

IELC 2025

International Educational Leadership Conference

FEAR NOT!
for I am with you



Facing Today's Challenges with Wisdom

Paul Madsen, ACSI Europe

There are a lot of mysteries in life...

these are some that I think about:

- The way that music touches the heart with deep longing and with ecstatic joy
- The uniqueness of the human body's design and thinking processes even though we share so much with the rest of creation
- The profound way that a numerical expression can explain a physical reality in the universe
- The role of the Jewish people through history to suffer so much and yet be preserved as a distinct people group, often at the center of world history

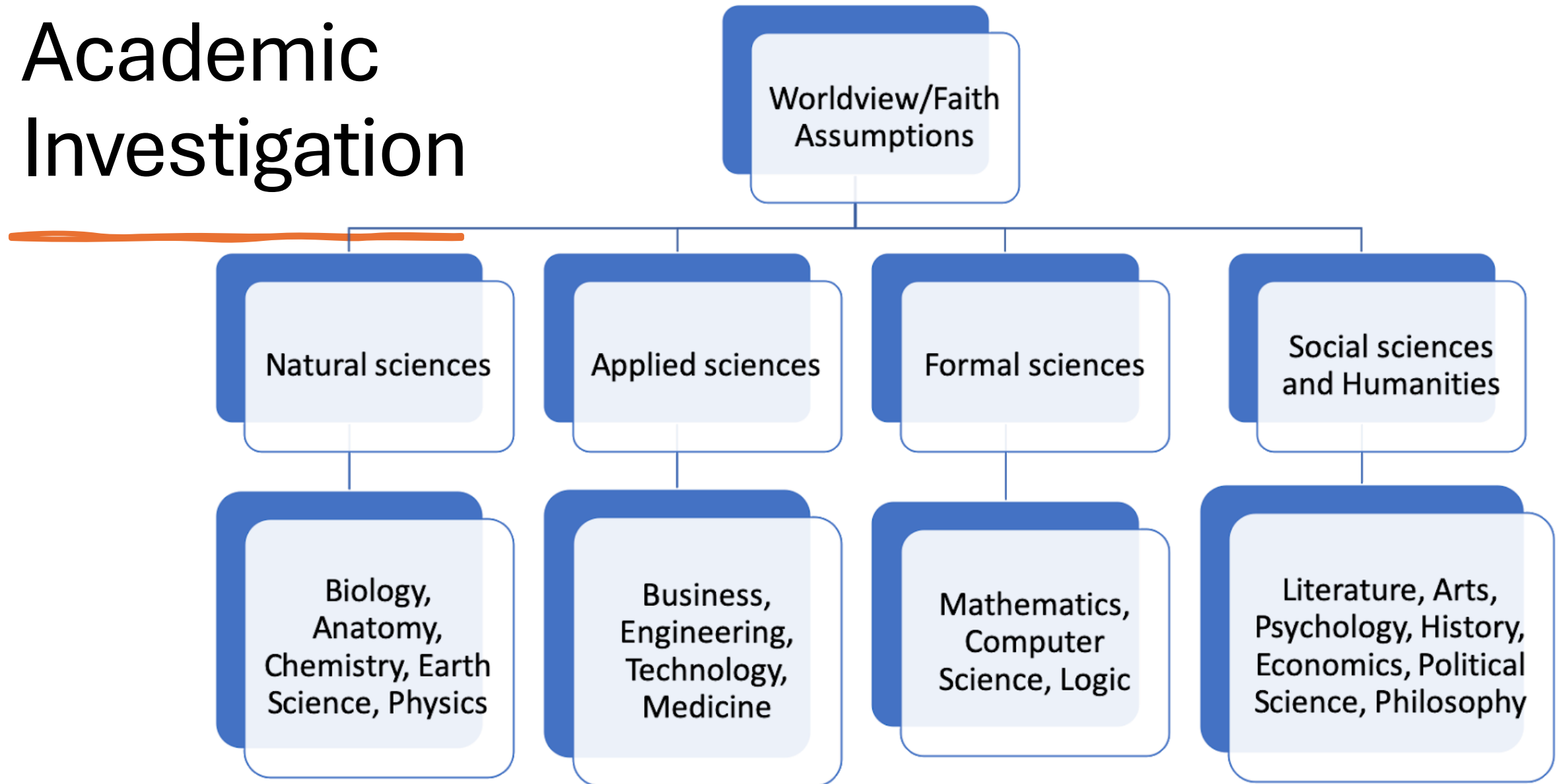
There are a lot of mysteries in life...

these are some that I think about:

- The power of the written word to express an idea and to preserve ideas across both time and space
- The distinctness of male and female identities that shapes our complete dependency of each one upon the other for reproduction, for social and family stability, and for learning to love and respect the other
- My own history with how and why God brought me here
- The power of suffering to shape our desires, our purposes and our understanding of reality



Academic Investigation



Academic Investigation





Academic
Investigation built
on biblical wisdom

Education must promote: The glory of God! (Heb. 1)

¹ In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

See also Psalm 19



Who is God and what has He done?

- God is the Creator and Sustainer of life and reality.
- He declares His creation to be “good”.
- He established natural laws that can be known and trusted.
- It answers the questions: Why does the universe exist? How is it possible to know and to apply nature’s laws?





Product Design

1

Function is first

The product should perform its intended function effectively.

2

Simplicity

Keep the design simple and intuitive.

3

Form follows function

While aesthetic appeal is important, the design should first be driven by how the product functions.



Human Design

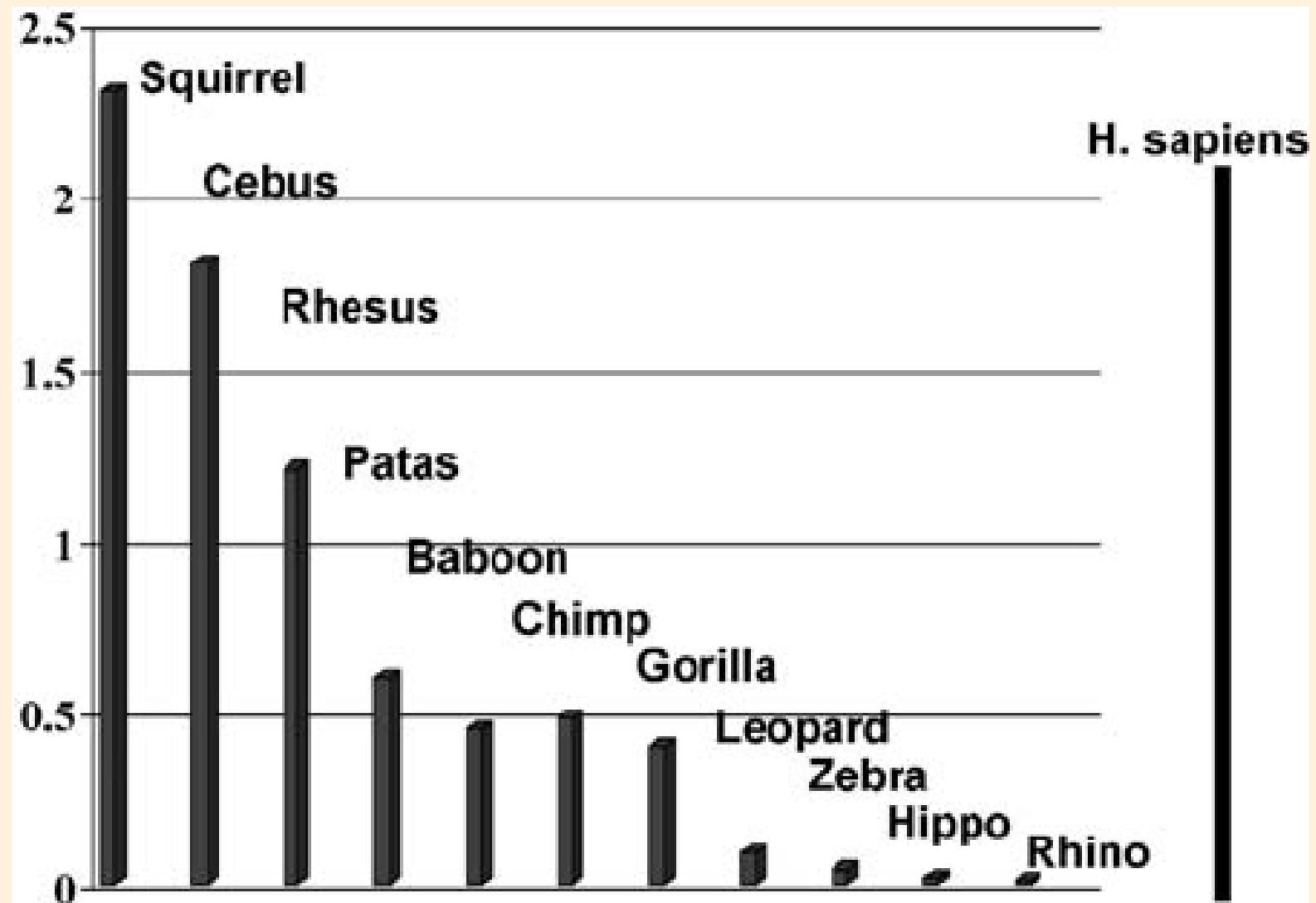
- 1 Function is first
- 2 Simplicity
- 3 Form follows function



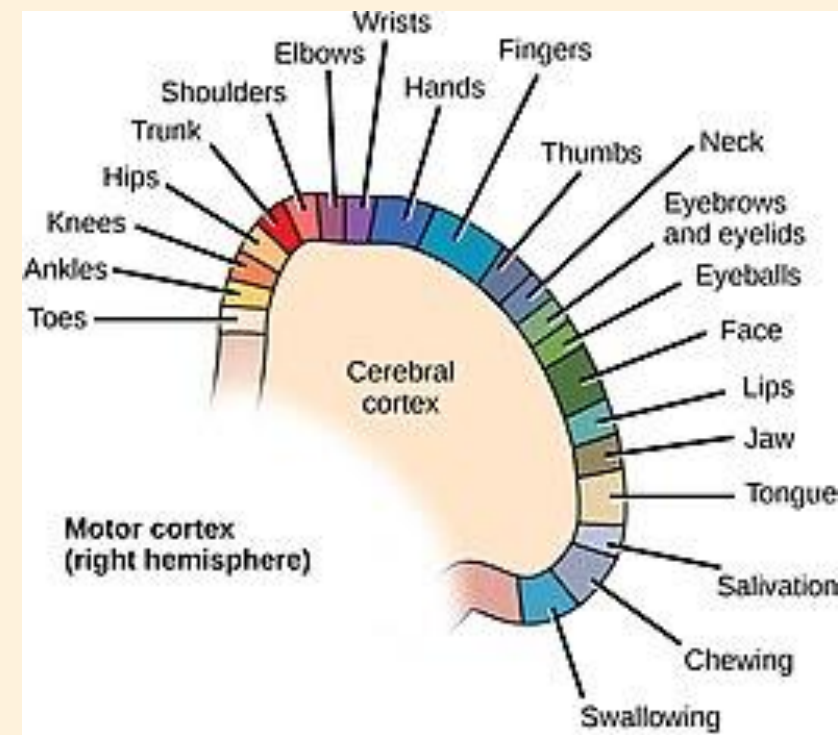
Reproduction, birth and childcare

Muscle control





Brain size and function



Education must recognize: The place of man (Gen. 1-2)

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

See also Psalm 8



The place of man

- A steward acting in God's Name and created in His image
- A relational, creative, thinking, spiritual being
- Responsible for and responsible to
- With an eternal destiny
- It answers the questions: Who am I?
What is my purpose?



We were made to worship



Education must recognize: The problem of sin (Romans 1)

²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools...

See also Psalm 51



The problem of sin

- Something is definitely wrong!
- Men and women are moral agents with a choice to do good or evil.
- We have, I have, chosen many times to do evil instead of good.
- It answers the questions: What is wrong with the world? What is wrong with me?



Education must recognize: The hope of restoration (Rev. 21)

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

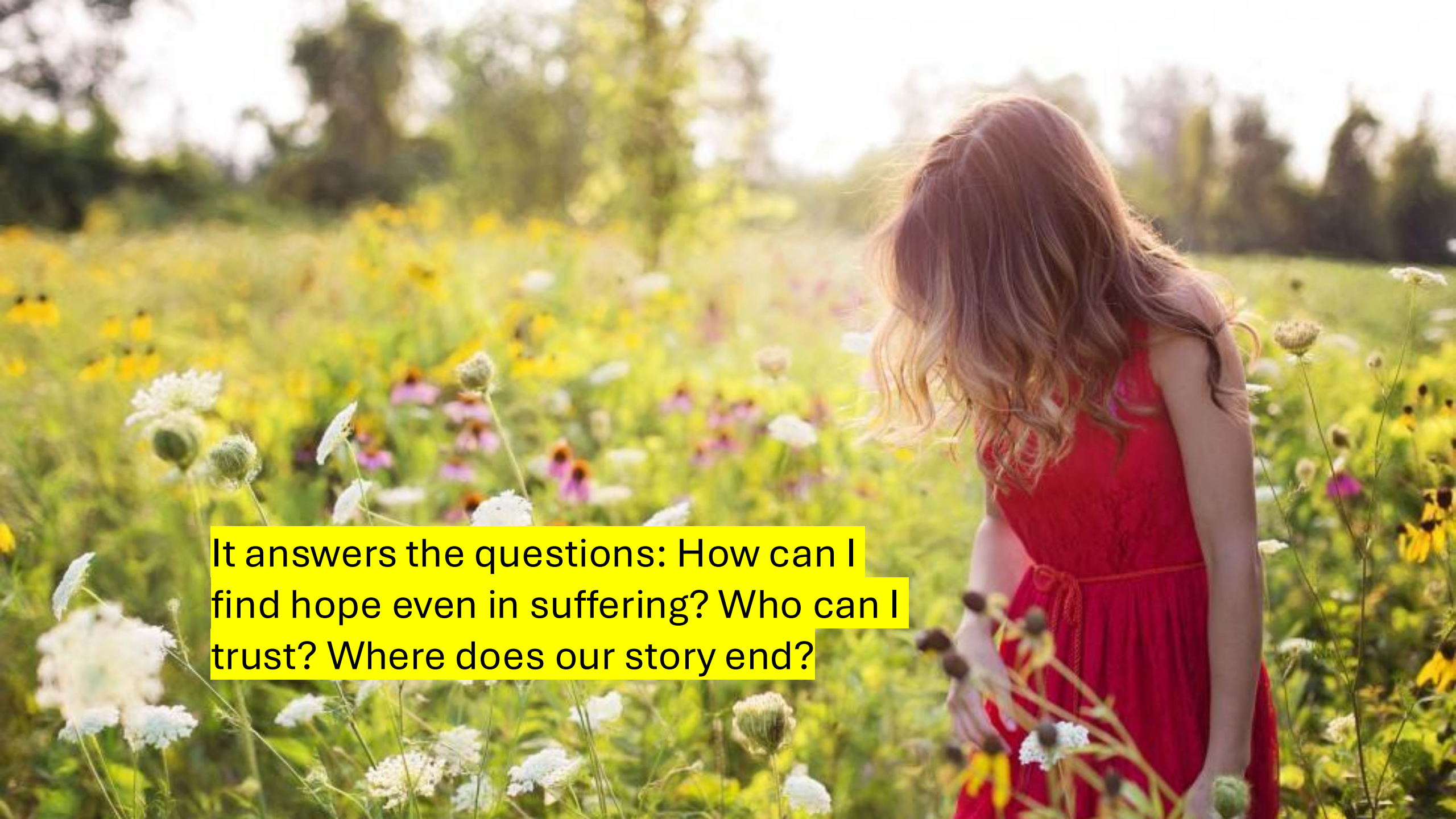
See also Psalm 23



The hope of restoration

- Repentance and forgiveness
- Restored relationship with God
- Restored relationships with others
- Restored order in creation
- Transformed lives and societies for His glory



A woman with long, wavy, reddish-brown hair is seen from behind, standing in a lush field of wildflowers. She is wearing a vibrant red, sleeveless dress. The field is filled with various flowers, including white daisies, yellow wildflowers, and purple coneflowers. The background is a soft-focus landscape with green trees and a bright, hazy sky. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

It answers the questions: How can I
find hope even in suffering? Who can I
trust? Where does our story end?



JESUS REPLIED:

**“YOU MUST LOVE THE LORD
YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR
HEART, ALL YOUR SOUL, AND
ALL YOUR MIND.”**

**A SECOND IS EQUALLY
IMPORTANT: ‘LOVE YOUR
NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’**

MATTHEW 22:37-39

A good education...

- Points us to the glory of God
- Models and teaches us humility and accountability
- Identifies the source of our problems
- Recognizes and implements the only real solution




Explore more in 4 Online sessions:

- Saturday, April 12, 9am – The Glory of God
 - Saturday, April 26, 9am – The Place of Man
 - Saturday, May 10, 9am – The Problem of Sin
 - Saturday, May 24, 9am – The Hope of Restoration
-
- <https://acsieurope.org/video-series>

2 Mysteries in 1 – Ephesians 3:1-13

- The Mystery of the Gospel
- The Mystery of suffering and its role in the proclamation of the Gospel
- “...when you read, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ.” (*Eph. 3:4*)



**“God whispers to us in our
pleasures, speaks in our conscience,
but shouts in our pains: it is his
megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”**

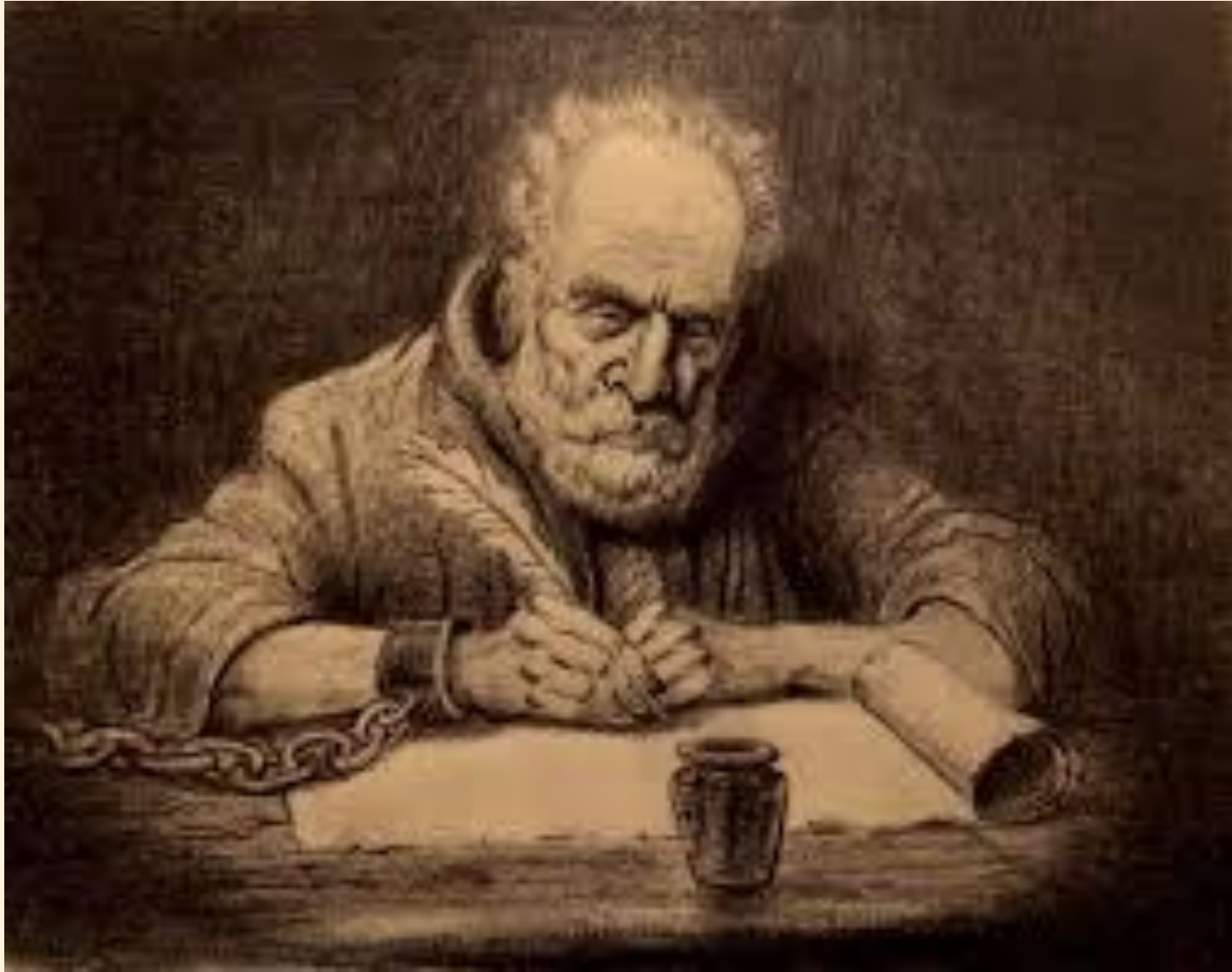
- C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain

2 Mysteries in 1 – Ephesians 3:1-13

- What is this great mystery? v. 6
- Was God hiding this mystery before? v. 5
- How is the manifold wisdom of God made known?
v. 10

2 Mysteries in 1 – Ephesians 3:1-13

- Why does Paul call himself a "prisoner of Christ Jesus" but not a "prisoner of Rome"? v. 1
- What is he really asking of the Ephesian church in verse 13?
- Why is this important for us?



A Daily Prayer – Eph. 3:14-21

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

A Daily Prayer – Eph. 3:14-21

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Discussion Questions:

- How am I using biblical wisdom to shape my understanding of suffering or challenges in my own life as a leader and in the life of our school community?
- How does this wisdom increase (or might it increase) our own hope and our trust in God's purposes?
- How will we use wisdom that comes from a biblical framework to shape all our learning experiences (both in and out of school)?
- How are we encouraging each other to "not lose heart" even as we are learning to see God's bigger picture?