**LTCL 2024 Week 5 Ppt CF Notes:**

**Slide 3** - Life Verse (Example: 1 Corinthians 16:14)

CRAIG - Do you have a scripture that most powerfully speaks to the center of your heart in profound and personal ways. ​

Maybe it’s not one verse, but a psalm or parable or story from the Bible. Maybe it’s a scripture that has gotten you through a rough time. ​

We’ve found over the years that some people walk into the workshop having this type of verse in mind but they just didn’t know what to call it. ​

**Slide 4**- Life Verse HW for next time!

CRAIG - When choosing a verse maybe it’s been a rallying cry or recurring theme to your life? ​

One you feel connected to. Maybe it’s a vision casting verse of what you think God is calling you to, touches you personally and awakens your belief in God’s love and plan for you or something he’s trying to teach you. ​

When picking a verse **Be Wary of Taking a Verse out of Context**​

For example, some may be tempted to choose Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ, who gives me strength,” This was not intended to be a verse saying that nothing will get in my way. But, the apostle Paul said before this verse how he knew what it meant to go through trials and what it meant to go through abundant blessings, showing that he was able to get through periods of difficulty and periods of blessing not relying on his own strength but solely on Christ’s.​

Make sure not to take a verse out of context. Before finalizing a life verse make sure you study it along with the whole chapter and context. For instance, Philippians 4:13 says, I can do all this through him who gives me strength…doesn’t mean that if I trust in Christ enough I will ace my final exam. Put in context, it can be seen that Paul's intent in his letter to the Church of Philippi was one of contentment, not attainment.​

TALK ABOUT THE PROCESS OF PICKING YOUR LIFE VERSE ​

In your handout on page x we’ve provided you 100 possible verses to choose from and they are categorized under 15 subjects like Assurance, Compassion, Courage, Hope, Love, Peace and so on. There are lots of other scriptures out there that we have not included that may resonate with you more and you can pick any verse that you feel God has put on your heart. ​

We are giving you this as homework to pick a verse. ​

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​**Slide 5** - Life Verse Categories

When choosing a verse maybe it’s been a rallying cry or recurring theme to your life? ​

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**(REPEAT Same speaking notes as Slide 4 in Week 5)**

**Slide 6 -** (Sunset graphic with example verse)Proverbs 3:5-6

Ask if anyone has one? Share mine. ​

Most of the time I have the tendency to first jump in quickly and do things in my own understanding and strength when I should have never done it or ​

​**Slide 25** - My Life Growth Plan Craig’s Version filled out worksheet

CRAIG - And here is Craig’s

**Slide 27** - Oaks of Righteousness tree graphic(s) full and empty

CRAIG - Some of you may be struggling to fill out your Oaks of Righteousness Tree and may feel like your tree **l**ooks like the one on the right instead of the one on the left. You may feel like you’ve been a drought so your growth is stunted or the tropical storm of life has blown all your leaves and fruit away.​

Life can be tough and might have you asking…Why am I having such a difficult time? Why isn’t God talking to me? Why does God seem so distant? Why does he seem silent. ​

I think we’ve all felt that way and the piece of advice we get, just like Job got and what Henry Blackaby talks about on page 190 is that there may be some unconfessed sin. There may be and that should be your first step when you feel like you are getting the silent treatment from God. ​

**Slide 28** - When God Seems Distant (Fact, Faith, Feeling train graphic)

CRAIG - While Doubts, questions and varying emotions are common parts of everyone’s life, they are unreliable gauges of anyone’s relationship with Christ. Even though feelings are important, your relationship with Christ is based on unchanging truths, not on emotions that can change daily. The Christian lives by faith in the reliability of God Himself and what He has said to us. ​

Story: A couple of times in my life I felt like a failure. {give an example} But failure is not my identity. I’m a child of God, an ambassador of His. ​

The diagram illustrates the relationship between fact (God and His Word) faith (your trust in God and His Word) and feeling. Our faith in God is the fuel train car that runs the engine of our life. Our feelings our the caboose. They don’t drive our life they should follow our faith. The promise of God’s Word, not our feelings, is our authority. ​

When we feel distant from God we need to focus on what God has already done and who He is. Ps. 46:10 says…Be still and know that I am God. You probably know that verse but do you know the following verses? It doesn’t say be still and everything will be easy or you won’t have any troubles. It says that God will be exalted and that God is with us and he is our refuge. ​

p.\_\_\_ of the handout outlines this whole concept and page \_\_\_ gives you some encouraging scriptures. ​

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​**Slide 29** - Tensions

CRAIG - But our Christian faith can feel like a balancing act. We’ve got competing things tugging at us. You can hear seemingly two competing things from two Christian leaders. For instance, take Henry Blackaby who you’ve just gotten to know through the Experiencing God book vs. Dave Ramsey, the author of Financial Peace. Dave Ramsey might say wait until you have funding until you move forward whereas Henry Blackaby might say move forward in what God is calling you to and the funding will come. ​

We’ve also seen in the Experiencing God book that he might not be a big fan of the SHAPE assessment that we’ve had you take. He would say it might limit you to pursue a calling that appears to be outside of your current gifting. So this whole idea between Does God equip the called or calls the equipped. ​

Some of you have are not sure if you are hearing from God or hearing from yourself or even hearing from God vs. hearing from Satan or being tempted by sin. God’s word is the litmus test. 2 Corinthians says **“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?**​

One key truth to examining yourself is checking your love for God’s correction, direction and protection. If you love Jesus Christ and are surrendered to His Holy Spirit’s leading, there will be a hunger and thirst for the written Word so you may know God’s will for you. We’ve provided you some scripture on the back of the handout. ​

We of course know we need to pray to hear from God and obey Him, but we have also seen huge breakthroughs for people using the tools who are stuck and need some help to get unstuck on personal insights and direction. ​

**Slide 30** - Sacred Pathways to God

CRAIG - We’ve provided another handout called “Living In The Question” when you feel like you are wrestling with questioning God or when you feel like you are hanging in the balance. It has some general advice and tips as you seek to gain clarity, focus, get “unstuck” and find answers. There is no quick fix to this and part of the process is living in the question long enough to work through all the issues to experience breakthrough. One of the things it recommends is to find how you best connect to God. Gary Thomas calls this a sacred pathway. ​

A sacred pathway is the way we most naturally connect with God and grow spiritually. If you want to know more, Gary Thomas wrote a book called *Sacred Pathways*.​

Worship have a deep love of corporate praise and a natural inclination toward expressive worship.​

Relational - Spiritual growth comes most naturally when you’re involved in significant relationships: large group, small group, friends. God has often spoken to you through others: a parent, pastor, friend, mentor, someone in your small group.​

Service Those with this pathway tend to feel God’s presence most when involved in serving others: teaching, visiting, physical labor.​

Intellectual People with this pathway have found that they grow close to God as their minds are fully engaged with thought provoking ideas. They love learning new things and reflecting on the genius of God in nature and history.​

Activist Activists feel close to God when engaged in a single-minded devotion to a cause (protecting the unborn, citizenship, homeless, sex trafficking, etc.).​

Contemplative- love uninterrupted time alone to read, pray, reflect, and quietly enjoy God’s presence. ​

Nature Pathway people respond deeply to God through their experience of nature. Given the choice of being indoors or out, it’s a no-brainer. They may have a hard time in worship services but get them up in the mountains or at the sea shore, and they come alive.​

There are more suggestions in the Experiencing God book and the Living In the Question handout on page 11. Ultimately we aren’t searching for self help ideas but are deepening our relationship with Christ and allowing the Holy Spirit to talk and minister to you. ​

[https://holytrinitychico.org/seven-spiritual-pathways-to-god/. https://www.messymiddle.com/how-many-pathways-to-god/​](https://holytrinitychico.org/seven-spiritual-pathways-to-god/.%20https:/www.messymiddle.com/how-many-pathways-to-god/%E2%80%8B)

**Slide 31** - When God Seems Distant

​CRAIG - **Read:**​

The deepest level of worship is:​

* praising God in spite of pain​
* thanking God during a trial​
* trusting Him when tempted​
* surrendering when suffering​
* loving Him when He seems distant​
* Henry Blackaby on page 191 would say one reason why God may seem silent is that His is ready to bring a greater revelation of Himself than you have ever known. That should immediately change your attitude. Instead of sulking, you would begin to watch with great anticipation what God will do next and what deeper understanding of Him. ​

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**Slide 33** - Homework for Week 6

CRAIG

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​**Slide 35** - Cohort Discussion (Experiencing God & Calling Assignment graphics)

CRAIG - Table Discussion​

Either Table or Big Group​

Either Experiencing God or Calling Assignment or homework from last week​