Suffering in Sanctification

The following are notes from a training session regarding counseling and walking with someone through a time and season of suffering (not a specific cause, but suffering for any cause).

1. Suffering comes to all from living in a fallen world - Romans 8
Suffering comes from our own sin and rebellion and consequences - Ro 6
Suffering comes from another's sin and consequences and our suffering results as we are the victims of another’s sin.

Then we need help in keeping our responses from being sinful.

2. Mt 19:24
Suffering exposes need or lacking - Where there is no need, there is no recognition of a lacking
So, we ask the question for ourselves, “What is God showing me in a place of my brokenness?”

3. Deut 8:1-4
Suffering exposes our heart and what we're blind to - God may use affliction to draw us back to Him
1 Pet 1:3-7. We are already citizens in heaven, but we’re not yet home, so we will face persecution and suffering - how will we respond? What does 1 Peter say about our response?
Ro 8:28-29; Mal 3 - Refiners fire

4. Luke 12:34; 22-34
Suffering reveals where our treasure is - Are our treasures and priorities aligned vertically or horizontally?
Learn to look to the Lord for \_\_\_\_(fill in the blank)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, not the world or even ourselves or family.
Often, our anxiety is birthed out of misplaced dependency on ourselves, others, and the world – relieve anxiety by looking to the Lord and owning and living out Philippians 4:4-9.

5. Luke 15:11-20
Suffering humbles us and brings us low, and should cause us to throw ourselves on the mercy of the Father.
We bring nothing to the table
2 Cor 12:7 - Paul's thorn
For the sake of Christ I am content in my weakness.
Paul still pleaded with The Lord for healing - It's right to pray earnestly for healing
Isa 53:3-5 - we are bound to Christ

6. To walk with those suffering -
a. Help them press into the sovereignty of God and the hope that The Lord has it in control.
b. Help them press into the grace of the Lord, into the heart of the Lord.
c. Help them press into Christ - our story of pain is encompassed in His story of redemption.

Our afflictions are not who we are, but it turns our hearts and our beings to Him.

We must go slow and patiently as counselors and ministers - be slow with those sitting in their ashes. Job’s friends were OK as they sat with him – their mistakes came when they started talking.

Pray with them, intercede for them, minister to them and point them to a greater hope!