

Take in all of the passages like a deep breath. Let them inform and become the foundation of our time together.

It Begins with God's Love and Care

Exodus 3:7-8 - The Lord said, “**I have indeed seen** the misery of my people in Egypt. **I have heard** them crying out because of their slave drivers, and **I am concerned** about their suffering. So **I have come down to rescue** them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land **into a good and spacious land**, a land flowing with milk and honey...”

- ⇒ I see you
- ⇒ I hear you
- ⇒ I am concerned about you
- ⇒ I can help you
- ⇒ I will be gracious to you

God Is Not Elsewhere

Acts 17:23 – In him we live and move and have our being.

God Initiates, Carries & Completes

Philippians 1:6 – He who began a good work in you will carry it onto completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

We Remain Attached

John 15:4-5 - Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

We Are Transformed

Romans 12:1, 5, 9 – Be transformed by the renewing of your mind (NIV). Let's just go ahead and be who we were made to be. Love from the center of who you are (MSG).

Fruit Emerges

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

How do these verses strike you? What emerges from within you as you hear them? I hope they inspire you today and that you have a deeper sense of living, moving and having your being in God.

Reflection

- I invite you to ponder these verses. What does the progression mean to you?
- If you were to create your own scripture-based paradigm, what verses would you choose?
- What is the trellis of your own life? What supports you as you make your way forward in formation and leadership?

ONGOING SOUL CARE

Daily

Enjoy five minutes of presence.

Weekly

Make space for reflection.

Monthly

Place yourself in receptive mode.

Quarterly

Assess your patterns and make adjustments.

Yearly

Engage a grand examen.

Remember

“Unnatural, frantic, anxious work, work done under pressure of greed or fear or any other inordinate passion, cannot properly speaking be dedicated to God, because God never wills such work directly.” (Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, p. 19)

John 15:5 - I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.