

1. I am growing in my own self-differentiation and emotional maturity. Can I be who I choose to be, without worrying about what others might think about me? What is my best thinking telling me to do? I believe that God’s voice joins my voice when I stop to reflect and to think clearly.
  - a. I am responsible for myself. What do I think? What do I believe? What will I do?  
*I will wear a mask over my face every time I go out to protect myself from catching Covid-19.*
  - b. I am responsible to others – to love them well. What does love look like?  
*I will wear a mask over my face every time I go out to protect others from catching Covid-19 from me.*
  
2. Something to consider for our times - from the book *Good to Great* by Jim Collins.

Collins refers to a concept that he calls the “Stockdale Paradox.” The Stockdale Paradox is:  
**“Retain faith that you will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties...and at the same time...confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.”**

Unrealistic optimists don’t make it. We must balance hope with honesty about the most brutal facts.

What are the most brutal facts about this pandemic?

What can you do to encourage yourself and be hopeful during this pandemic?

“Life is unfair – sometimes to our advantage, sometimes to our disadvantage. We will all experience disappointments and crushing events somewhere along the way, setbacks for which there is no reason and no one to blame. It might be disease, it might be injury, it might be an accident, it might be losing a loved one; it might be getting swept away in a political shake-up; it might be getting shot down over Vietnam and thrown into a POW camp for eight years. What separates people, Stockdale taught me, is not the presence or absence of difficulty, but how they deal with the inevitable difficulties of life. In wrestling with life’s challenges, the Stockdale Paradox has proved powerful for coming back from difficulties not weakened but stronger.”

“The Stockdale Paradox is a signature of all those who create greatness, be it in leading their own lives or in leading others.”
  
3. Be aware of how prone we all are to want to **blame** someone or something for our struggles. Blaming is not helpful. Blaming is a waste of emotional energy and is often polarizing. Blaming is not productive. Focus on your own thinking, and your own behavior. What will you do to take responsibility for yourself? Blaming is an indication of a lower level of emotional maturity.

