

1. Get Acquainted: Sharing Parts of Our Story (10 min)

- Tell the story of a hardship you have faced and how you reacted in:
 - Fight
 - Flight
 - Froze
 - Faith
- TimO's Examples:
 - Fight – I fought against my clumsiness in sports by doing extra drills at home.
 - Flight – I quit 2 basketball programs rather than face the opportunity to stay and work for change.
 - Froze – Feeling the pressure of the night getting away from me, I froze and asked my wife to marry me outside the door of Tom's Steakhouse (now Fred's market). Ugh!
 - Faith – I asked to plant a church, got turned down and was satisfied that God would work to do His will and I did not need to worry or force it.

2. Kingdom Centered Prayer: (10 min)

1. Adoration - Worship the LORD for His steadfastness. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit that He is solidly trustworthy in the midst of everything unsettled or unpredictable in this world.

2. Confession - How have you lived agitated or grumbling in the midst of hardships? Confess your pride and unbelief to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and settle you under His good rule

3. Thanksgiving - Give thanks to Jesus that HE is solid and faithful in the midst of everything else which is temporary and fleeting. Thank Him that His work is finished, His work to be *cursed in our place so that we could be blessed*.

4. Supplication Others - Who do you know that struggles with hope? Pray for them, asking the Lord to help them see in Him that their greatest threats are answered and that their greatest hopes are guaranteed.

5. Supplication Personal - Ask the Holy Spirit to bear in you His fruit of love and joy. Pray for such a clear sense of Jesus' steadfastness on the compass of your heart, that you can set your course resolutely toward Him.

3. Worship: Steadfast, staying the course in trying times. (10 min)

My brother Vincie is a deep and passionate person. Now that he is in heaven, I am certain those traits are even greater. Vincie loves poetry and would recite it often. He loves this poem by Robert Service and introduced it to me in a prayer he prayed over his son, Oliver the first, born 1 ½ lbs and only as long as my hand. Oliver was a born premature and had to endure many surgeries in the first few days of his life. I will never forget Vincie as he prayed, cried and worshipped God for the gift of this little boy. Vincie would often muse that non-Christians often wrote about the struggle of life better than Christians.

Read the following poem slowly and enjoy the call to endurance and steadfastness then spend some time rejoicing in the Lord's endurance and steadfast love for you and that He would grow those qualities in your heart.

The Quitter -

When you're lost in the Wild, and you're scared as a child,
And Death looks you bang in the eye,
And you're sore as a boil, it's according to Hoyle
To cock your revolver and . . . die.

But the Code of a Man says: "Fight all you can,"
And self-dissolution is barred.
In hunger and woe, oh, it's easy to blow . . .
It's the hell-served-for-breakfast that's hard.

"You're sick of the game!" Well, now that's a shame.
You're young and you're brave and you're bright.
"You've had a raw deal!" I know — but don't squeal,
Buck up, do your damndest, and fight.

It's the plugging away that will win you the day,
So don't be a piker, old pard!
Just draw on your grit, it's so easy to quit.
It's the keeping-your chin-up that's hard.

It's easy to cry that you're beaten — and die;
It's easy to crawfish and crawl;
But to fight and to fight when hope's out of sight —
Why that's the best game of them all!

And though you come out of each grueling bout,
All broken and battered and scarred,
Just have one more try — it's dead easy to die,
It's the keeping-on-living that's hard.

4. Sermon Reflection: (10 min)

The Trial – We are at WAR! We suffer now. We react now.

- A Season of Tension – Both External and Internal
 - What are some tensions outside of you that concern you?
 - What are some of your internal conflicts that are a struggle for you?
 - How are you reacting to those tensions?
 - Fight??
 - Flight??
 - Freeze??
 - Faith??

Our Eternal Hope – Jesus

- Jesus our solution – His Work and His Return
 - What is your greatest threat?
 - How does Jesus' work and return comfort you?
 - What is your greatest yearning?
 - How does Jesus' work and return satisfy you and even make you joyful?

Faithful Response: How should we respond when things are against us? IN Patient Faith

- What is our response to hardship? Believe ON Jesus then:
 - Be patient – God is in control
 - Don't Grumble – Think of others
 - Ask to help – How can I help?
- Our Response to Hardship – confident in the settings and course of our hearts - Jesus

5. Mission: Setting The Course of Our Day and Week (10 min)

- Establish Our Hearts: Charting our course to know, love and rejoice in Jesus' work for us by serving and loving our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and our enemies.
 - Think of your week –
 - Who can you serve this week?
 - Who can you give words of encouragement?
 - Who can you pray for that is suffering hardship?
 - How can you be a blessing to them?

6. Jesus From Others (10 min)

Close your time together in letting each person share something they came to love about Jesus from something someone in the group shared during your time together.

- What do you love more about Jesus from what someone shared during our CG tonight?