Discipling People Through Difficulty

In this session, we’ll address walking alongside people in the midst of suffering and struggles. It will discuss how we embrace this reality as a place of spiritual growth, even as God ministers to us in the desert and the wilderness just like He did Moses, Elijah, Jesus, and Paul. We’ll explore how our weaknesses are an important aspect as we disciple others.

**Rick Hill** works for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, majoring on delivering training and developing resources in the areas of discipleship and leadership. Rick serves as an Elder in Carnmoney Church just outside Belfast and has been involved in the leadership team of a fresh church plant into the city centre in recent years. Prior to this, Rick was involved in youth ministry for over a decade and remains passionate about raising up emerging leaders, leading to the establishment of Pioneer – a leadership development network in Ireland. Rick is married to Sarah and dad to Noah and Micah. He is also a keen runner.

1. **The Wilderness**

Exodus 3:1-6

* 1. Encounter

“*There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush.”*

* 1. Formation

*Learning to see things from God’s perspective*

* 1. Preparation

*A liminal, ‘in-between’ space used by God to prepare significant leaders for what’s about to come in their lives.*

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.”* James 1:2-3

1. **Practical Ways of Discipling Through Difficulty**
   1. The Appropriateness of Lament
   2. The Importance of Presence
   3. The Helpfulness of Normality
   4. The Need for Hope
   5. The Permission to Leave Alone
   6. The Health of Weakness
   7. The Creativity of Care
   8. The Uniqueness of Prayer
   9. The Doorway to Teaching

***Suggested Resources:***

Proximity – Seasons of Life: www.presbyterianireland.org/proximity

This resource explores 7 key seasons of life such as suffering, grief and change. Each session contains a Bible passage to read along with a short commentary or reflection on it. This is designed for a disciple-making relationship, not just spoon-feeding people the answers but helping to teach people to reflect on God’s word for themselves. Some discussion questions are provided to stimulate conversation together and push people towards action.

***Suggested Readings:***

“Leading with a limp” by Dan Allender

“Emotionally Healthy Discipleship” by Pete Scazzero