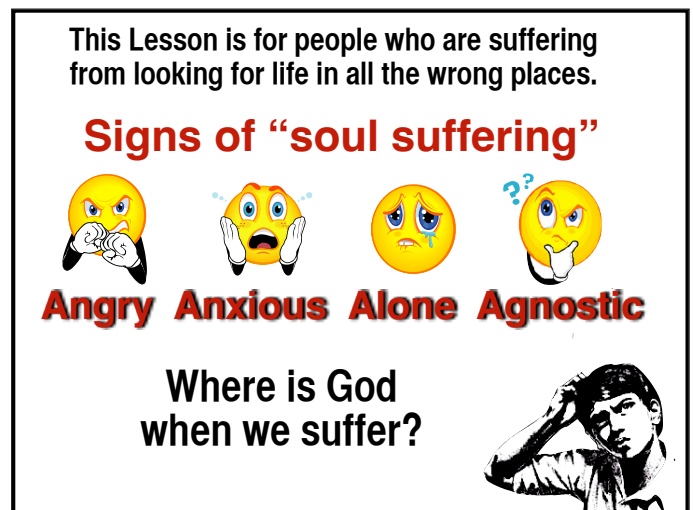
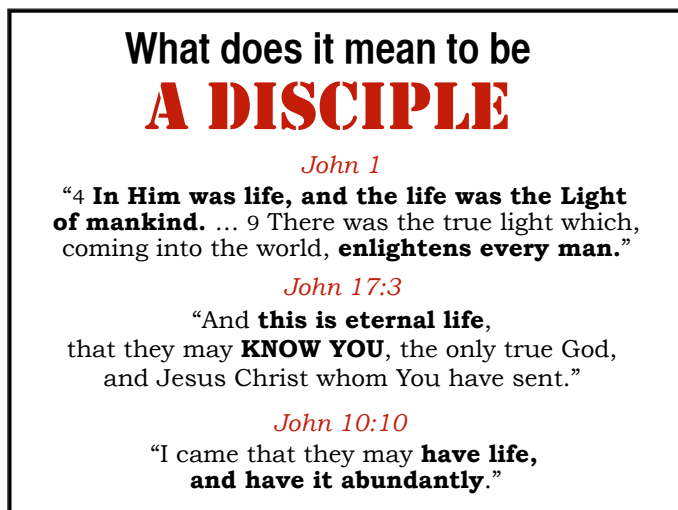
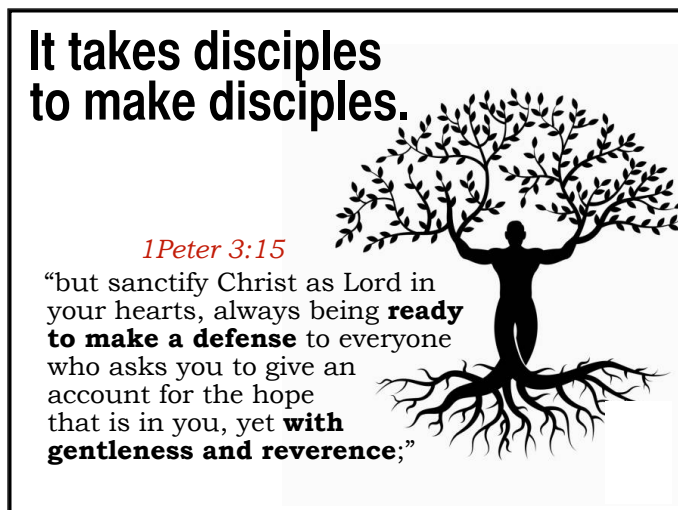
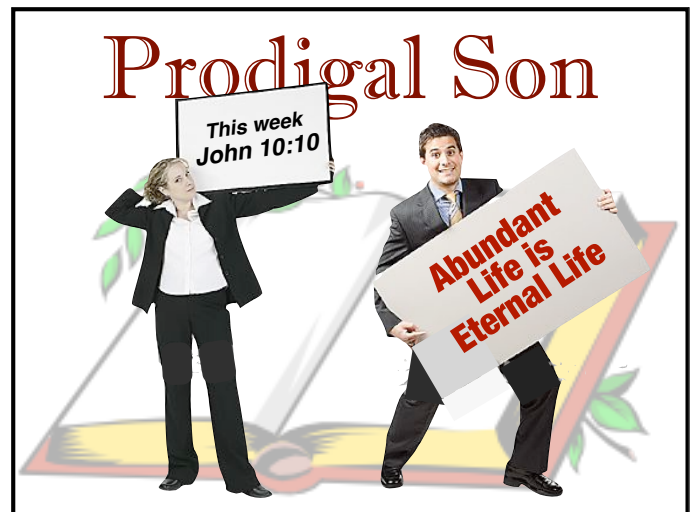
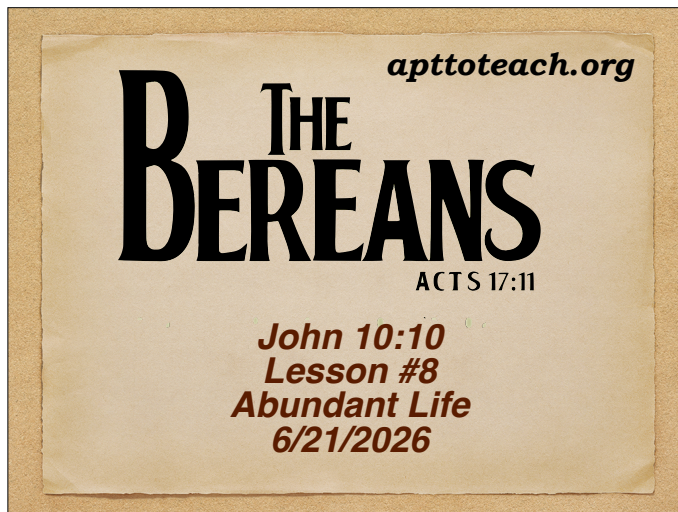




**"Eternal life"**  
is a quality of life in this world  
(not just something that starts in the world to come).

**it is being fully human**  
**(bearing the Image of God).**

**It is being true to our created self.**

Bell Hooks



"Love is moving toward another person's soul with a commitment to help them reach the deepest **desire of their heart.**"

**Do we know the deepest desire of the human heart?**

*Lessons in Discipleship from:*

**The Prodigal's model - insight through suffering.**

*John 10:10*

"The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; **I came that they might HAVE LIFE, and might have it abundantly.**"

**The Father's model - a memory and a treasure.**

*John 1:4*

"In Him was life, and the life was **the LIGHT OF MANKIND.**"

**The Older son's model - optics without heart.**

*John 5*

"39 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is **these that bear witness of Me**; 40 and you are **unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.**"

Discipleship Formation

Disciples put on a new self, and put off the old self.

**Get over yourself**

**Give yourself**

Disciples follow Christ  
- the Image of God  
- an abundant life  
- being fully human  
- the heart's desire.

Disciples delight themselves in the Lord, not this world.

**Accept yourself**

Disciples know & follow the deepest desire of their heart, not their flesh.

**Know yourself**

*Psalm 37:4*

**"Delight yourself also in the Lord,**  
and He shall give you  
**the desires of your heart."**

**Discipleship starts with the longing of the heart.**

*Matthew 6*

"33 But **seek first His kingdom and His righteousness**; and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore **do not be anxious** for tomorrow;"

"There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus."

Blaise Pascal

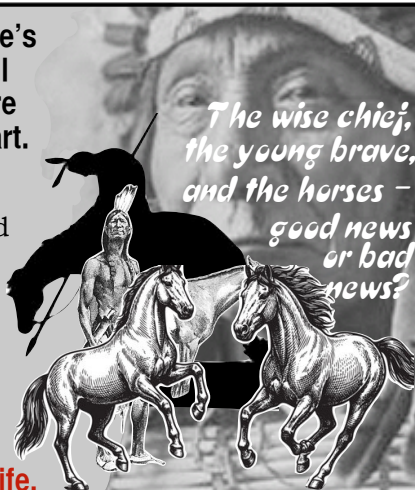


Controlling this life's circumstances will not satisfy the core desires of our heart.

*1 Cor. 15:19*

"If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied."

**We need a power that lifts us above the chaos of this life.**



*Psalm 37:4*

**"Delight yourself also in the Lord,**  
and He shall give you  
**the desires of your heart."**

**We need to see what is the root cause of the anger, anxiety, aloneness, & agnosticism**  
**- not just manage symptoms.**

**We need to address the (inner) heart,**  
**not the (outer) optics.**

**We often try to cover or control the symptoms**  
**without addressing the problem.**



*Psalm 37:4*

**“Delight yourself also in the Lord,  
and He shall give you  
the desires of your heart.”**

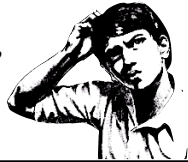
**“Delight”**

is from a Hebrew word which means  
**“being refreshed or satisfied”**

**We will not overcome soul sorrow until  
we have a vision of an abundant life.**

*John 6:68*

“Simon Peter answered Him, **“Lord,  
to whom shall we go? You have  
words of eternal life.”**”



**Do natural disasters show  
the acts of a sovereign God  
or call for the acts of a  
compassionate God?**

**Our life is shaped not so much  
by our circumstances as by our  
response to them.**

**God’s providential  
circumstances may  
not be clear, but His  
plan for our response is.**



In troubled times, our first  
question should not be,  
**‘HOW can I get out of this?’**

**but ‘WHAT should I get out  
of this and bring to this?’.**

“In the end, dear friend,  
it is always between us  
and God, not between  
us and them.”

**Mother Teresa**



**1 Cor. 13:4-7**

**our response to**

**circumstances**

**The WAY OF THE  
CROSS is a loving  
response to life’s  
circumstances.**



**It is the  
“salt”, “light”,  
“greater works”,  
“fruit of the Spirit”.**

patient  
kind  
not jealous  
does not brag  
is not arrogant  
does not act unbecomingly  
does not seek its own  
is not provoked  
does not take into account a wrong suffered  
does not rejoice in unrighteousness  
rejoices with the truth  
bears all things  
believes all things  
hopes all things  
endures all things

trials  
insults  
success of others  
success of self  
power and authority  
freedom  
competition  
challenging confrontation  
injustice  
failure of others  
gossip and slander  
loss  
doubts  
discouragement  
delayed expectations



**We tend to seek fullness of  
life, but in the distant land  
and by our own merit.**

The TOWER of  
Babel spirit  
is still alive.

as is the  
GOLDEN  
CALF  
of Israel.



*Psalm 37:4*

**“Delight yourself in the LORD;  
And He will give you  
the desires of your heart.”**

- The core desire of our heart is never satisfied by what a “worldly” mind offers.
- Answered prayer comes when the core desires of our heart are synced with God’s image in our heart.

**Serene, Secure, Significant, Sure  
Content, Courageous, Connected, Certain**

The core longings in life are neither created nor cured by our circumstances.

### Casual longings

#### Critical longings

#### Core longings



Effective prayer does not start with or focus on faith  
**so much as on a heart aligned with God's Image in all of us.**

### Why does God not give us what we ask for?

- We don't see the **TRUE** desire of our heart.
- We see **our CIRCUMSTANCES**, as the problem.
- We don't see **the WAY** of the Cross as our hope in this life.

Like the Prodigal son, it is not wise, **to let suffering go to waste.**

Like the Father, it is not loving to support, **a runaway son in a distant land.**

Like the Older brother, it is not enough to be at home, **in body only.**



**"love" "grace"**

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

**John 15:13**

*God's redemption has to do with our sins*  
**not our plans**



### The temptation of Jesus and all humanity

*Matthew 4*

#### Change the circumstances!

"<sup>3</sup> **Command** that these stones become bread."

#### Claim the promises!

<sup>6</sup> **He will command His angels concerning you** so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

#### Compromise the means!

<sup>9</sup> All these things I will give you, **if you (prostrate yourself before) me.**"

### Testimonials to the Way of the Cross

**Jesus' wilderness temptation**  
(Matt.4:1-11)

**Paul's thorn in the flesh**  
(2 Cor.12:7-10)

**Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane**  
(Matt.26:39)

**The Prodigal Son** (Lk.15:11-32)

**The Rich young Ruler** (Lk.18:18-27)

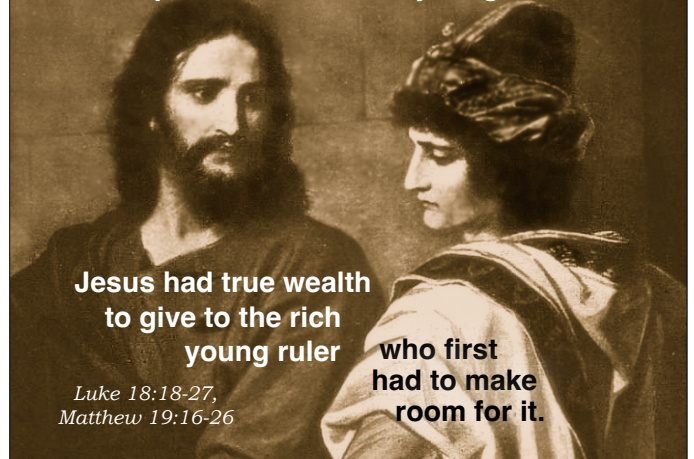
**The testimony of the early church**  
(1Cor.1:18-31)



### Matthew 6

“19 **Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.** 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 **for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.** ... 24 **No one can serve two masters;** for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. 25 For this reason I say to you, **do not be anxious for your life,**”

### the parable of two rich young rulers



Jesus had true wealth  
to give to the rich  
young ruler

Luke 18:18-27,  
Matthew 19:16-26

who first  
had to make  
room for it.

## Spiritual Audit

|                                      |                      |            |                           |                                         |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Signs of<br>a distant land's<br>pain | Angry                | Anxious    | Alone                     | Agnostic                                |
| Core of a<br>heart's desire          | Serene               | Secure     | Significant               | Sure                                    |
| Signs of<br>abundant life            | Content              | Courageous | Connected                 | Certain                                 |
| Source of<br>a home for<br>the soul  | "My peace<br>I give" | "Fear not" | "I am with<br>you always" | "Whoever<br>believes in<br>me has life" |

### The greater gift

"A monk in his travels once found a precious stone and kept it. One day he met a traveler, and when the monk opened his bag to share his provisions with him, the traveler saw the jewel and asked the monk to give it to him. The monk did so readily. The traveler departed overjoyed with the unexpected gift of the precious stone that was enough to give him wealth and security for the rest of his life.

However, a few days later he came back in search of the monk, found him, gave him back the stone, and entreated him, 'Now give me something much more precious than this stone, valuable as it is.



Anthony De Mello  
Indian Jesuit priest

**Give me that which enabled  
you to give it to me."**

### Psalm 37:4

As disciples of Christ, may we delight ourselves in the Lord, and address the deepest desires of our heart with peace, power & purpose, that this world cannot give or take away and can only come through Christ in whose name we pray.

## Prodigal Son

