

Interpretation

Discerning Problems Biblically

TGI – Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Week 11 – 12/5/16

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Introduction - Interpreting Information

1. Interpreting information refers to rightly discerning and interpreting facts through a biblical world-view, construct or framework of beliefs.
2. Re-interpretation is almost always needed
3. Without proper, accurate interpretation, one cannot offer practical answers or provide wise, biblical counsel for lasting change.

Interpreting Information Regarding ...

1. The Person (Engineer? Artist? Sensitive? Forceful?)
2. The Problems (Immediate? Engrained? Complicated?)
3. The Patterns of problems, thoughts/**themes** & behaviors
4. Their Perspectives (world-view) about...
 - a. Himself - “I have such low self-esteem... everywhere I ...”
 - b. his problems - Magnified? Minimized?
 - c. God – Close/far? Gracious? Unfair?
 - d. The solutions to his problems – “I must...”
5. The Motives of the heart, or idols

Interpreting Information Discerning Heart-Themes

Wisdom looks @ the 
with a Biblical World-view

Patience, time (rope)

Questions (bucket)

Discernment (tubs)

Interplay of the “tubs”



The Person – a Created Being

- “...then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground ... PHYSICAL
- and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.” SPIRITUAL (Gen. 2:7)
- ““Man shall not live by bread alone, PHYSICAL but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” SPIRITUAL (Mt.4:4; Deut.8:3)
- I believe that so-called “psychological problems” are either spiritual problems or physical problems or a combination of both.

Spiritual issues are *Heart-issues*

Discerning these issues begin with a biblical view of the nature of man

1. Spiritual - will exist through eternity future, non-material aspects
2. Emotional - like God experiences emotions
3. Relational - like God relates to other people in fellowship
4. Intellectual - like God, is rational; with a mind/heart that thinks, reasons, considers logically
5. Volitional/Responsible - given commands, expected to respond in worship, relationships, work, obedience.
6. Desiring being (vs. instinct-driven); Created with desires that long to be fulfilled.

We do what we do because we want what we want”

The Person & His Problems - Marred in 4 Arenas

In the world you will have trouble... (Jn. 16:33)

Vertical	Relationship with God
Internal	Relationship with ourselves: thoughts, guilt, self-perceptions, beliefs, expectations, emotions, affections
Horizontal	Relationships with <u>other sinners</u> Family & Friends Church-family Co-workers, Neighbors Enemies
External	Relationship with a broken universe (Rom. 8:22)

Interpret the Person - Believer or Unbeliever?

Their standing with God effects dynamics

1. Jesus & the Woman at the Well
2. Jesus & Nicodemus
3. Jesus & the Pharisees (Mt. 25, Simon)
4. Woman caught in adultery vs. the Pharisees
5. Peter (Mt. 16:17 vs. Mt. 16:23)
6. Gentiles or Christians (Eph. 4:17-24)
7. Galatians, Philippians, Philemon

Interpret the Person... Unbeliever?

1. All unbelievers are not equal (continuum) Atheist...
Heathen ... Pharisee ... “Sinner”?
- 
2. Show compassion, love, mercy
 3. Engage at their level of experience, interest
 4. Meet needs
 5. Share the practical nature of the Gospel to solve life's problems
 6. 2 Tim. 2:24-26

Interpret the Person... Believer

Mature or Immature?

¹¹About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹²For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. (Heb. 5:11-14)

Interpret the Person... Believer *Mature or Immature?*

¹⁴warn them that are unruly [defiant],
comfort the feeble-minded [discouraged],
support the weak [lacking-knowledge, experience, etc.],
be patient toward all men.

¹⁵ See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever
follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and
to all men. (1 Thess. 5:14-15)

Discern the Problem... *AND/OR Spiritual?*

Physical

1. Diet effects thinking & behavior
 - a. ADD, ADHD, OCD, epilepsy, schizophrenia, confusion, memory, bizarre behavior, autism
2. Sleep deprivation
3. Yeast infections
 - a. psychotic symptoms, schizophrenia, neurosis
4. Gastrointestinal disorders; tumors; diabetes, cancer, aging, dementia, brain injuries
5. Drugs, medications, alcohol, etc.

Discern the Problem... *Harvest?*

Heat or

Heat – suffering

- a. **Have been sinned against**
 - i. **Bad theological teaching** (woman at the well)
 - ii. **Sinful home environment** (Joseph)
 - iii. **Unloving treatment of all kinds** (Stephen, Paul, Peter)
- b. **Life-circumstances**
 - i. **Job loss**
 - ii. **Physical health issues**
 - iii. **Environment** (economy, weather, political, social)

Discern the Problem... *Harvest?*

Heat or

Harvest – consequences of sin

- a. **Cain, “*you must master it*”**
- b. **Criminal activity**
- c. **David, “*The sword...evil...wives...*”** 2 Sam. 12:10ff
- d. **Adultery, unfaithfulness**
- e. **Dishonesty**
- f. **Life-dominating (addictive) behaviors**
- g. **Divorce**
- h. **Anorexia**

Discern the Problem - *Caused by Harvest*

Heat

Physical Problems can be caused by sin..

1. Shame
2. Unresolved Guilt
3. Lack of forgiveness
4. Bitterness, anger, hatred
5. Poor theology
 - a. Worry
 - b. Anger, bitterness
 - c. Rebellion, blaming God

***Natural
consequence?***

***Law of
Reciprocity?...***

***Don't assume
that you
know!!***

Discern the Problem...

Heat AND

Harvest - Judgment

PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL

²⁰“The LORD will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. ²¹ The LORD will make the pestilence [disease] stick to you until he has consumed you off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ²² The LORD will strike you with wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with drought and with blight and with mildew. They shall pursue you until you perish. ²³ And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron. ²⁴ The LORD will make rain ...powder. From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed. (Deut. 28:20-24)

Discern the Problem...

Heat AND

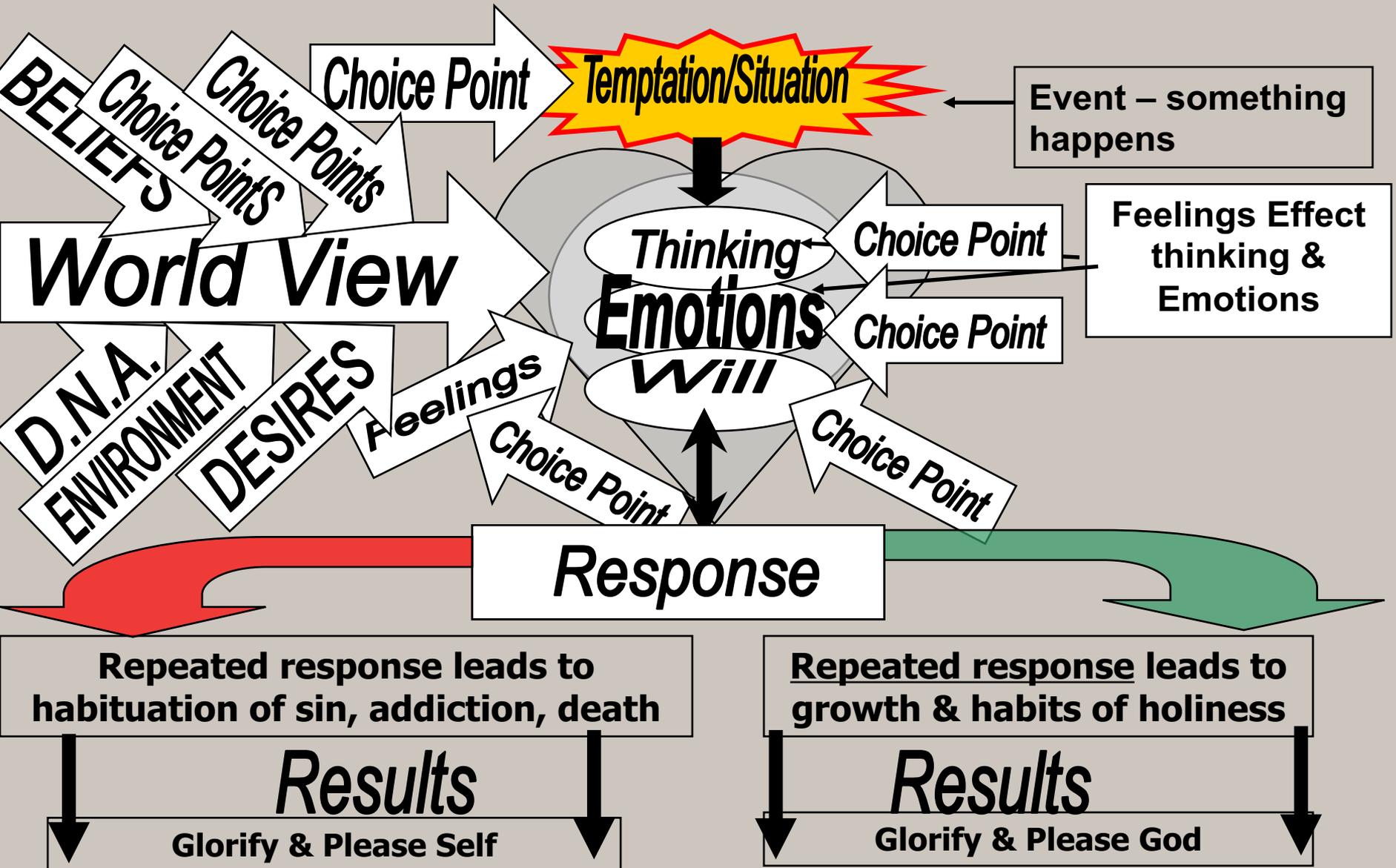
Harvest – Discipline

¹O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath. ²Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for **my bones are troubled**. ³**My soul also is greatly troubled**. But you, O LORD—how long? ⁴Turn, O LORD, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love. ⁵For in **death** there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you praise? ⁶I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. ⁷**My eye wastes away** because of grief; **it grows weak** because of all my foes. (Ps. 6:1-7)

Sensitive to Suffering

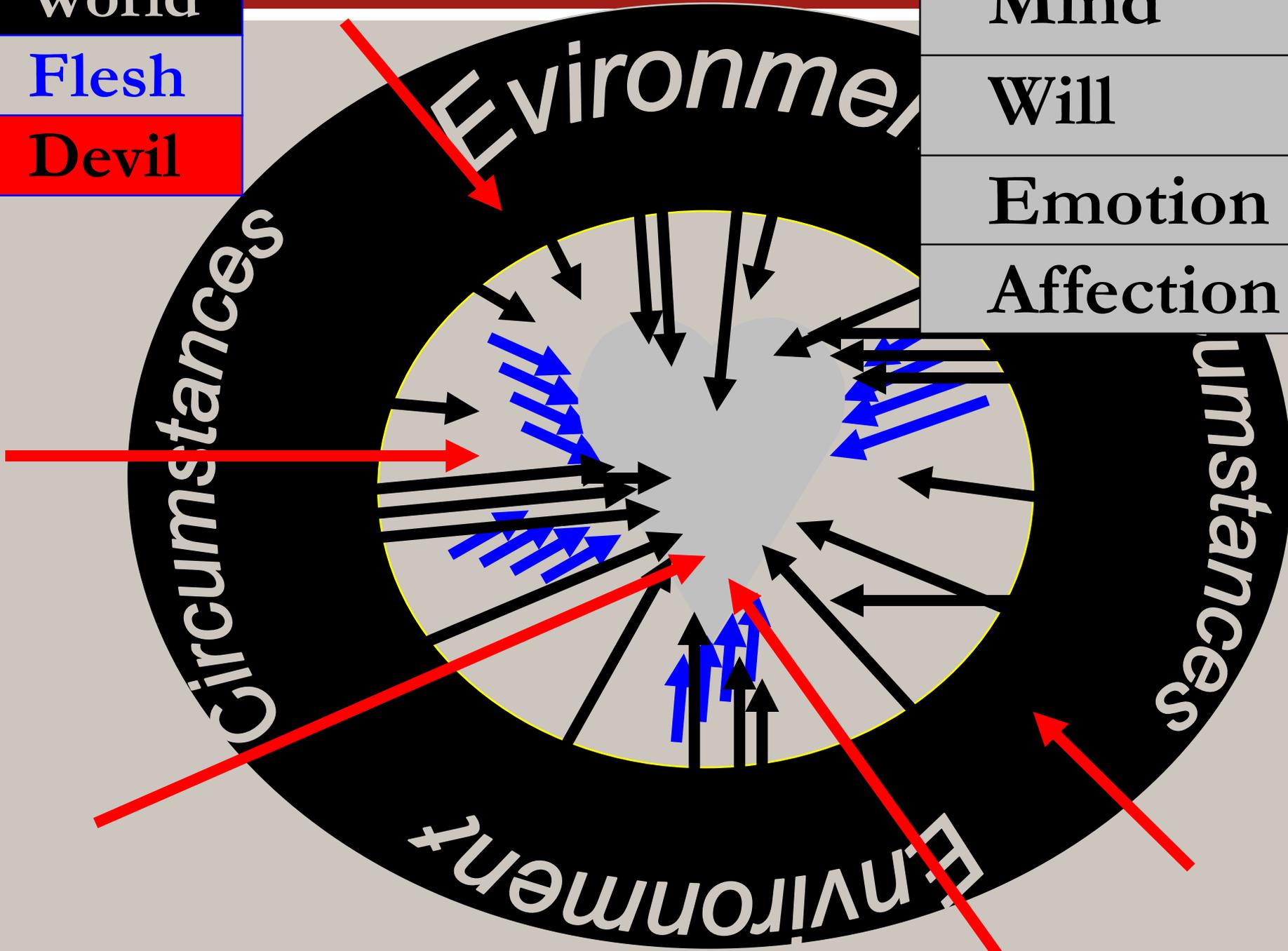
1. ¹Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ²Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. (Gal.6:1-3)
2. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. (Rom. 12:15)

The Patterns



World
Flesh
Devil

Mind
Will
Emotion
Affection

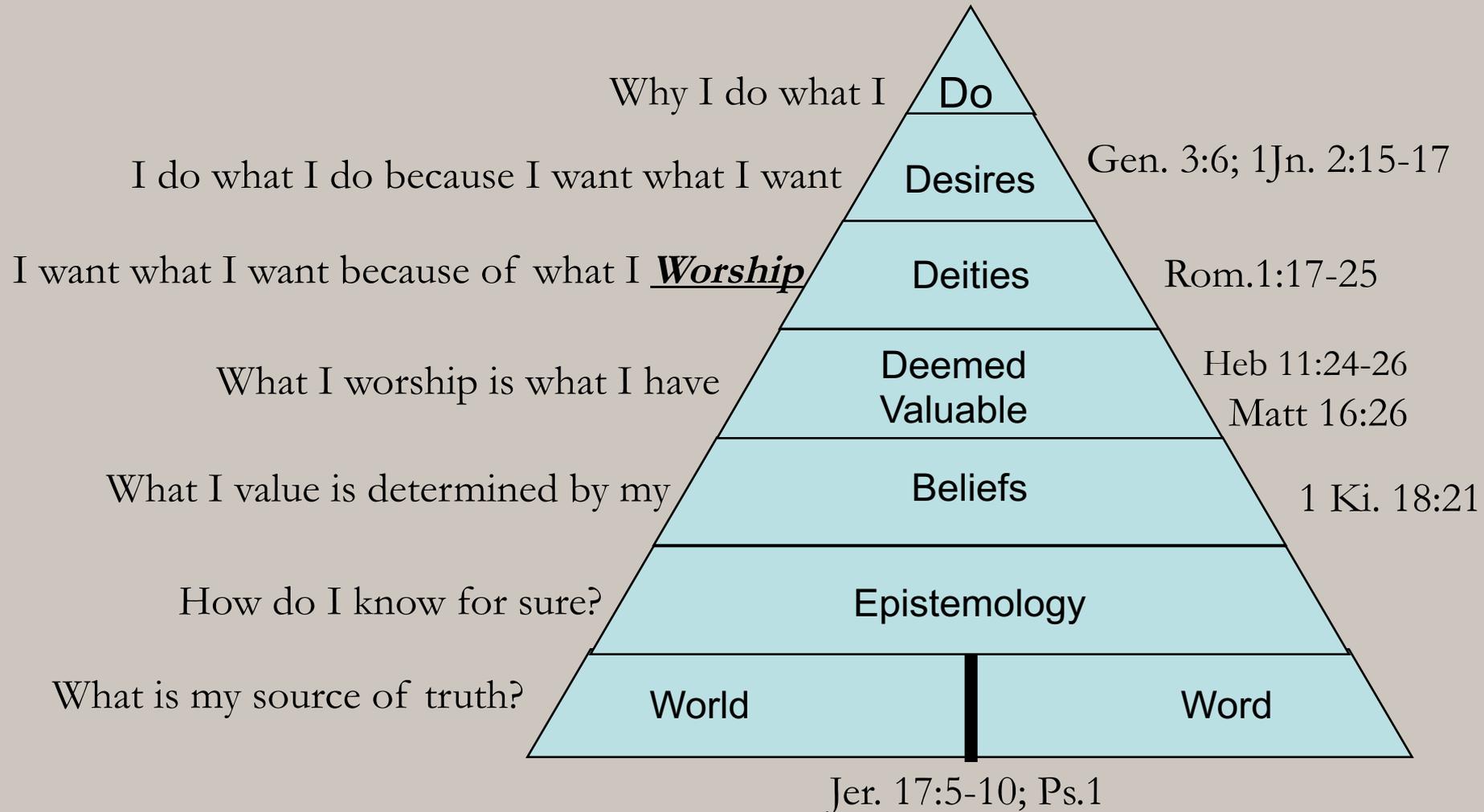


The Patterns

1. I struggle with pornography, normally on Saturday nights
2. I struggle with depression, mainly after family gatherings; during holidays
3. I typically binge when I'm sad or upset
4. I/he get angry whenever....every time...when
5. “If only...”

Perspectives & Motives - Shaped by World-View

Why do I do what I do?



Interpret the Perspectives

1. I have low self-esteem
2. I'm a victim of abuse...
3. He treats me this way because of his childhood...
4. I look at God this way because my dad...
5. I come from an alcoholic/broken home...
6. No one should ever experience what I did...
7. *"I'm angry at God's sovereignty..."*

Interpret the Perspectives

1. I have OCD, depression, a chemical imbalance
2. I am an alcoholic; I'm in recovery
3. I've learned that my child has ODD
4. I tend to be wired a bit tight...
5. If my husband would just...
6. I wouldn't have any problems if it weren't for
7. Why is God doing this to me?

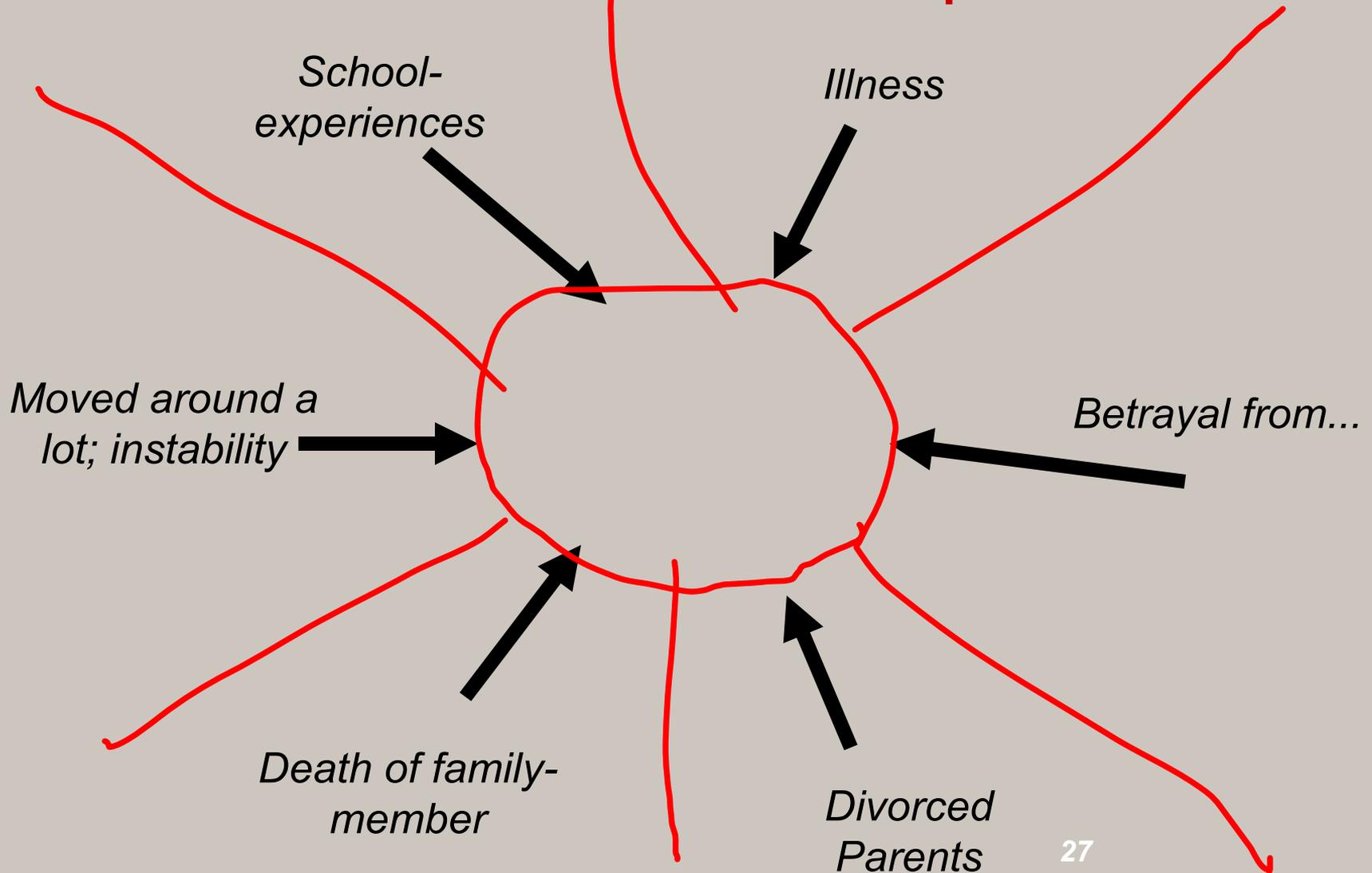
Interpret the Perspectives

1. It's just so unfair...
2. My dad didn't deserve this, he was a good man
3. My child shouldn't have to go through this
4. Why doesn't God answer my prayers?
5. Interpretation – using biblical descriptions that point to the heart and the answers/solutions.

Arrange the Information

1. A Satellite-view
2. Understand the “Time-line”
3. Draw a Family-tree
4. Look for “Highs” & “Lows”; “left-hand turns”; Life-defining-experiences
5. Identify and name define the major pieces
6. Draw a “Life-Pie”

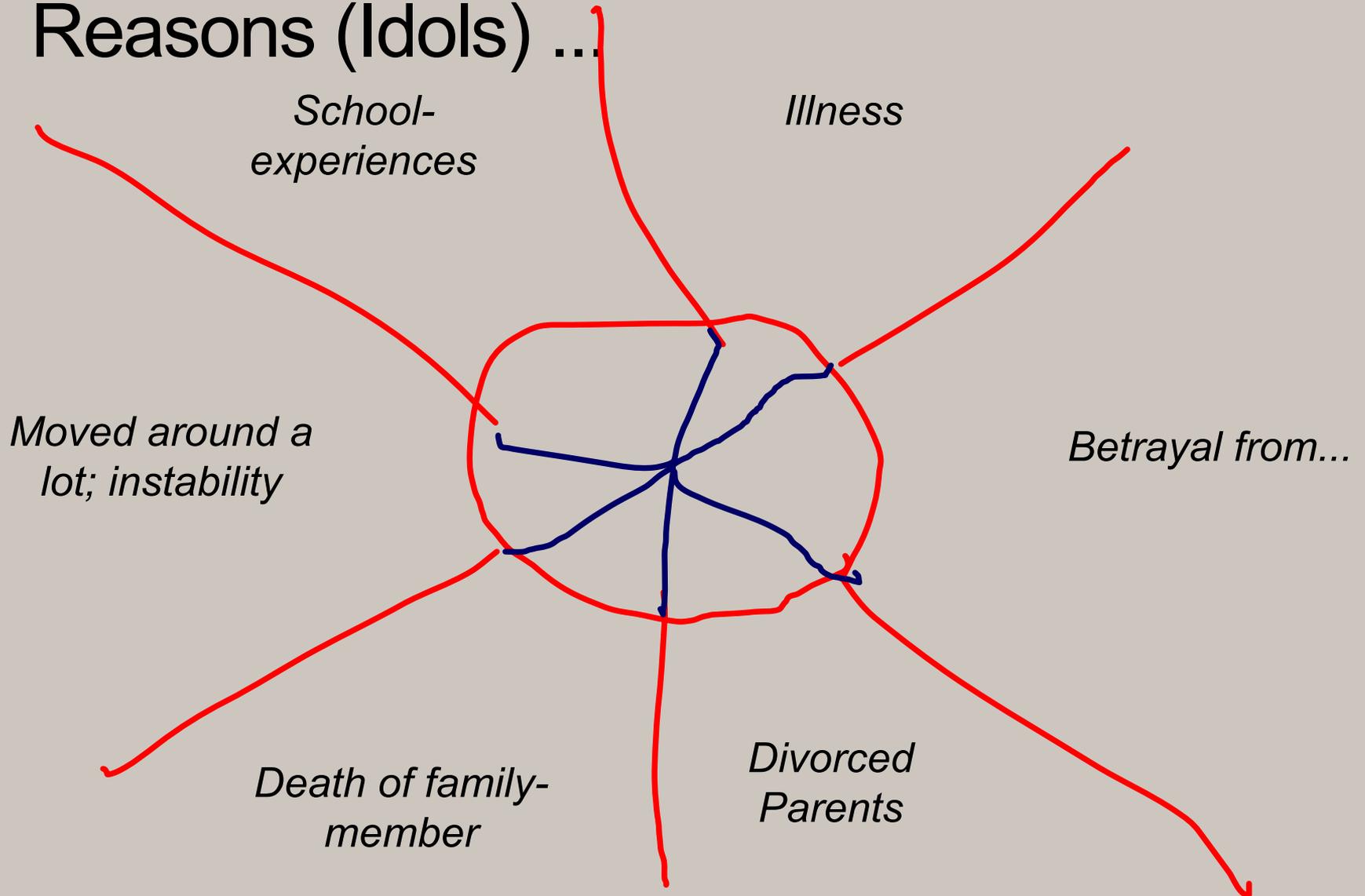
Arrange the Information – The “Life-Pie” – “Trouble-pie”



Discern the Information

1. Is it possible...?
2. Clarify what you've heard
3. Check your own perceptions
4. Clarify and Discern patterns
5. Clarify and Determine theological history
6. Clarify and Discern the world-view
7. Clarify and Discern the motivations
8. Clarify and Discern the idolatries

Describe the Perspectives, Patterns, & Reasons (Idols) ...



Homework

1. Listen to yourself talk/thinking this week; see if you can discern a pattern or perspective that may need to be reinterpreted.
2. Watch “Why Do I Do What I Do?”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvtvMMs3_Jk

Going Deeper

1. *Crosstalk, Where Life and Scripture Meet*, Michael R. Emlet
2. *Seeing with New Eyes*, Powlison
3. *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, Paul Tripp

Next Week and Beyond

- December 12th – LAST CLASS of SEMESTER
 - Lesson: Giving Instruction
 - Teacher: Kevin Martin
- January 9th – First Week of Spring Semester
 - Do not need to register
 - Contact Heather with questions
(heather@bethanycommunitychurch.org)