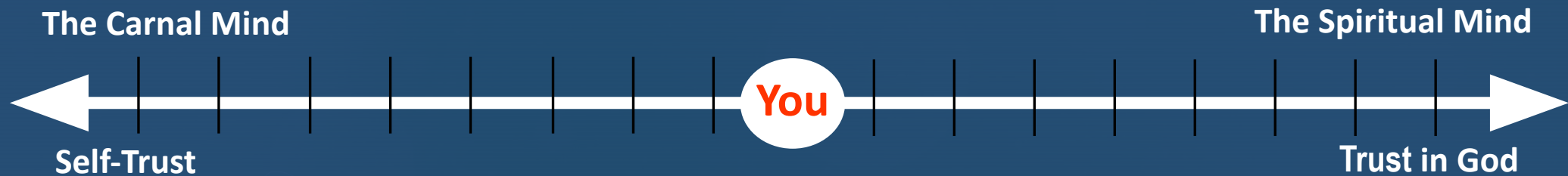
THE CHOICE SPACE

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- "I live...yet not I"
- Life engaged in God's Program
- Humility
- Life is a classroom for learning to reign
- Identity = who God says I am
- Hopes in eternal dimension
- Trust in mercy
- Trusts in God's provision
- Empty yourself
- Focus on His Word
- Eyes fixed above
- Focus on Goodness of the Lord
- Philippians 4:8 thinking
- Lay hold of hope
- Seeks maturity
- "Teach me!"

The Choice Space as a Discipleship Strategy

Locus of Trust Continuum



—

Factors Leading to Self-Trust

- “Life for its own sake”
- Cynicism
- Unbelief
- Limited possibilities
- Values power
- Trust in riches
- Grasping
- Focus on problems
- Eyes on circumstances
- Eyes on the world
- Uncontrolled thoughts
- “Hope” for hope
- Seeks information
- “Up by my bootstraps” thinking

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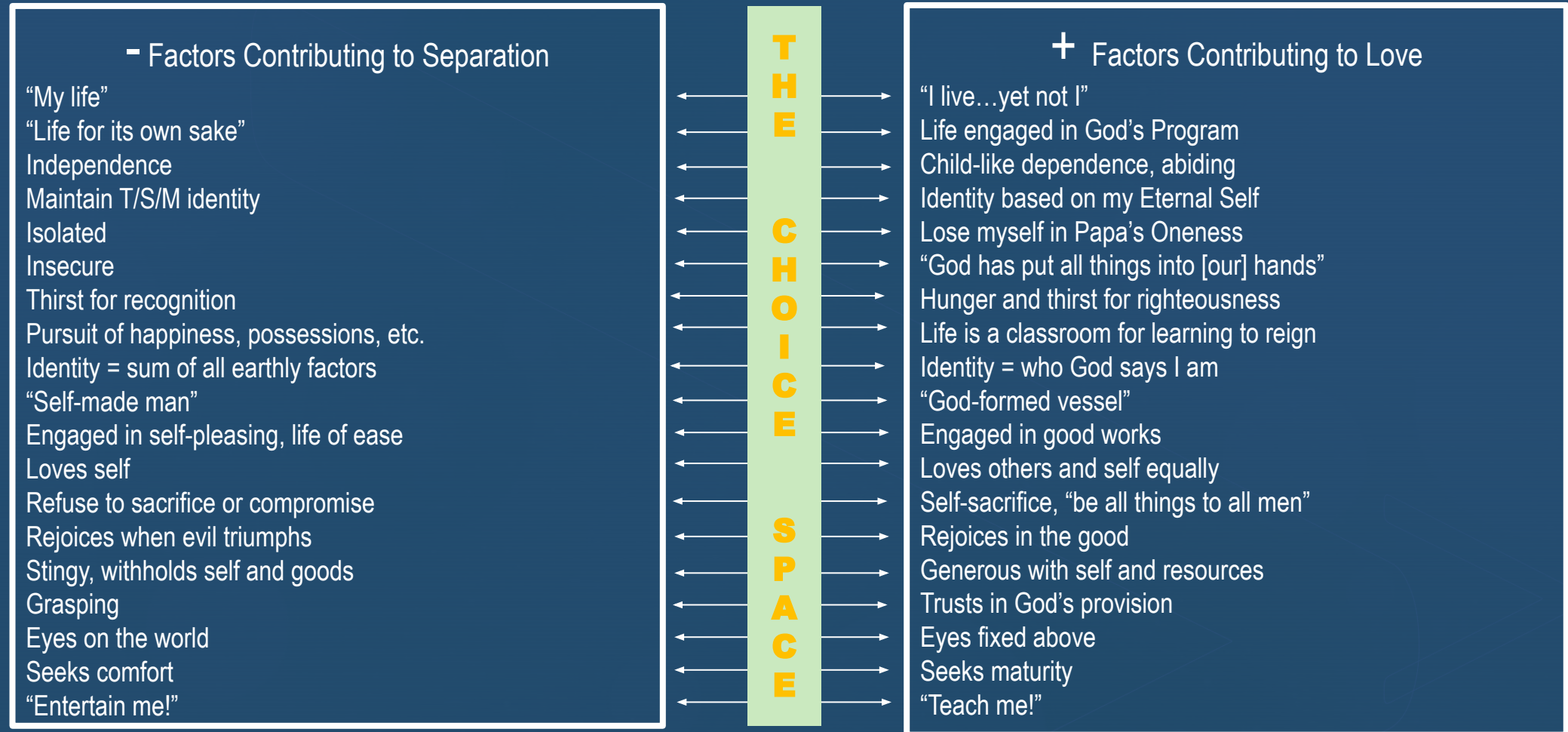
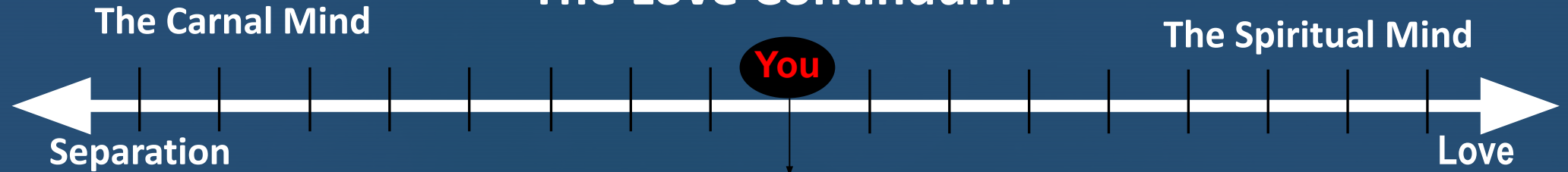
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Factors Leading to Trust in God

- Life engaged in God’s Program
- Hope
- Belief
- Unlimited possibilities
- Values Mercy
- Trust in God’s provision
- Empty yourself
- Focus on His Word
- Eyes fixed above
- Focus on Goodness of the Lord
- Philippians 4:8 thinking
- Lay hold of hope
- Seeks understanding
- Promotion comes from the Lord

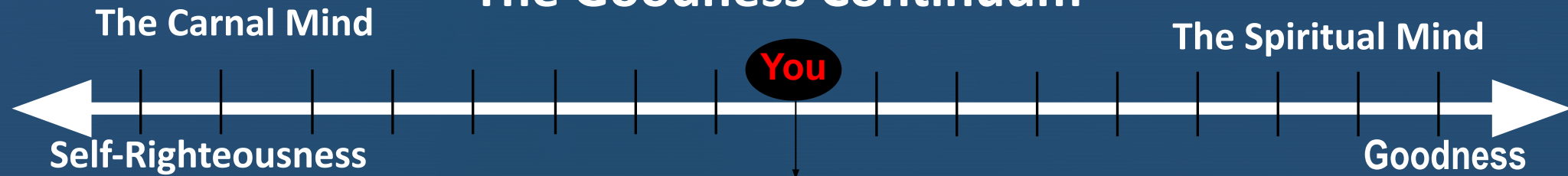
Choice Space and the FOTS

The Love Continuum



Choice Space and the FOTS

The Goodness Continuum



- Factors Leading to Self-Righteousness

- Light from their own source
- Judges sin and sinners
- Seeks vengeance
- Exalted view of themselves
- Wants to be seen of men
- Loves to be honored
- Thirst for recognition
- Sits in the seat of honor
- Religion is rule-based law
- Feels superior to others
- Active in dead works and human causes
- Advertises their good deeds
- Looks for reward in this life
- Loves self
- Refuse to sacrifice or compromise
- Walks in darkness

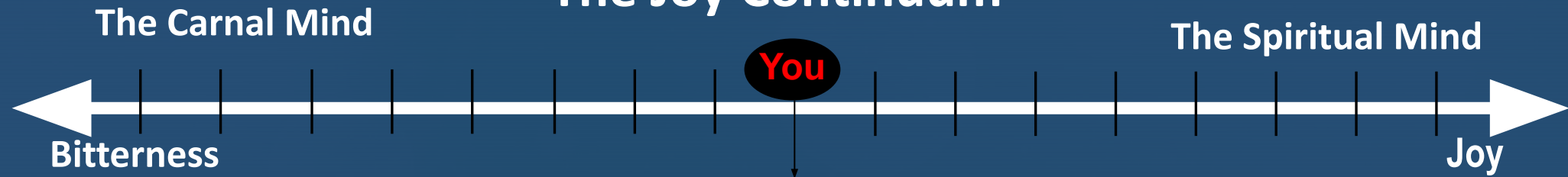
THE CHOICE SPACE

+ Factors Contributing to Goodness

- True Light shining through me
- Loves mercy
- Loves justice
- Walks humbly with God
- Want God to shine, themselves invisible
- Love to be unknown
- Hunger and thirst for righteousness
- Patiently waits for exaltation
- Embraces grace as Papa's gift
- Embraces all men as brothers
- Walks in good works prepared by Papa
- Performs in secret for God only
- Lays up treasure in heaven
- Loves others and self
- Self-sacrifice, "be all things to all men"
- Walks in glorious light

Choice Space and the FOTS

The Joy Continuum



- Factors Contributing to Bitterness:

- Entitlement
- Independence
- Frustration
- Uncontrolled thinking
- Focus on self/self-pity
- Preserve life
- Easily gives up
- Reactive
- Complain and whine
- Avoid/Escape from trials
- Live for the moment
- Trusts in present circumstances
- Poverty spirit (limited possibilities)
- "Feel it all..."

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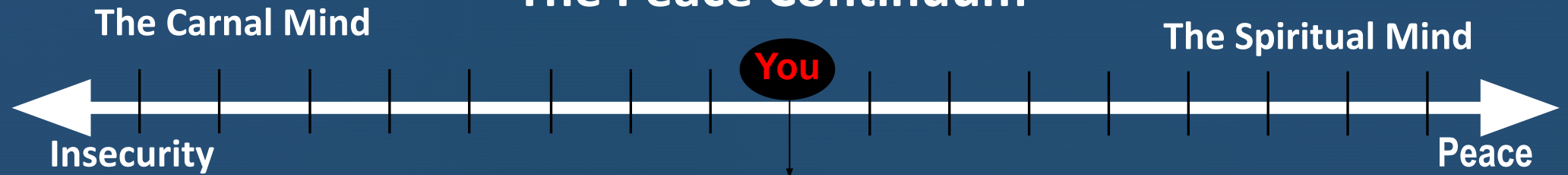
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+ Factors Contributing to Joy:

- Thankful, grateful
- Life engaged in God's Program
- Understanding the purpose of suffering
- "Whatever things" thinking (Phil. 4:8)
- Lose self in Papa's Oneness
- Lose life for His sake (Luke 9:4)
- Faithful, persevering
- Patient
- Rejoice!
- Endure hardship like a good soldier
- Contextualizes present in terms of future
- Trusts in God's promises
- "All things" thinking (Romans 8:32)
- "Count it all..."

Choice Space and the FOTS

The Peace Continuum



-Factors Contributing to Insecurity:

- Misplaced identity
- Independence
- Over-compensation
- Anxiety
- Focus on self
- Control everything
- Puts up walls of protection
- Suspicious
- Strength is self and my abilities
- Unable to commit
- Defends when wrong
- Unable to relax

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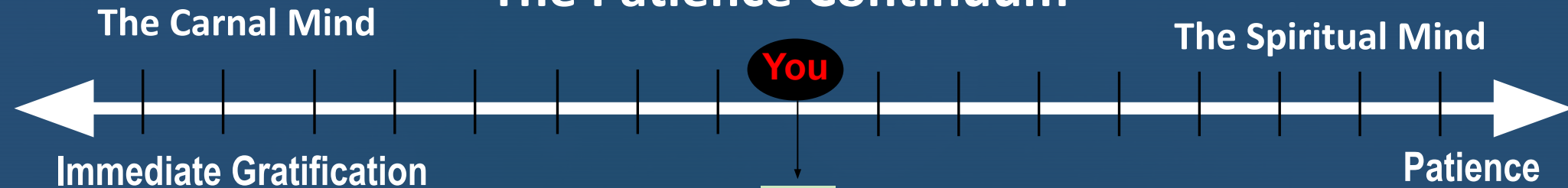
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+ Factors Contributing to Peace:

- Identity based on God's word
- Child-like dependence
- "Be who you are"
- Low stress
- Focus on who I really am
- Trust Papa to be in control
- Unguarded, approachable
- Trusting
- Weak in my flesh, strong in the Spirit
- Takes risks on people and love
- Repents when wrong
- Enters into rest

Choice Space and the FOTS

The Patience Continuum



- Factors Contributing to Gratification:

- Obsessed with “my needs”
- Acts on frustration
- Sets unnecessary deadlines
- Inadvisable expectations
- Inflexible
- Focus on schedule
- Expects perfection
- Agitated
- Demanding

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+ Factors Contributing to Patience:

- Considers the needs of others also
- Delays response
- Does not rush through life
- Relaxed, appropriate expectations
- Flexible
- Focus on people
- Understands appropriate performance
- Peaceful
- Gracious

Choice Space and the FOTS

The Kindness Continuum



- Factors Contributing to Disrespect:

- Myopic focus on self
- Deserving and entitled
- Under-values what we have received
- Pouty, inconsistent, erratic
- Lashes out when wronged
- Returns evil for evil
- Always expects to be well-treated
- Surly
- Ignores sowing & reaping principle
- Arrogant
- Defends when wrong
- Abusive
- Negative mindset
- Competition mindset

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+ Factors Contributing to Kindness:

- Sense of awe at God's creation
- Humble
- Sees the big picture of Papa's gifts to us
- Centered on a foundation of gratitude
- Patient when wronged
- Returns good for all treatment, evil/good
- Considers other's circumstances
- Pleasant, encouraging, affirming
- Understands sowing & reaping principle
- Considerate
- Repents when wrong
- Encouraging
- Positive, optimistic, finds good
- "Plenty for all" mindset

Choice Space and the FOTS

The Faithfulness Continuum



- Factors Contributing to Brokenness:

- Focus on self and pain
- Gives up easily
- No strength of spirit
- Easily distracted by their own issues
- Steeped in self-pity
- No stamina
- Arrested by obstacles
- Weepy
- Unreliable
- Talks a good game
- Insecure and overcompensating
- Wavering
- Negative mindset
- Victimized

THE CHOICE SPACE

+ Factors Contributing to Faithfulness:

- Focus on mission and vision
- Unrelenting determination
- Empowered by the Holy Spirit
- Keeps attention and heart focused
- Immersed in a sense of a larger purpose
- Gritty, spunky
- Creatively overcomes obstacles
- Joyful
- Trustworthy
- Fights the good fight!
- Secure and humble
- Fiercely loyal
- Positive, optimistic, finds good
- Warrior spirit

Choice Space and the FOTS

The Meekness Continuum



- Factors Contributing to Self-Assertive:

- Maintains Independence
- “Takes the bull by the horns”
- Selfish Aggression
- Always has the answer—never wrong
- Flash emotions
- Insecure
- Controlled by spontaneous behavior
- Must be center of attention
- Skewed leadership definition
- Positional thinking
- “Organization serves me”
- Wavering
- Impatient and demanding
- Scrutinizes others’ faults

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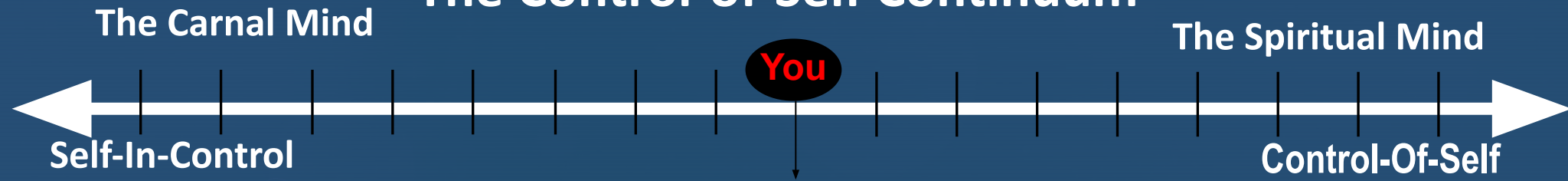
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+ Factors Contributing to Meekness:

- Union
- Faith—let God fight your battles
- Yield to Spirit—“No reputation”
- Teachable/Correctable
- Slow to speak, slow to anger
- Unshakably confident
- Thinking, intentional
- Contentment—either as appropriate
- Servant leadership
- Considers the mission before position
- Deference
- Fiercely loyal
- Patient and accommodating
- Looks to the log in their own eye

Choice Space and the FOTS

The Control-of-Self Continuum



- Factors Contributing to Self in Control:

- Maintains Independence
- Insecure in God's Love/acceptance
- Manipulates others for self-gain
- Seeks immediate gratification
- Flash emotions
- Truth interpreted as "what's good for me"
- Defends, protects, hides
- Reacts to circumstances
- Finds source in their own strength/ability
- Receives info only through 5 senses
- Does/says what makes self look good
- Returns evil for evil
- Vain, self-involved, egocentric
- "Entertain me!"

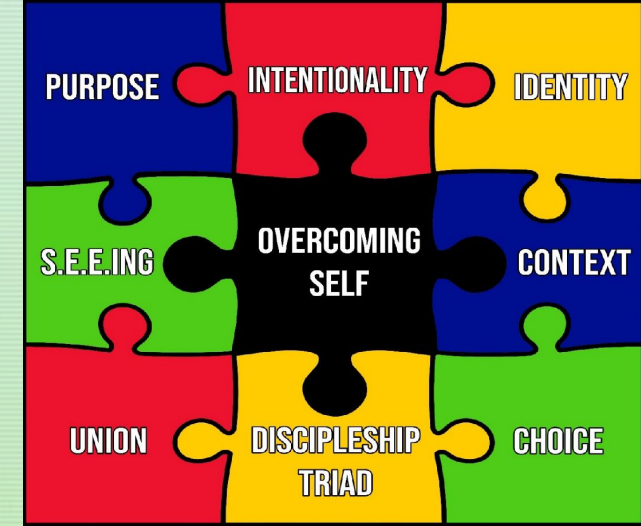
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+ Factors Contributing to Control of Self:

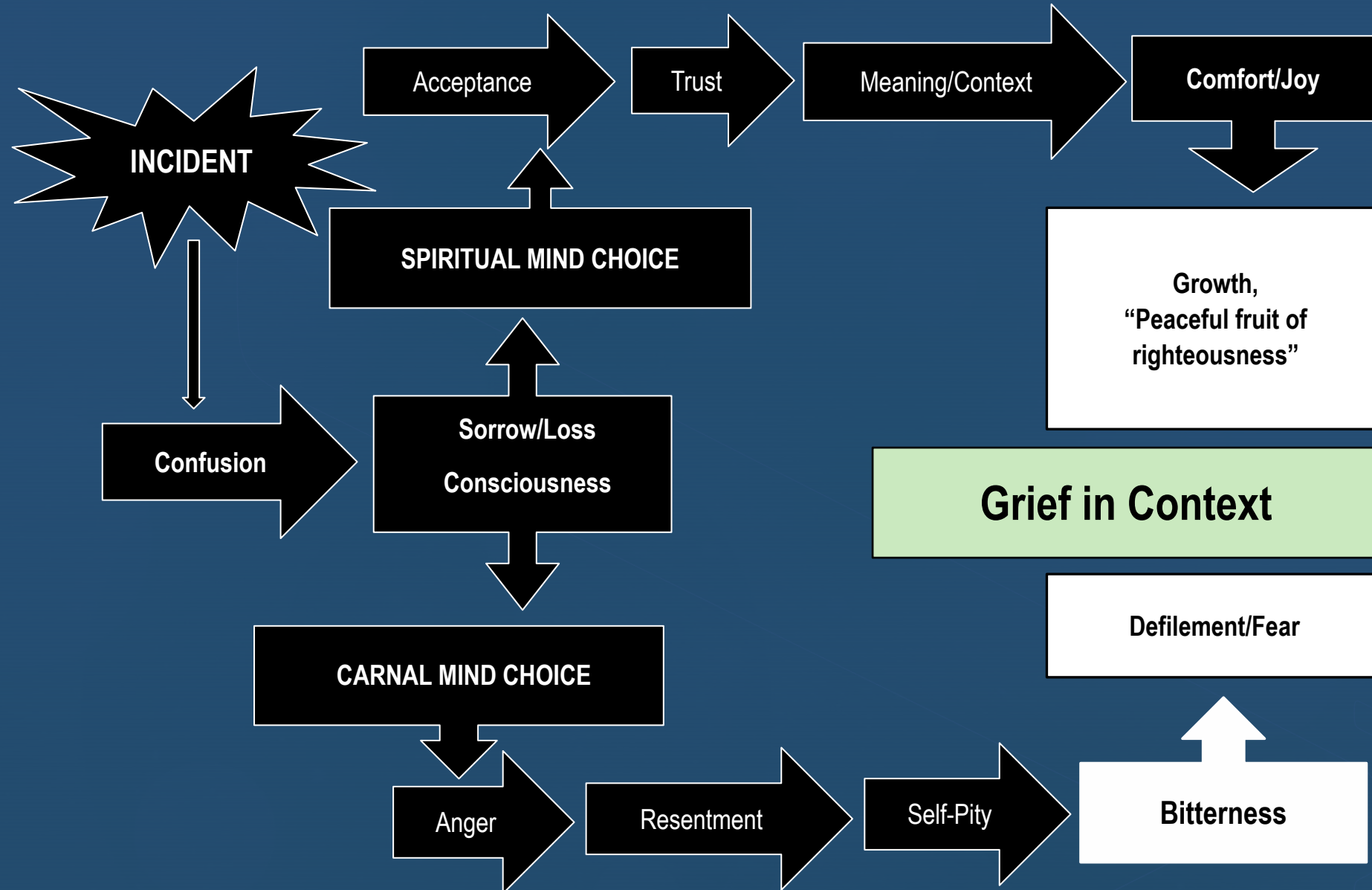
- Union
- Secure in their revealed identity
- Acts according to his/her true self
- Patiently endures t/present for future good
- Slow to speak, slow to anger
- Speaks the truth in Love
- Is vulnerable and transparent
- Responds to the Holy Spirit
- Trusts in God's power
- Sees into the eternal realm
- Discerns helpful, edifying actions/words
- Overcomes evil with good
- Accurate view of self-importance and worth
- "Teach me!"

Day 3-4: Reflexes, Batting Cage, and Big Hairy Deals—Part 1

- “Reflex Choice” (RC) happens instantaneously without time to think.
- RC is the “Sweet Spot” of transformation is when FOTS become reflexes!
- “The Batting Cage” is routine, day-after-day decisions according to tools, habits, attitudes and assumptions collected over a lifetime.
- When carnal mind has free reign, the “Batting Cage” often consists of a series of bad habits.
- BHDs are high-stakes, difficult circumstances for which the other choices prepare you.
- BHDs and the Grieving Process—Take Your Time!

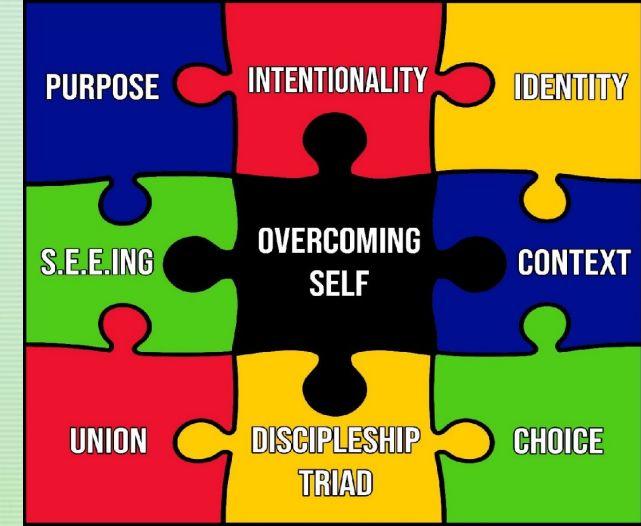


Grief in Context



D5: Redeeming Resources for Treasure

- Revelation 3:16 is a sobering verse!
- Laodicean Church suffered from self-satisfaction, a form of deception that resulted in an over-confidence; and, in their deception, declared their need for “nothing” (i.e., “I need nothing from God”).
- Jesus’ “Shopping List”
- What are the “Gold, White Raiment, and Eyesalve” of Revelation 3:18? (Hint: They are the anecdote for our state of being “wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.”)
- Resources available to “buy” from the Lord: Time, Identity, and Choice.
- A fair question is, “After Jesus’ complete and vanquishing victory over sin, death, over the gates of Hell; after making a spectacle of the enemy, and overcoming the world system; after taking back His people and His creation—what is left for us to overcome?”
- Our battle is with Independent Self, our challenge to extend Jesus’ victory into our own soul. Our journey is through the wilderness, into our promised inheritance, and into battle with our carnal mind and flesh.



Next Week: Discipleship Triad

