

WRESTLING WITH GOD

GENESIS 32: 22-32

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STEPHEN SPENCE



JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD AT PENIEL

GENESIS 32:22-32: **AN ORIGIN STORY**

...Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. ...Jacob said, “**I will not let you go unless you bless me.**” ...Then the man said, “You shall no longer be called **Jacob**, but **Israel**, **for you have striven with God** and with humans and have prevailed.” ...So Jacob called the place **Peniel**, saying, “**For I have seen God face to face**, and yet my life is preserved.”

**GOD'S PEOPLE
WRESTLE
WITH GOD!**

The one who wrestles with God

That one sees God's face

Jacob becomes Israel

"This is who we are!"

**GOD'S PEOPLE
WRESTLE
WITH GOD!**

Hannah wept bitterly every year

Job challenges God and God's defenders

David taught God's people to sing "How long, O Lord?" in Psalm 13

Jeremiah "the weeping prophet" of Lamentations

**GOD'S PEOPLE
WRESTLE
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Jesus in Gethsemane

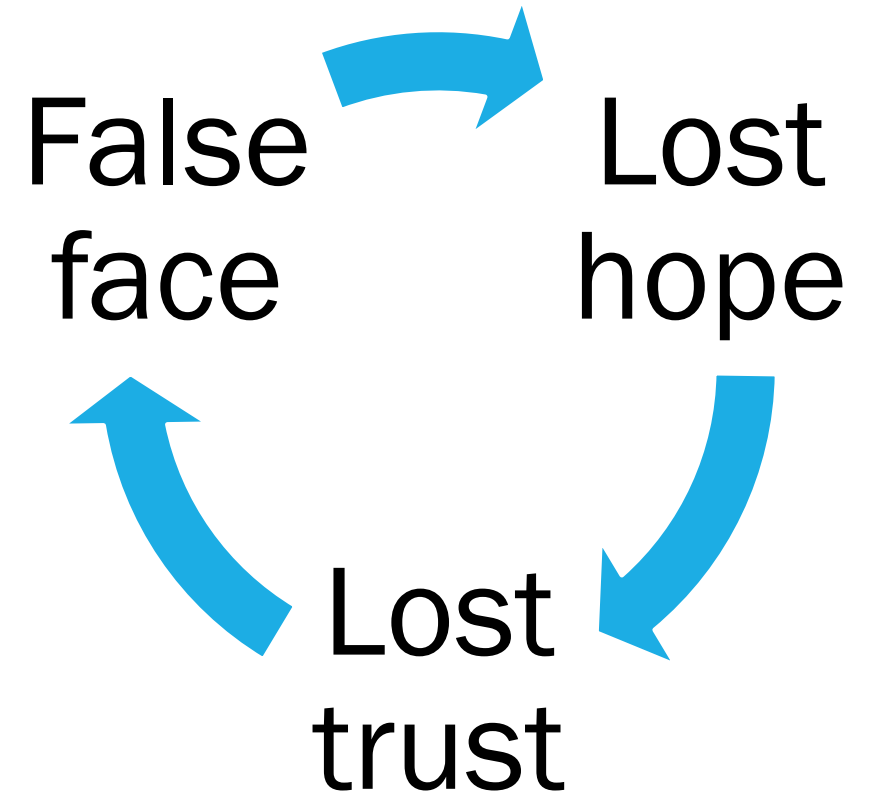
Jesus on the Cross

Paul and his Thorn in the Flesh

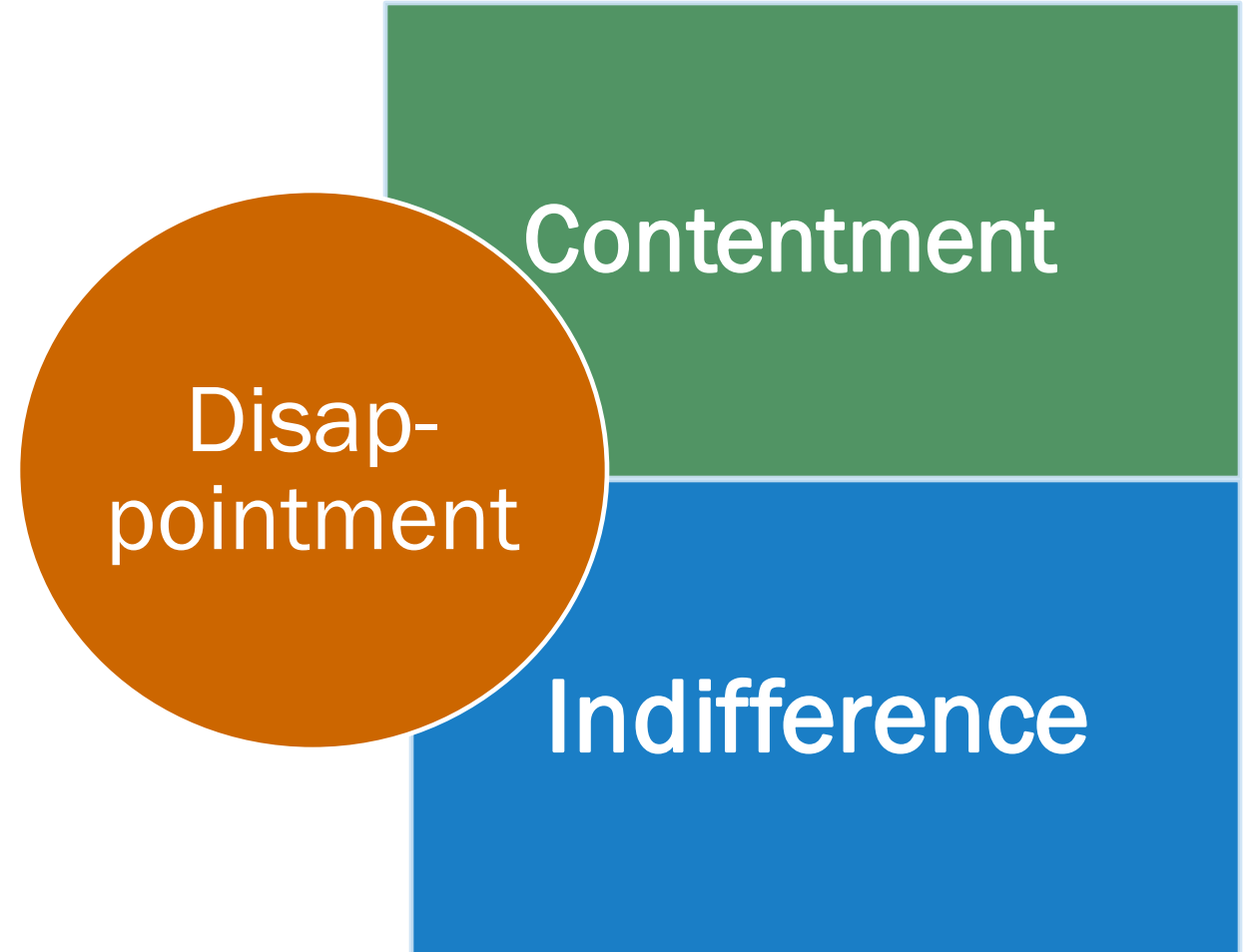
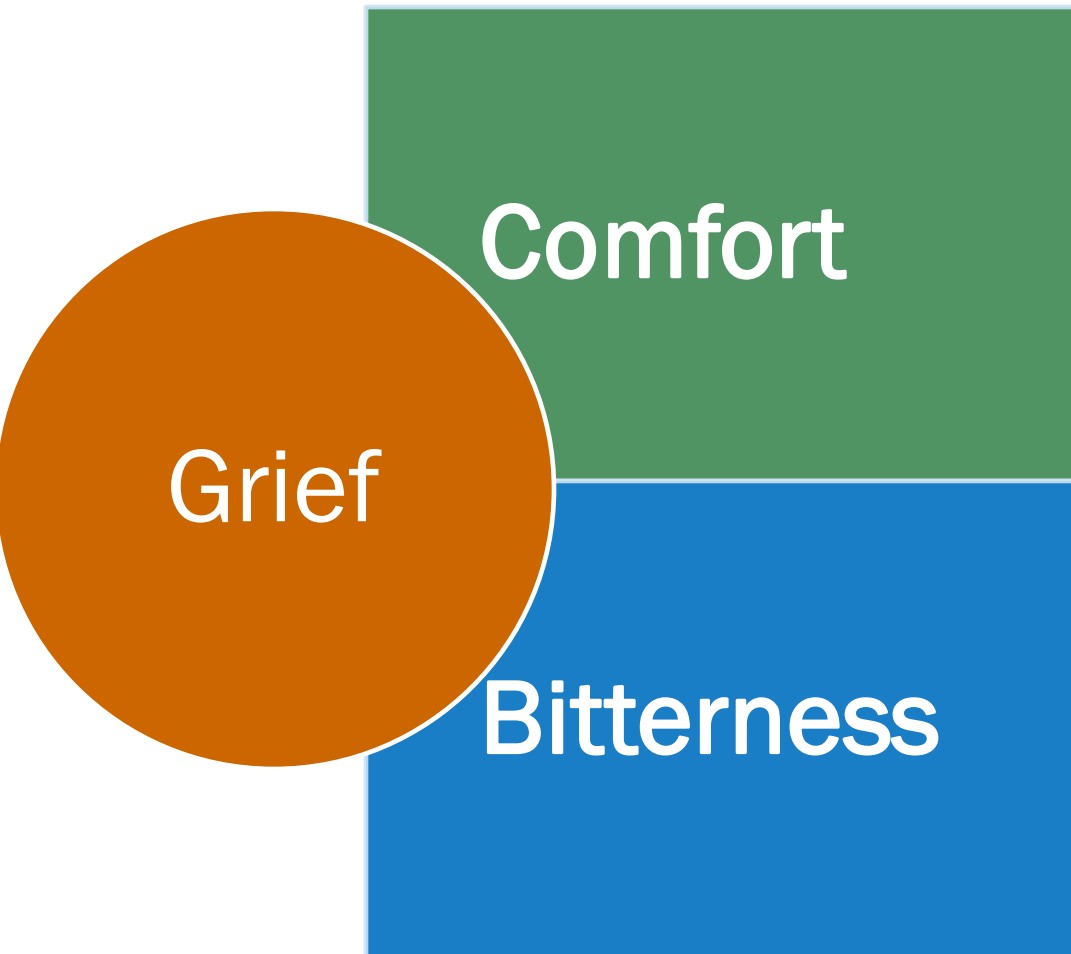
"The Dark Night of the Soul"

ARE WE AFRAID THAT GOD CAN'T HANDLE IT OR THAT WE CAN'T HANDLE IT?

Many Christians seem to have lost their nerve to wrestle with God. Many Christians today are trading a birthright to wrestle with God for an easy meal of safe answers. Many Christians feel that they must wear an “everything is fine” face to church.



REASONS TO WRESTLE WITH GOD



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THE IMPACT OF WRESTLING

“Wrestling in prayer is crying out to God, asking for what we need, holding nothing back. It is fighting with God, but it is grabbing hold of God, expecting him to answer, and refusing to let go or look away.” (Vaneetha Risner)

- It requires honesty and openness
- A willingness to admit our pain and our fears

There are no guidelines or rules; it's personal.

There is only one rule! Don't stop until you see God's face.

THE IMPACT OF WRESTLING WITH GOD

Do we have something that we need to wrestle with God about?

Are we prepared to wrestle honestly with God?

Wrestling with God will always leave its mark on us.

A deeper relationship and a new me.