



# The Way of a Brother

Accompaniment - The Way it all  
started

# Retreat Overview



Friday – Session 1 – **Real Christianity**  
The Way of a Brother



Saturday  
Session 2 – Inside Out  
Understanding what the heart iss



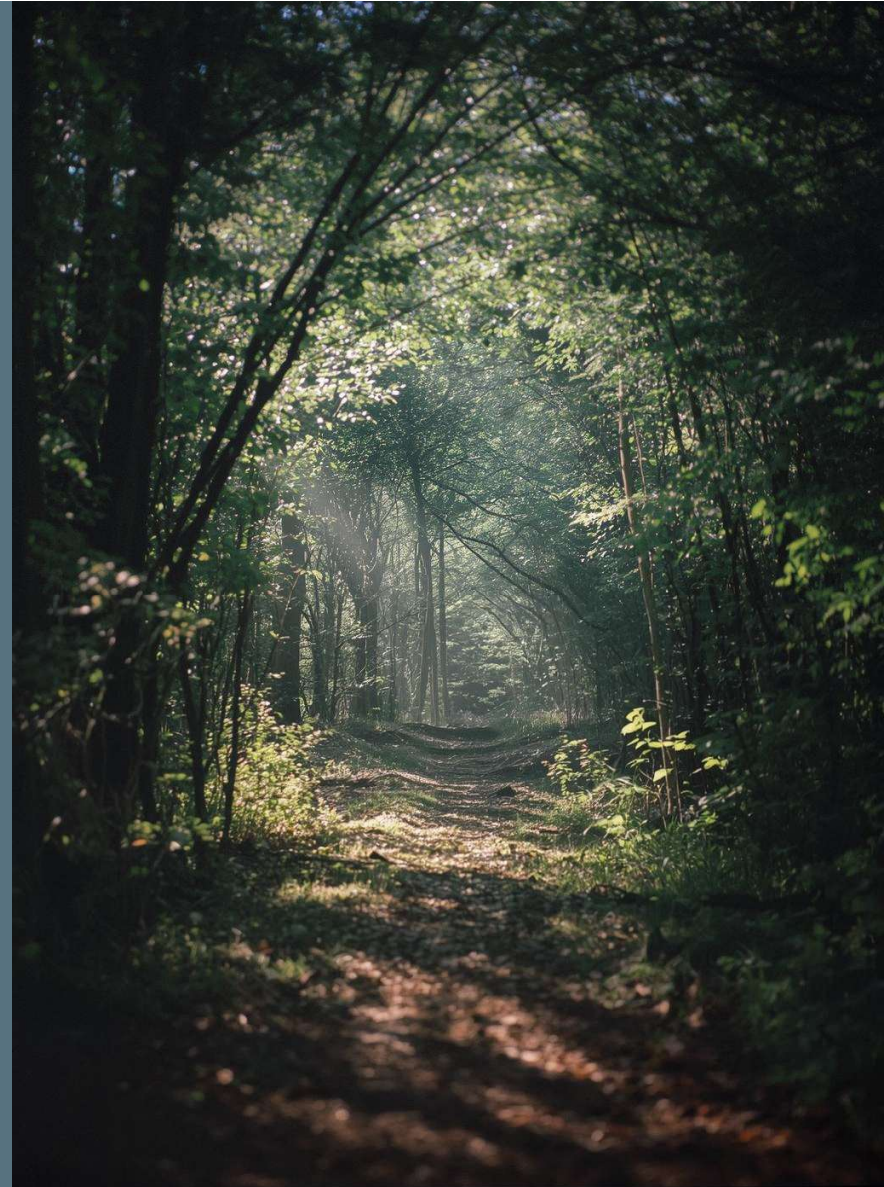
Session 3 –Circle of Trust  
Trust and what matters to us.



Session 4 – Outside In  
Next level brotherhood: receiving



Sunday – Session 5 – Walking with a Brother







# Session 1

# Real Christianity

The Way  
of a  
Brother



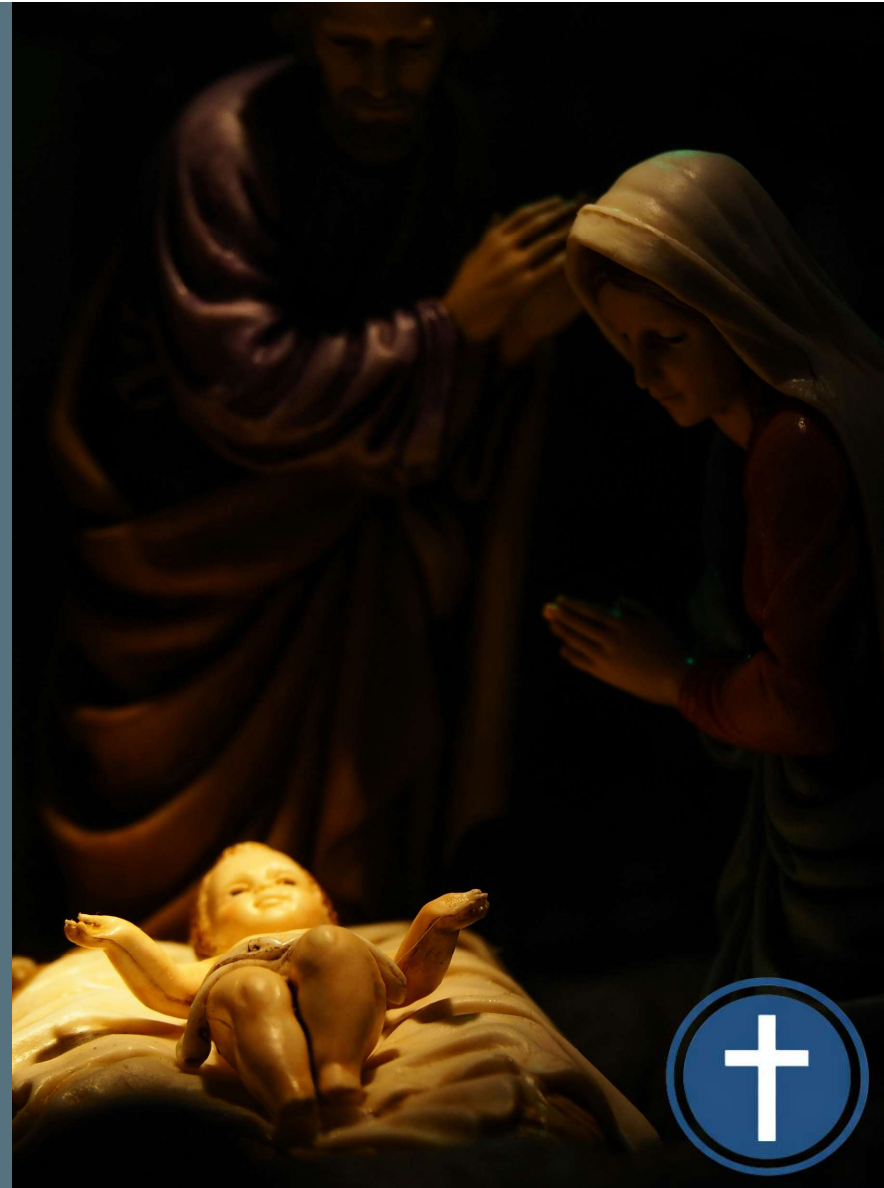
Gary Fritsch

# Accompaniment:

The Greatest Gift from God:

*“For God so loved the world that  
he gave his only Son...  
...that the world might be saved  
through him.”*

It was not enough to explain the  
way or show the way - He WAS the  
way.





# EVANGELII GAUDIUM



THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL  
POPE FRANCIS



## Missionary Disciples

“In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envision a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. ...



# We are all Missionary Disciples

**”The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, **anyone who has truly experienced God’s saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love.** Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus; **we no longer say that we are “disciples” and “missionaries”, but rather that we are always “missionary disciples”.****

*Evangelii Gaudium (Joy of the Gospel) #120*





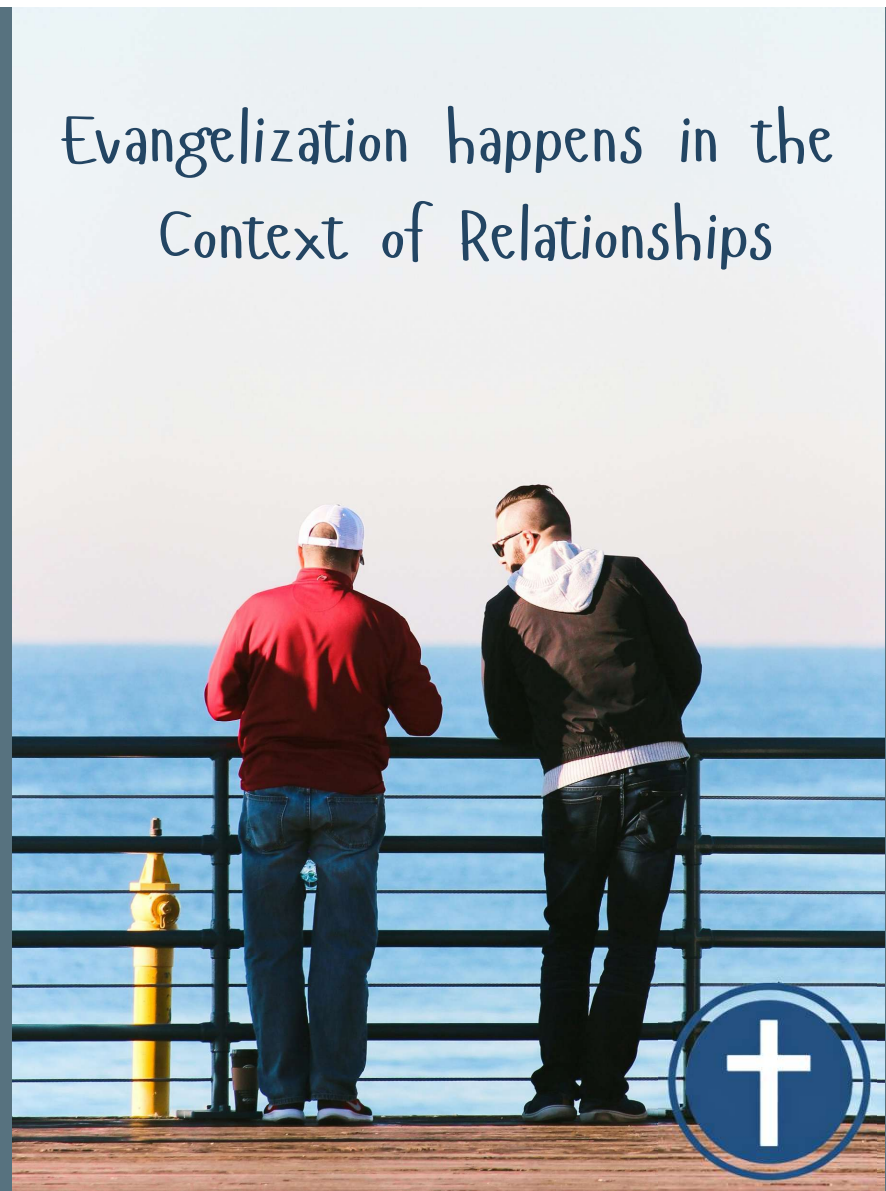
# Accompaniment Makes Disciples.

“The Church will have to initiate everyone - priests, religious and laity into this ‘art of accompaniment’ which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other.” (Cf. Exodus 3:5) EG 169

“The Sacrament of the Present Moment  
‘the present moment is a “visible sign” of  
God’s invisible action. A channel of grace.”

*Jean-Pierre de Caussade - Abandonment to  
Divine Providence*

Evangelization happens in the  
Context of Relationships



# It's always been true

God is a communion of persons.

Man becomes the image of God not so much in the moment of solitude as in the moment of communion. John Paul II

God accompanies Israel (Exodus 13:21)

The Spirit Guides and Consoles (John 14:26)

The Church is a community of Accompaniment (Acts 2:42-47)

Jesus Accompanies the disciples (Road to Emmaus)





# Session 2

# Inside Out

Understanding  
what the  
Heart is



Tom Merhaut

What are we made  
of?

...the inside view

“[human beings] by their interior life,  
transcend the entire material universe;  
they experience this deep interiority  
when they enter into their own heart,  
where God, who probes the heart,  
awaits them, and where they decide  
their own destiny in the sight of God”

*Gaudium et Spes (Vatican II)*







# Return to the Heart

“The symbol of the heart has often been used to express the love of Jesus Christ. Some have questioned whether this symbol is still meaningful today.

Yet living as we do in an age of superficiality, *rushing frenetically* from one thing to another without really knowing why, and ending up as insatiable consumers and slaves to the mechanisms of a market unconcerned about the deeper meaning of our lives, *all of us need to rediscover the importance of the heart.*”

(Pope Francis, *Dilexit Nos* 2)





# What is the

**Heart?**  
Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 2563:

The heart is the dwelling-place where I am, where I live; according to the Semitic or Biblical expression, the heart is the place "to which I withdraw." The heart is our hidden center, beyond the grasp of our reason and of others; only the Spirit of God can fathom the human heart and know it fully. **The heart is the place of decision**, deeper than our psychic drives. It is the place of truth, **where we choose life or death**. It is the place of encounter, because as image of God we live in relation: it is the place of covenant.







**WE OFTEN LOCK IT AWAY**

## What is the

### Heart?

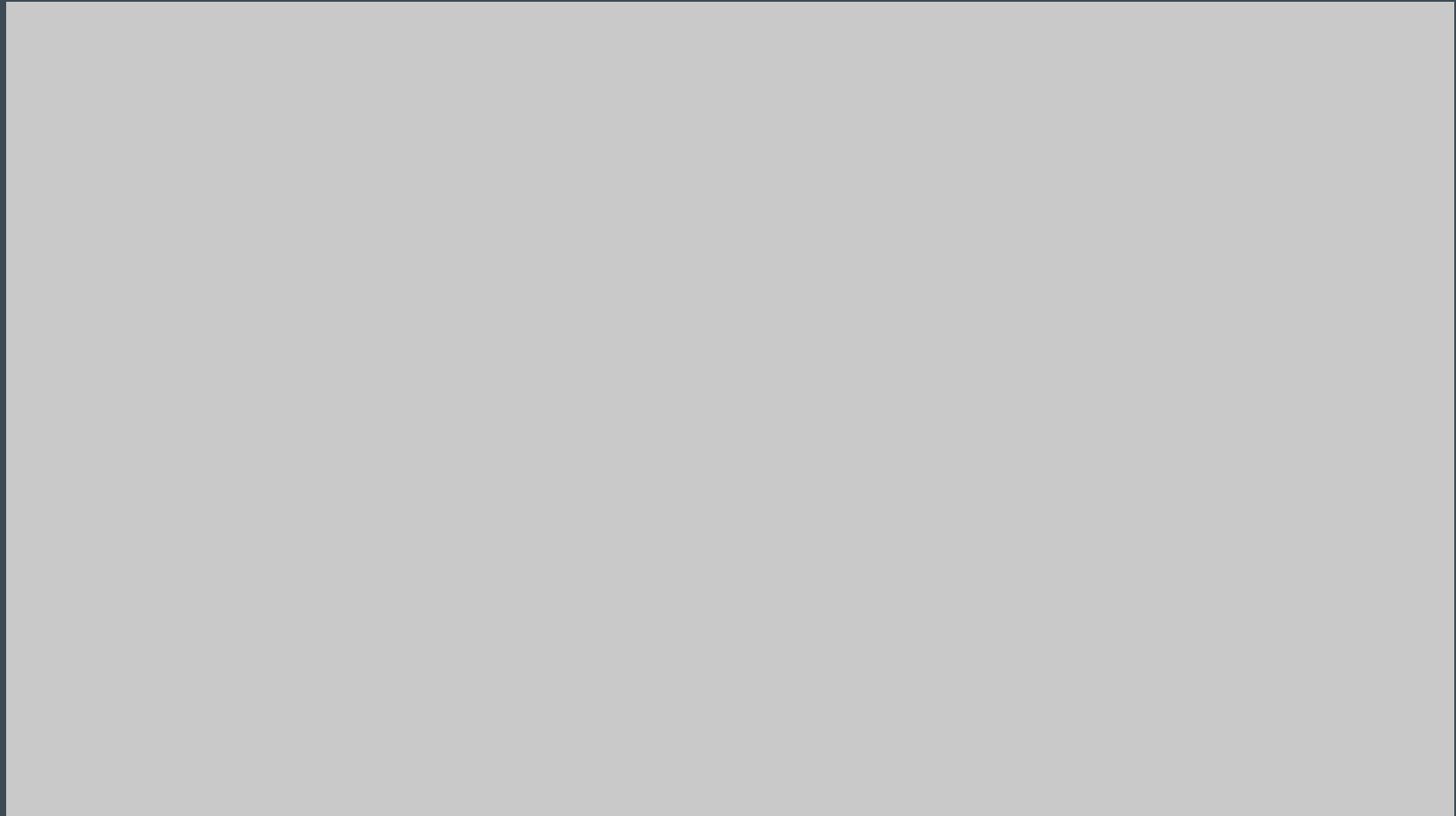
“The heart is also the focus of sincerity, where deceit and disguise have no place. It usually indicates our true intentions, what we really think, believe and desire, the ‘secrets’ that we tell no one: in a word, the naked truth about ourselves. It is the part of us that is neither appearance or illusion, but is instead authentic, real, entirely ‘who we are’.”

(Dilexit Nos 5)



# Feelings–The Heart's Response

Human emotions are the body's response to our perception of reality.



# Concealed, covered up, needing to be freed



"This interior reality of each person **is frequently concealed behind a great deal of 'foliage,'** which makes it difficult for us not only to understand ourselves, but even more to know others: 'The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse, who can understand it?' (Jer 17:9). We can understand, then, the advice of the Book of Proverbs: 'Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life; put away from you crooked speech' (4:23-24)." (Dilexit Nos 6)







Healing Comes through  
Vulnerability



# Summary of the Heart

- The heart is where we feel, and respond to our perception of reality
- The heart is where we take in the big picture, ponder reality
- The heart is where desire, where we believe
- The heart is where we make our ultimate decisions
- The heart is where we hide our secrets
- The heart is where we find our true self
- The heart is where God dwells within us
- The heart can be covered up, complicated by our wounds





# Circle of Trust

Listening  
for the Heart



Mike Laffin



A man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue shirt, is shown in profile, looking towards the right. He has a serious, attentive expression. In the background, the back of a woman's head with long dark hair is visible, slightly out of focus. The setting appears to be an indoor space with soft lighting.

# Listening for the Heart





**Most of us have  
listening problem**

and need to  
**TRANSFORM**  
our listening



A photograph of Pope Francis speaking into a microphone. He is wearing his white papal attire, including a zucchetto and glasses. His right hand is raised in a gesture. The background is dark and out of focus.

*Listening is...more than...hearing.  
Hearing is...receiving information;  
listening is about **communication**,  
and [communication] calls  
for closeness.*

Pope Francis | 2016 World Communications Day

**Comunicăre**

*“That they may all be one, as you,  
Father, are in me and I in you, that  
they also may be in us.”*

Jesus | John 17:21







## HOW DO WE TRANSFORM LISTENING?

1. Build and maintain trust
2. Set self aside (martyrdom)





**EVANGELIZATION**  
happens at the speed of  
**TRUST**





**TEAM CHEMISTRY**  
happens at the speed of  
**TRUST**







GOOD COACHING  
happens at the speed of  
TRUST





RELIABILITY

happens at the speed of  
TRUST





DECISION MAKING  
happens at the speed of  
TRUST

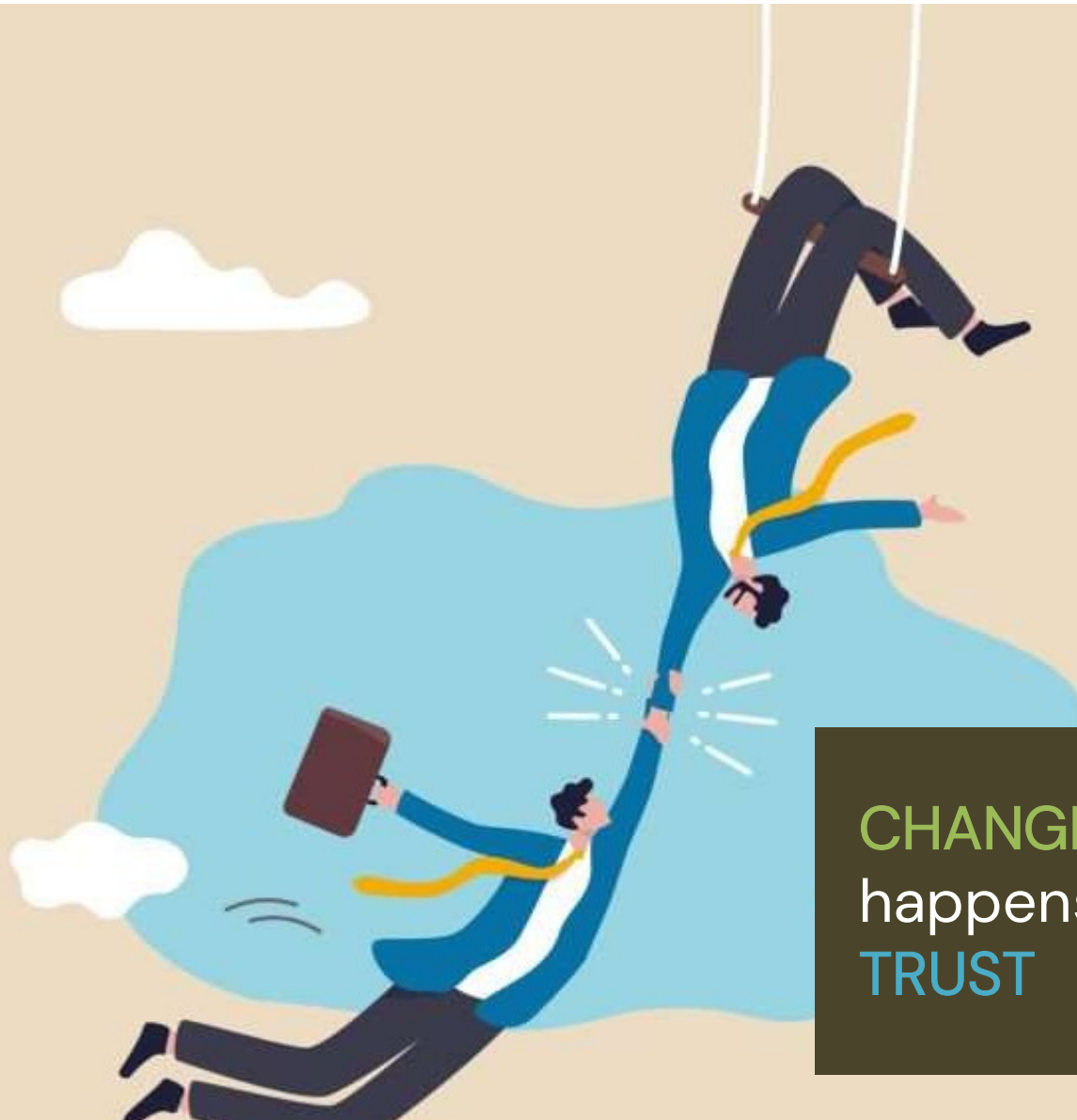






**ACCOUNTABILITY**  
happens at the speed of  
**TRUST**





**CHANGE**  
happens at the speed of  
**TRUST**





DISCIPLESHIP  
happens at the speed of  
TRUST







HEALING  
happens at the speed of  
TRUST





**GRIEVING**  
happens at the speed of  
**TRUST**



# TRUST





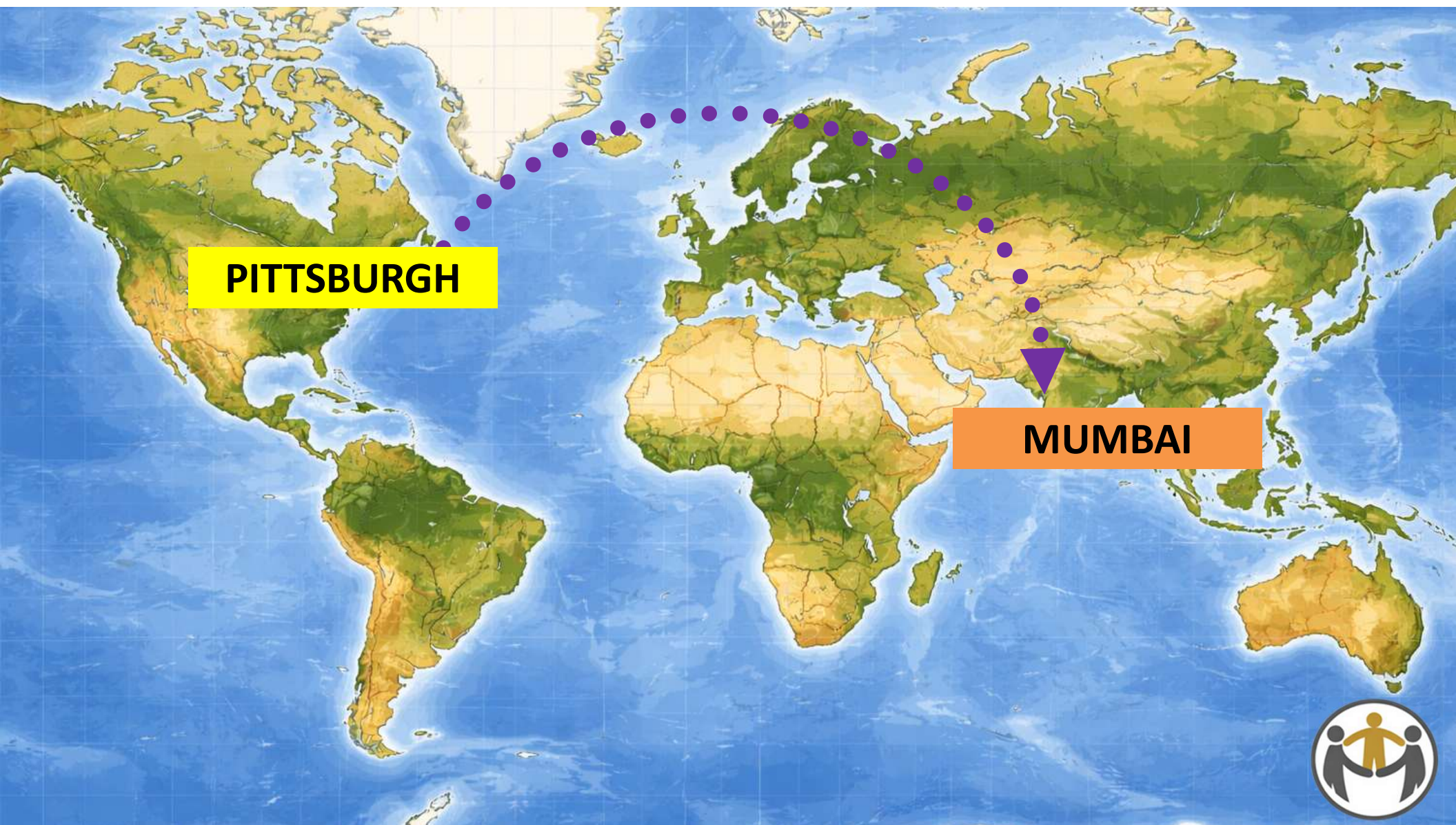


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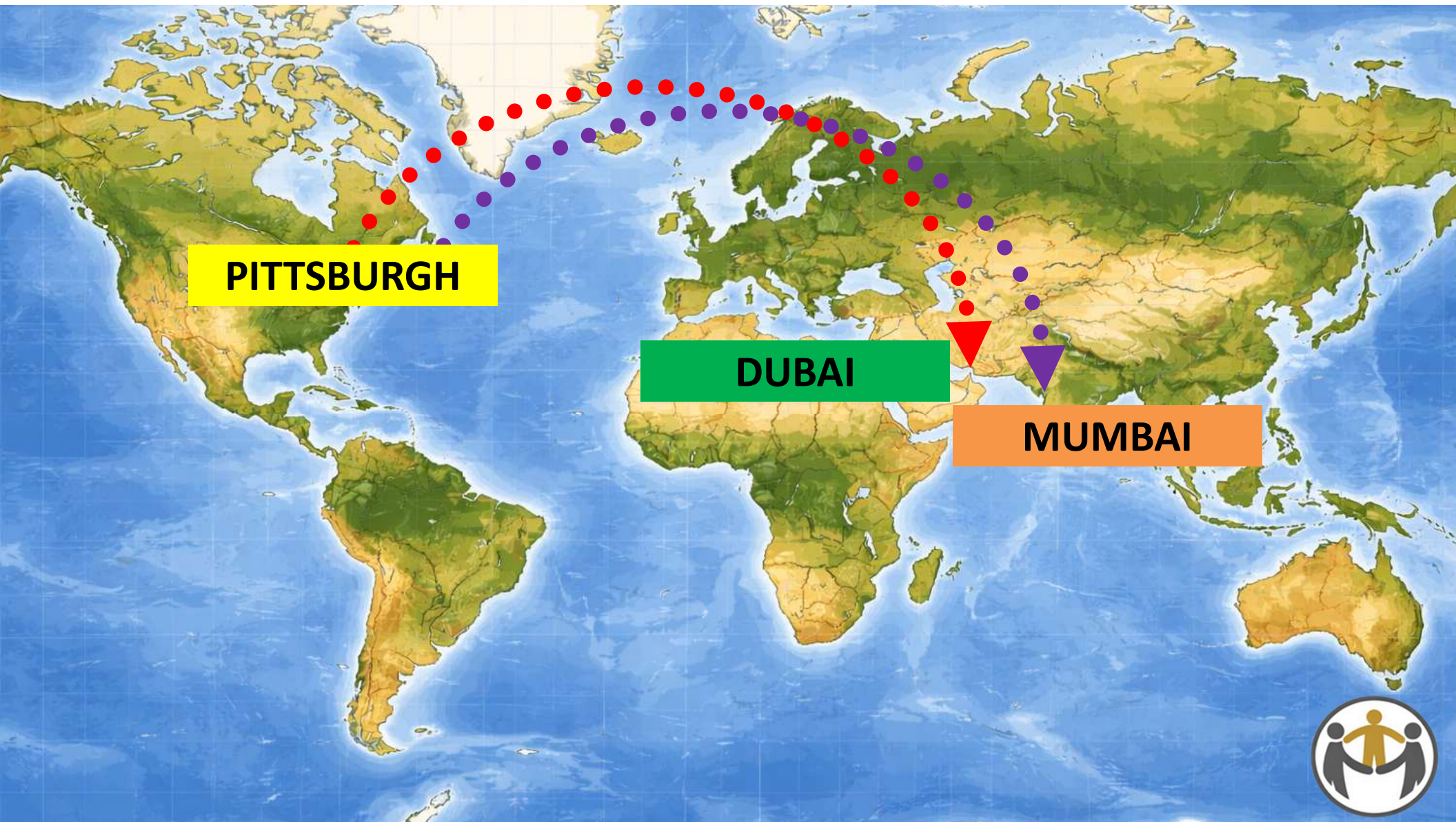


**PITTSBURGH**

**MUMBAI**












# LISTENING TO UNDERSTAND

isn't all that easy  
but it's doable

- 
- A photograph of two men sitting at a table, engaged in a conversation. The man on the left, with a beard and wearing a grey cardigan, is gesturing with his hands while speaking. The man on the right, also with a beard and wearing a dark blue shirt, is listening attentively. The background shows a simple room with a white wall and a window.
1. Recall God is present
  2. Aim to understand, not respond
  3. Remove phone, screens
  4. Don't interrupt
  5. Reflect back, don't diagnose, fix
  6. Ask fewer questions; affirm, clarify







# QUESTIONS

to ask to learn what's going on inside

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1. What were you thinking?
2. What were you feeling?
3. Was that hard for you?
4. Was that fulfilling?
5. Was that exciting?
6. That sounds scary.  
How are you processing that?
7. Where was God in that?
8. How do you think He saw it?
9. What does that  
mean to you?





*"I'm sorry, dear. I wasn't listening. Could you repeat what you've said since we've been married?"*



# Session 4

# Outside In

Next Level Brotherhood:  
Transform Hearts



Gary Fritsch



# Listening can be vulnerable

When I open my heart to listen to you  
When I make room for your experience  
When I truly try to understand you  
I let you deeply affect me  
You might change my mind  
Show me a new way  
You might show me I am wrong  
When I make my heart like soft wax for you  
to make an impression on me  
then listening is truly vulnerable.





Approaches to Listening:

Listen.

Empathy

Compassion

Affirmation

Transformational

Cooperation



**We are all tempted. We are all sinners. We all  
suffer**

Jesus had  
splugchnizomai  
shplank - nee - zo -  
my

He was

**MOVED WITH COMPASSION**



# Moved with Compassion

## **Matthew 9:36**

- Crowds “troubled and abandoned”
- Sends out the twelve

## **Matthew 14:14**

- Great crowd with many sick
- Heals their sick

## **Matthew 20:34**

- Two blind men crying out
- Restores their sight

## **Mark 1:41**

- Leper begging to be made clean
- Touches him; heals him

## **Mark 6:34**

- Sheep without a shepherd
- Teaches them many things

## **Mark 8:2**

- Hungry crowd with Him three days
- Feeds the 4,000

## **Luke 7:13**

- Widow grieving her only son
- Raises her son



# Affirmation (Conrad

~~Baars)~~  
*"Most people in their lives are only ever affirmed for doing what someone else expected of them."*

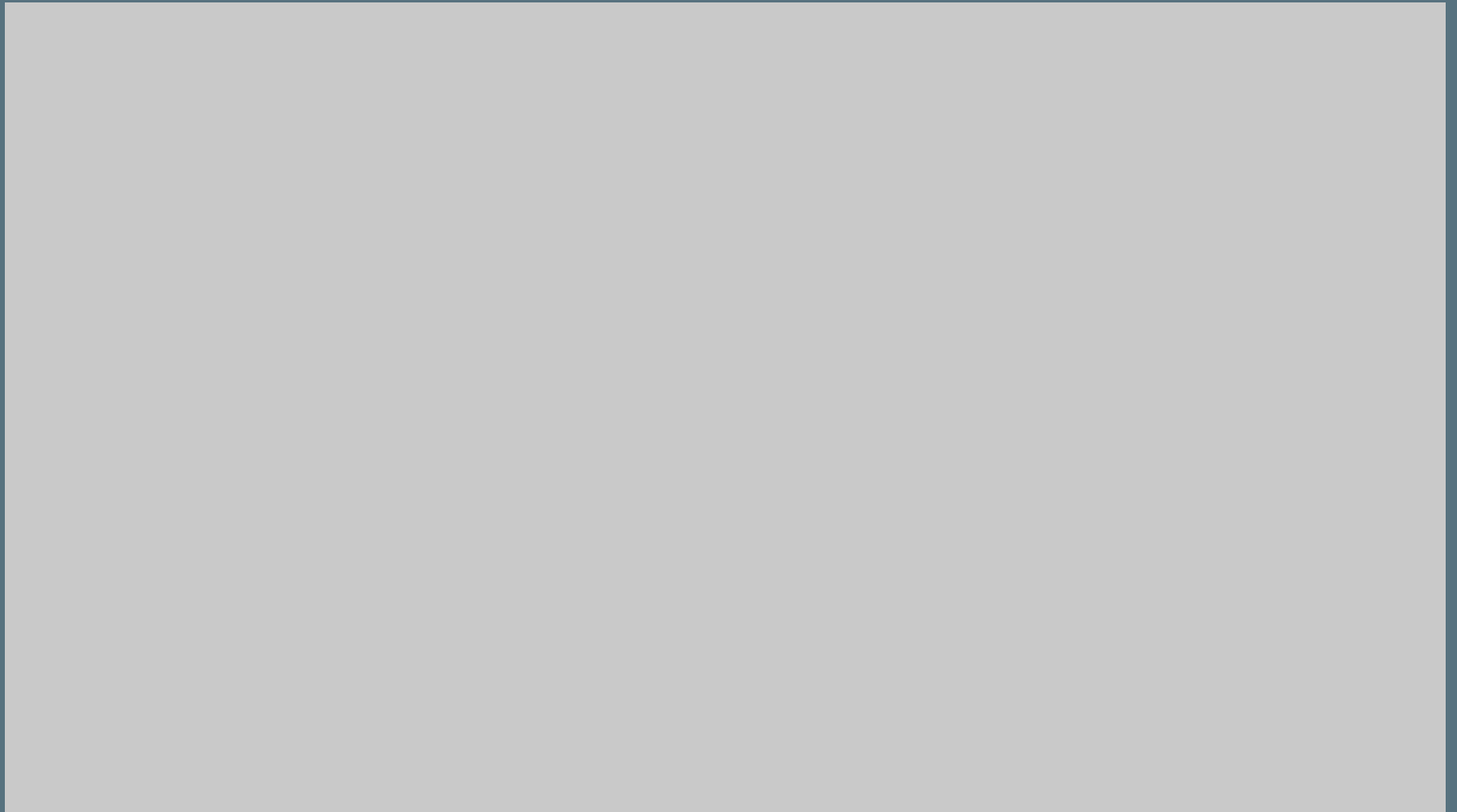
*-Joe Cavanaugh*

True affirmation is about your  
unique goodness

It doesn't seek to possess you, or  
use you, or change you

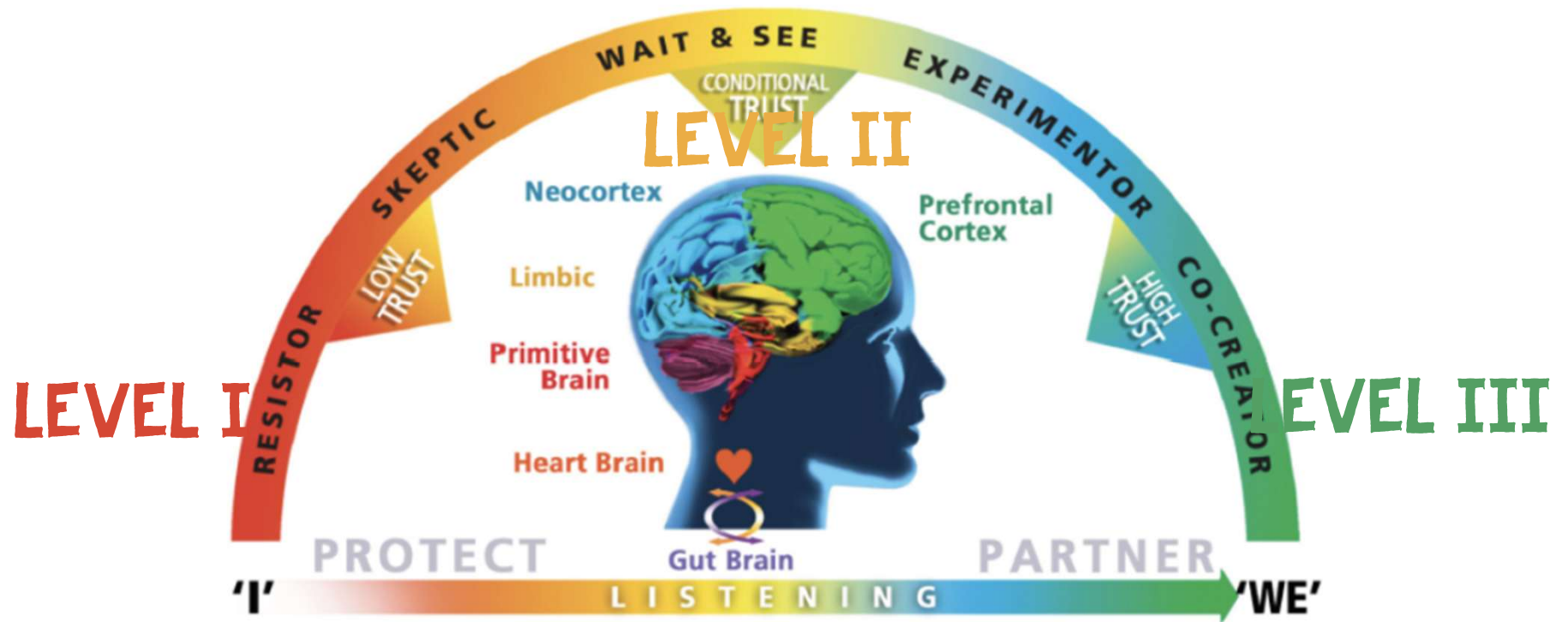
It is revealed genuinely through our  
visible, sensible, physical reactions

## FR. Boniface on Vulnerable



# WE ARE WIRED FOR IT

## CONVERSATIONAL INTELLIGENCE<sup>®</sup> DASHBOARD





## Level I: Transactional

**Tell and Ask:** Low Trust - Get what we need - Validate our view of reality

## Level II: Positional

**Advocate and Inquire:** Conditional Trust - based on shared position  
Advocating for my view - inquiring about yours - influence you to my view

## Level III: Transformational

**Share and Discover:** High Trust - my sharing sends a cue that I am willing to be vulnerable - others in conversation sense non-judgement and share more freely  
We discover more, grow more, create more

## Level I: Transactional

**Moses at the Burning bush:** Who am I that I should go? Who should I tell them sent me?

**God at the Burning bush:** I have witnessed the affliction of my people.

## Level II: Positional

**Moses:** But suppose they don't listen to me? but I am slow of speech and tongue

**God:** I will be with you.

**Abraham bargaining for Sodom:** Lord what if there are only 10?

## Level III: Transformational

**The Angel at the Annunciation:** Hail, full of grace. You have found favor.

**Mary at the Annunciation:** No objection, but 'how will this be?' Be it done unto me ...



## Barriers to Level III

### Conversation

- Temptations to fix
  - Being uncomfortable with silence
  - Being out of our own window of tolerance - feelings of stress and 'triggering'
  - Making Judgements
  - Spiritual Bypassing
    - Offer it up
    - God has been good to you
    - Forgive as God forgave you
    - Do not fear, have faith

# Wounds and

**Defenses**  
When we are vulnerable, there can be landmines.

Places where we 're-encounter' old wounds.

- avoidance
- aggression
- defensiveness
- self-
- condemnation
- shutdown
- fawning agreement
- self-justification

Underneath these defenses is something worth defending.



# CONNECTION

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting on a stone ledge in front of a large window with red curtains. The woman is on the left, looking towards the man on the right. The window has four panes with a circular pattern. The room has stone walls and a tiled floor.

The opposite of trauma is not 'no trauma'.

The opposite of trauma is ***connection***

God made our brains and nervous systems to ***need one another***

Trauma can be simply described as

**UNWITNESSED PAIN**

While our souls are designed to heal from painful events, they are not designed to heal in isolation from other people.

# Christian Reality

Walking with  
a brother

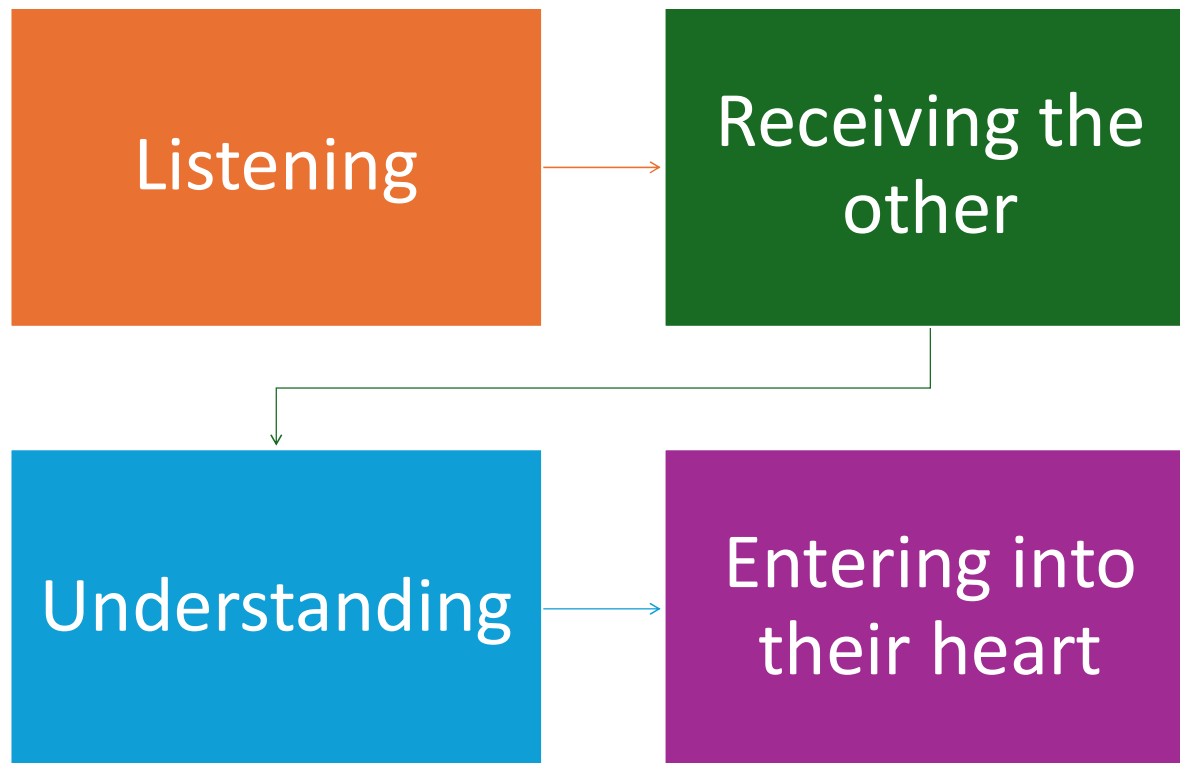


Matt Rosswog

## Session 5



# Accompaniment involves:





# Central Dynamic of Accompaniment

This dynamic applies across all church ministries and human relationships

The ultimate goal of accompaniment is holiness, which is understood as "perfection of love" in Christianity

A photograph of a group of people, likely in a church or community setting, with their hands raised in a gesture of praise or prayer. The image is slightly blurred, focusing on the hands in the foreground. The text "We are all Called to Holiness" is overlaid in the center.

We are all Called to Holiness

# Universal Call to Holiness

Holiness signifies being set apart and consecrated to God. It is a divine attribute that believers are called to emulate. The concept is deeply rooted in Scripture, with God commanding his people to be holy as He is holy. For instance, in Leviticus 11:44-45, God instructs, "For I am the LORD your God. consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, because I am holy." This call is reiterated throughout the Bible, emphasizing the distinctiveness of God's people from the surrounding nations.

## Cont.

- We become witnesses and memory keepers remembering on behalf of the church how Christ has revealed himself to us as a church through the scriptures, but so we can speak about him from personal experience.



# Key Elements for Striving for Holiness

- **Prayer:** A strong prayer life is foundational for growing in holiness. Through prayer, Catholics deepen their relationship with God, listen to His voice, and receive the grace needed to fulfill His will. Various forms of prayer, including personal prayer, communal prayer, and the Mass, are essential.
- **Sacraments:** The sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Confession, provide spiritual nourishment and healing. Frequent participation in these sacraments helps Catholics overcome sin and grow in virtue, making them more like Christ.
- **Virtue and Love:** Striving for holiness involves living out the virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, and kindness. It requires a commitment to moral excellence and a dedication to serving others.
- **Community:** Engaging with a community of faith is vital for spiritual growth. Catholics are encouraged to support one another in their journeys toward holiness, fostering an environment of love and accountability.

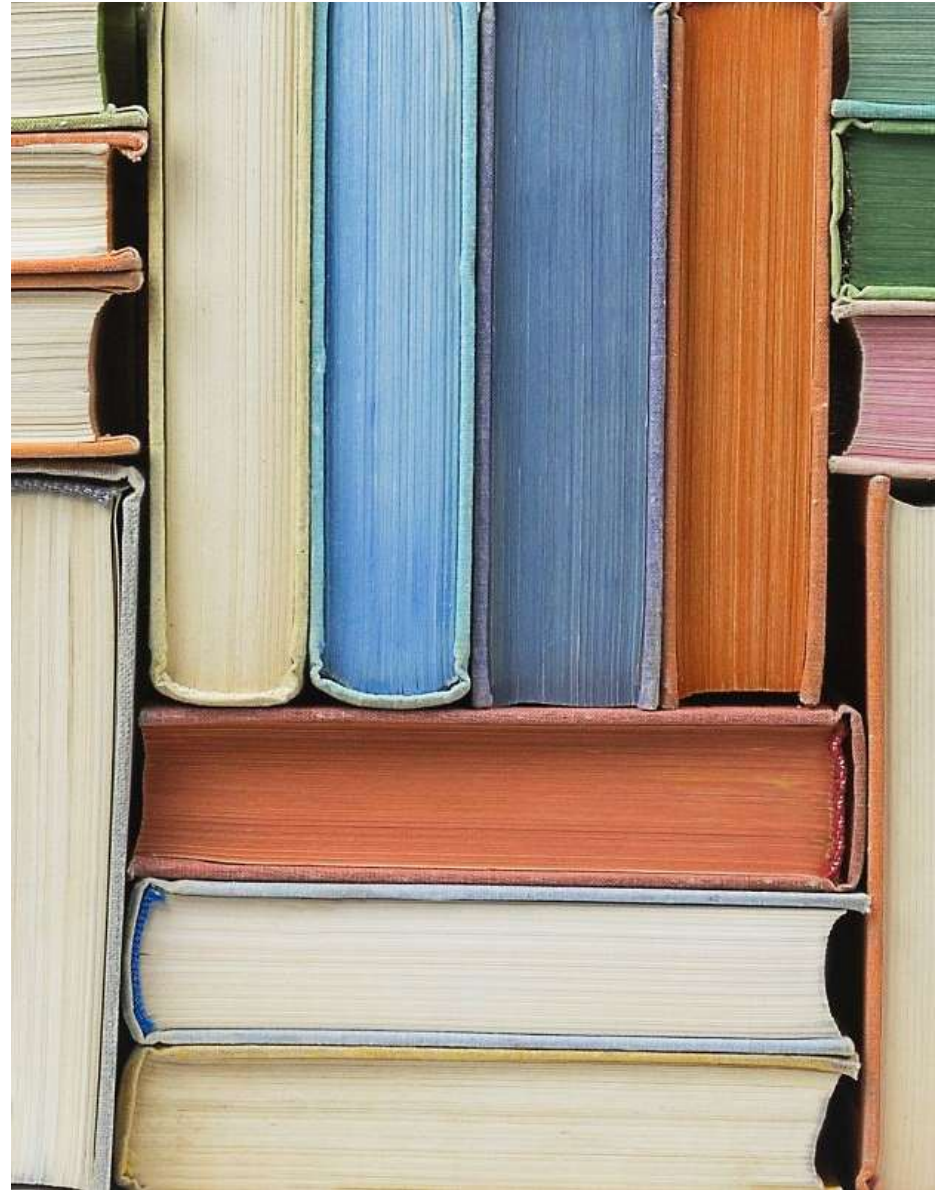


## Pope Francis speaks on Holiness

- He states that Holiness is a Gift from God and is not something that can be achieved on our own.
- Holiness is not only the prerogative of only a few. Holiness is a gift that is offered to all without exception so that it constitutes the distinctive character of every Christian.

# The 2020 Vatican Directory for Catechesis, 113 B

- The Catechist is an expert in the art of accompaniment, has educational expertise, is able to listen and enter into the dynamics of human growth, becomes a traveling companion with patience and a sense of gradualness, in docility to the action of the Spirit and through a process of formation helps his brothers to mature in the Christian life and journey toward God. The catechist, an expert in humanity, knows the joy and hopes of human beings, their sadness and distress and is able to situate them in relation to the Gospel of Jesus.





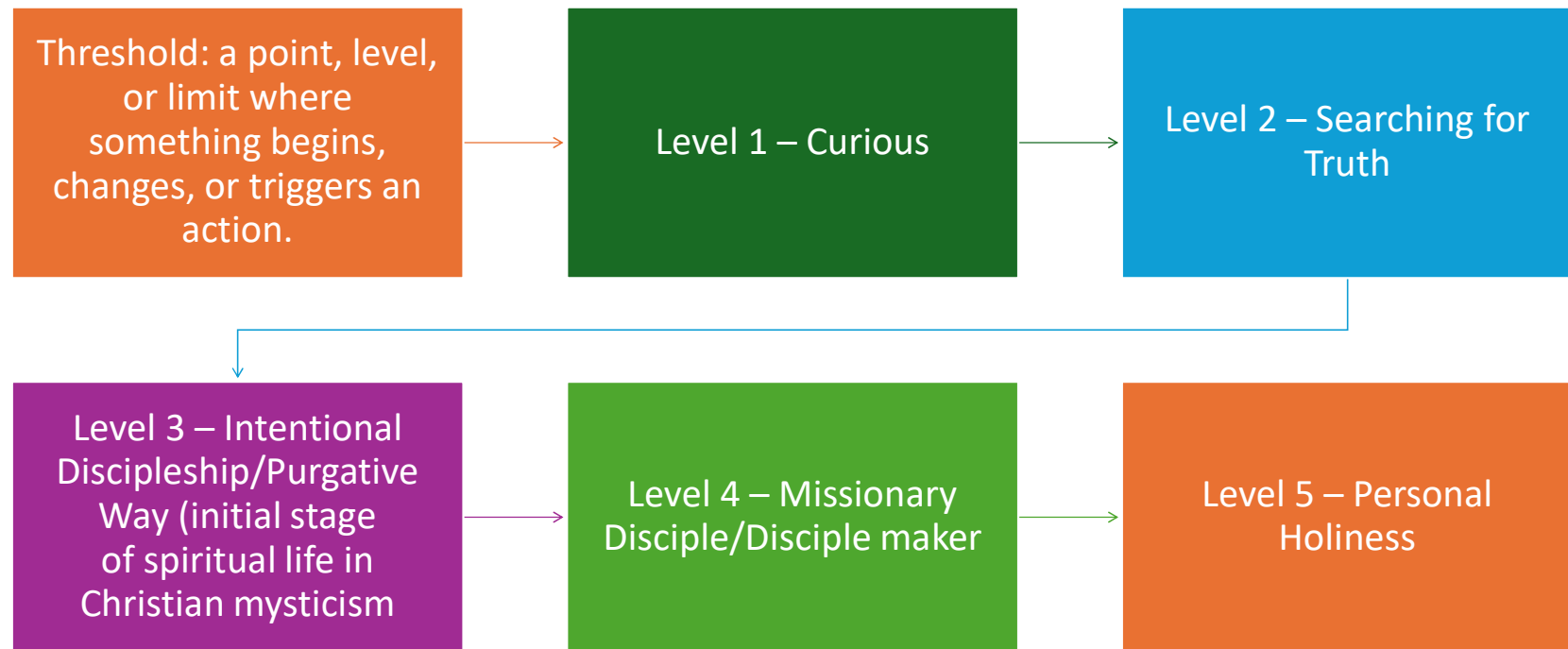
# Training in Holiness

- We have such a high standard of living as Christians. We are called for a genuine “training in holiness.” This training must integrate the resources from both traditional forms of individual and group assistance and more recent forms of support.



# Thresholds of Ongoing Conversion

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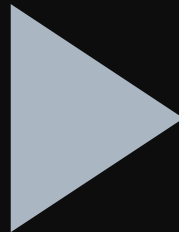


# Assessing Growth

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## Areas of Growth

- Prayer
- Community
- Mission



## Dimensions of Growth

- Knowledge
- Experience
- Habits

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# Key Responsibilities of a Husband

- Love and Sacrifice
- Leadership
- Understanding and Honor
- Provision
- Faithfulness
- Mutual Respect

# Matthew and Kristin





## Saturday

### Friday



Real  
Christianity



Inside  
Out



Circle of  
Trust



Outside  
In

### Sunday



Christian  
Reality



Real Christianity



Inside Out



Circle of Trust



Outside In



Christian Reality