**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 1: Job: From Fruit to Much Fruit (Case Study)**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What is the story of Job about and how is it helpful as we discuss suffering from a Godly and Biblical perspective?
* What are the major questions that you have about suffering (p. 1)?
* What is the relationship between the story of Job and the parable of the vine and the branches (John 15:1-8)?
* What is the purpose of pruning in this parable?
* What questions (“complaints”) did Job have as he endured his suffering (p. 4)?
* What are the resources that believers have as they face and endure suffering?

**Discussion Questions:**

* Why do bad things happen to good people?
* What are the potential good outcomes from enduring suffering?
* What did you learn about God and yourself from the case study of Job??

**Explanation Questions:**

* What are the seven lessons from the life of Job mentioned in the workbook?
* What additional lessons have your learned from your personal study of Job?
* Which of these “lessons” do you think is most important? Why?
* What is your understanding of “brokenness”?
* What is the relationship between humility and brokenness?
* Why is brokenness important for maturity and effectiveness?

**Application Questions:**

* What insights about suffering have you gained from this chapter?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 2: The Big Three**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What are the two “barriers” to realizing the benefits of deep processing mentioned in the workbook (p. 11)?
* What are your thoughts and experiences with desperation and/or discouragement?
* How does our concept of God relate to desperation and discouragement?
* What are the “Big Three” issues that Job wrestled with during his time of suffering (p. 11)?
* What are the issues involved in “doubt and wisdom”?
* What are the issues involved in “faith and trust”?
* What are the issues involved in “forgiveness and reconciliation”?

**Discussion Questions:**

* What areas do you personally struggle with concerning suffering?
* Why is it so hard to have Godly perspective when we are suffering?
* What are the major issues that you struggle with when you are suffering?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding and definition of sanctification?
* According to I Thessalonians 4:3-8, what are the four issues related to sanctification listed in the workbook (p. 18)?
* What are your insights concerning sanctification as “separation to God” from sin, the world, and the devil (p. 19)
* What are your insights concerning sanctification as the “work of the Holy Spirit” in transformation (p. 19-21)?
* What are your insights concerning sanctification as “obedience” to the Word and the Spirit (p. 21-25)?
* What are your insights about the CONTROL issue” (p. 20)?

**Application Questions:**

* What insights about suffering/sanctification have you gained from this chapter?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 3: Testing, Maturity, and Love**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes from the case study of Job (chapter 1) and the “big three” (chapter 2)?
* What does James 1:2-4 say about “trials of many kinds” (p. 27)?
* What is meant by the “testing of your faith” in James 1:2?
* How does “testing” produce “perseverance…” and “maturity”?
* What does it mean to be “complete, not lacking anything”?
* How does “faith” (II Peter 1:8) relate to the process of “testing” (James 1:2-4) and/or “suffering” (Romans 5:3-5, p. 28) resulting in “love”?
* What is your definition of Godly love (p. 28-30)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* How do trials produce love?
* What are ways you can cooperate/not cooperate with God in trials?
* How do you become a more loving person?

**Explanation Questions:**

* According to I Timothy 1:5, what is the goal and what are the means to the goal (p. 28, 32)?
* What is meant by: 1. Pure heart; 2. Clear conscience; and 3. Sincere faith?
* What insights do you have about I Timothy 1:5 from the diagram on p. 33?
* What takes place in a believer’s life if they develop a “pure heart”?
* What takes place in a believer‘s life if they develop a “clear conscience”?
* What takes place in a believer’s life if they develop a “sincere faith”?
* How do these three “means” work together to produce love?
* Why is establishing a Godly “foundation” important (p.34)?

**Application Questions:**

* What insights about testing, maturity, and love have you gained from this chapter?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 4: Processing and Deep Processing**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in trials and/or suffering from chapter 3?
* What does Psalm 138:7-8 say about walking in the “midst of trouble” (p. 37)?
* What perspective does Clinton give on the importance of understanding processing? What does he mean by LD = f(p,t,r)?
* What are your definitions of: 1. Processing; 2. Transformation; and 3. Process items (p. 37-38)
* What is your definition of deep processing (p. 39)? How does it differ from processing?
* How does Job17:1 (“My spirit is broken”) relate to deep processing (p. 37, 39)?
* What are the potential benefits from deep processing (p. 40-41)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* Which process items have you experienced and what did you learn?
* Which deep process items have you experienced and what did you learn?
* What is your responsibility in successfully working through processing and deep processing for transformation?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3 (p. 43)?
* What happens when these three young men refuse to bow down to the image?
* What insights do you have about “faithfulness in the fire” (p. 43)?
* How does “faithfulness in the fire” lead to transformation (p. 44)?
* How does Daniel 3 relate to James 1:2-4, Romans 5:3-5, and II Peter 1:8 (p. 28)?

**Application Questions:**

* What insights about processing and deep processing have you gained from this chapter?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 5: Life Transitions**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in being “faithful in the fire” from chapter 4?
* What is your definition of life transitions (p. 49)?
* What are the three primary types of life transitions?
* What are your definitions of: 1. Situational life transitions; 2. Developmental life transitions; and 3. Transformational transition stages (p. 49-57)?
* What are the three major transformation transitions and the four stages involved in maximizing their benefit (p. 56-57)?
* What insights have you gained about the role of transitions in growth and maturation?

**Discussion Questions:**

* What stages of Clinton’s leadership development model are you currently in (p. 50)? What issues are you addressing during this stage?
* What transformational transition are you going through (or have gone through)?
* What/how has life transitions contributed to your deeper understanding of God’s love and grace?
* What questions do you have about God and his purposes in life transitions?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul (p. 59)?
* What have you learned about faithfulness and growth from this study of the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul?
* What have you learned about life transitions from this study of the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about processing and deep processing from this study of the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 6: Life and Leadership Crisis**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in life transitions from chapter 5?
* What is your definition of life and leadership crises (p. 65)?
* What situations would be on your list of the top five most difficult life or leadership crisis?
* What is your definition of sin? How does sin impact life and the world we live in?
* What is the difference between sins of ungodliness and unrighteousness (p. 67)?
* What is the pattern of sin in James 1:14-15?
* What is your definition of repentance and how does it relate to confession (p. 67)?
* What is your definition of forgiveness and how does it interact with the consequences of sin (p. 68)?
* How does God’s grace help us process loss (p. 69)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* How have you handled life and leadership crises in the past?
* What did you learn about yourself and others during this experience?
* What transformational benefits did you gain from this experience?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of the Apostle Peter (p. 72)?
* Why did Peter return to the profession of fishing (John 21:1-3)?
* What led up to Peter’s return to the profession of fishing (p. 72-73)?
* What was the sequence of Peter’s restoration by Jesus (p. 73)?
* What were the results of Peter’s restoration (p. 75)
* What does Clinton mean by “pressure items” and what can they produce (p.74)?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about life and leadership crisis from the restoration of Peter?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 7: Life and Leadership Conflict**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in life and leadership crises in chapter 6?
* What is your definition of life and leadership conflict (p. 77)?
* What are the two major sources of life and leadership conflict (p. 78)?
* What is your definition and understanding of reaction formation (p. 80)?
* What is your understanding of and experience with confrontation?
* What is your understanding of and experience with reconciliation?
* What have you learned about yourself, others, and the value of “living in peace [as much as it depends on us] with everyone” (Romans12:18)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* How do you handle conflicts in your life and leadership relationships?
* Which leadership style(s) are you? Which leadership styles do you work best with and which styles do you have the most difficulty with (p. 78-79)?
* What challenges do you face in trying to apply Sande’s approach to confrontation and reconciliation (p. 80-81)?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of Barnabas (p. 83)?
* What was Barnabas’ relationship with Paul?
* What was the cause of their conflict (Acts 15:39)? Who was right?
* How did they resolve their conflict?
* What happened to each of them after their separation? What happened to John Mark?
* How can God use conflict for our growth and effectiveness as leaders (p. 85)?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about life and leadership conflict from Barnabas and Paul?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 8: Leadership Backlash**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in life and leadership conflicts in chapter 7?
* What is your definition of leadership backlash (p. 87)?
* When does leadership backlash usually take place (p. 88)?
* How do the dynamics of faith/vision (p. 14) make leaders and followers vulnerable to leadership backlash?
* What are the two primary points where leaders are vulnerable to “giving up or giving in” (p. 88)?
* Where does resistance (“backlash”) come from (p. 89)?
* What are the resources that a leader needs to endure and mature through leadership backlash?

**Discussion Questions:**

* What has been your experience with leadership backlash?
* What did you learn about yourself and others from experiencing leadership backlash?
* How will you better handle leadership backlash in the future?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of Moses (p. 91)?
* What were the circumstances leading up to the people’s backlash against Moses?
* How does God provide for the people through Moses’ leadership (Exodus 17:1-7)?
* What are the characteristics and learning opportunities for leaders who are experiencing backlash (p. 93)?
* How can God use backlash for our growth and effectiveness as leaders (p. 85)?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about leadership backlash from Moses?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 9: Isolation**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in leadership backlash in chapter 8?
* What is your definition of isolation (p. 95)?
* When and why does isolation usually take place (p. 96)?
* How do the dynamics of faith/vision (p. 14) make leaders and followers vulnerable to isolation?
* What are the dynamics of discouragement (p. 95)?
* What are the three types of isolation (p. 96)?
* What is the fourfold process involved in God’s work in isolation (p. 97)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* Have you ever gone through a time of isolation? If so, what was it like?
* Have you ever gone on a personal retreat (Type III isolation)? If so, what was it like?
* How does isolation lead to growth and maturity in your life and leadership?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of Elijah (p. 99)?
* What were the circumstances leading up to Elijah’s isolation?
* How does God provide for Elijah during his time of isolation (I Kings 19:4-13)?
* What are the warnings and assurances about isolation that we can learn from Elijah (p. 101)?
* How can voluntary isolation (Type III isolation) help us grow and mature (p. 96)?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about isolation from Elijah?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 10: Spiritual Warfare**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in isolation in chapter 9?
* What is your definition of spiritual warfare (p. 103)? What is your understanding of the “spirit realm” and God’s power (p. 104)?
* What is the “excluded middle” (p. 104)? How does this concept relate to the power of God and spiritual warfare?
* What are the three battlefields (p. 105) and how do they relate to spiritual warfare?
* What are the characteristics of devil and how does he try to deceive, discourage, and destroy people (p. 105)?
* What is your understanding of the “battle of the mind” (p. 106)?
* What is your understanding of the “day of evil” (p. 106)?
* What is your understanding of the “full armor of God” (p. 107)
* What is your understanding of the prayer and fasting as a means of spiritual warfare (p. 107-109)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* Have you encountered spiritual warfare? If so, what was it like?
* What did you learn from your encounter with spiritual warfare?
* Why is prayer (and fasting) important in winning spiritual battles?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of Daniel (p. 111)?
* What were the circumstances leading up to Daniel’s spiritual warfare?
* What have you learned about “spiritual encounters” from Daniel (p. 111-112)?
* What are God’s purposes in spiritual warfare (p. 111)?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about spiritual warfare from Daniel?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 11: Brokenness and Spiritual Authority**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in spiritual warfare in chapter 10?
* What is your definition of brokenness (p. 115)?
* What are the three types of brokenness (p. 116)?
* What is your definition of humility? Why is it important for growth and maturity?
* What is your definition of discipline? Why is it important for growth and maturity?
* How does deep processing encourage brokenness (p. 118-119)?
* What is the process of brokenness (p. 119-120)?
* What are the barriers to brokenness (p. 120)?
* What are the blessings of brokenness (p. 121)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* What do you think of this concept of brokenness?
* Have you experienced brokenness? If so, what was it like?
* What do you think the role of brokenness is in moving from fruit to much fruit (John 15:1-8)?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of Joseph (p. 123)?
* What are the characteristics of spiritual authority (p. 125)?
* What is the process of exercising greater spiritual authority (p. 125)?
* What are the observations about spiritual authority and how do they relate to the process of brokenness (p. 125-126)?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about brokenness and spiritual authority from Joseph?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**

**Deep Processing: Maturing Through Really Hard Times**

**Small Group Discussion Format**

**Chapter 12: Destiny Processing and “Much Fruit”**

**Opening Prayer**

**Accountability Questions:**

* Did you read the chapter and answer the questions to the best of your ability?
* Did you connect with your accountability partner at least once this week?

**Review, Introduction/Discovery Questions:**

* What did you learn about God and his purposes in brokenness in chapter 11?
* What is your definition of destiny processing (p. 129)?
* What are the four critical aspects of destiny (p. 129-130)?
* What are the four stages of destiny processing (p. 130)?
* What insights did you gain from the section on “unfolding revelation” (p. 130-131)? What is the WARNING about discerning the “voice of God”?
* What are the four types of destiny experiences (p. 131)?
* What is the role of deep processing in destiny fulfillment and how does this lead to “much fruit” (p. 132)?

**Discussion Questions:**

* Why is destiny important to you?
* What is your best sense, at this time, of your destiny?
* What stage of destiny processing are you in? What can you do better to cooperate with God in destiny processing?

**Explanation Questions:**

* What is your understanding of the life and ministry of Caleb (p. 134)?
* What is meant by “a different spirit” and wholehearted obedience as primary characteristics of Caleb (p. 135)?
* What do you think kept Caleb going for the forty years that he traveled in the wilderness because of other people’s disobedience?
* What are the life and leadership lessons from Caleb (p. 135)?

**Application Questions:**

* What have you learned about destiny processing and “much fruit” from Caleb?
* What is God challenging you about in your own life?
* What do you plan to do to address this?

**Closing Prayer**