

# Growing in Christ

January 14 - March 10



# Growing In Christ Course Outline



# **Session 1: Beholding & Becoming**



# Session 2: Idols of the Heart





Session 3

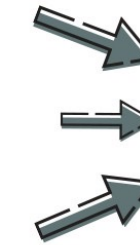
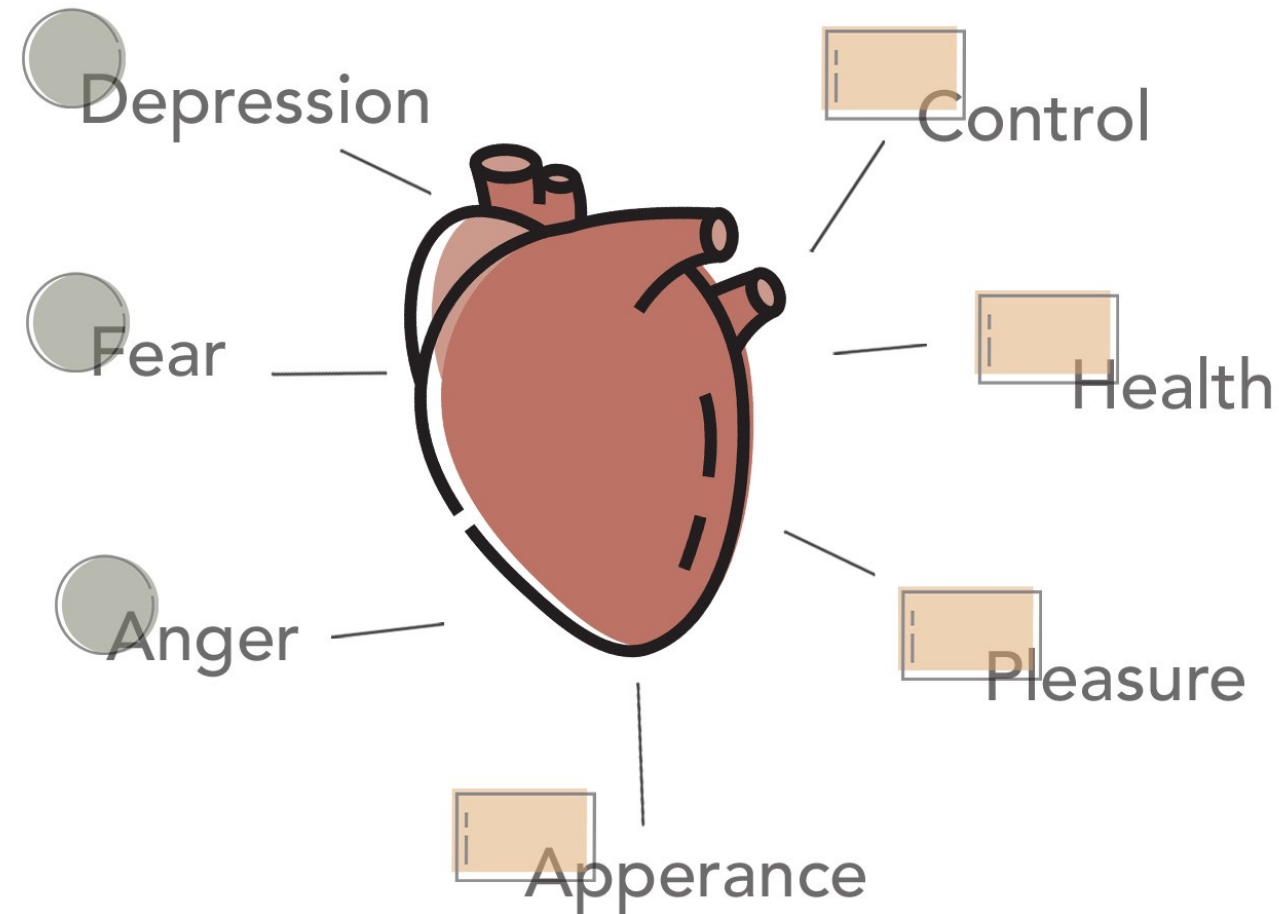
Apart from Christ

In Christ

# IDOLS OF THE HEART

## Influences

Sickness  
Finances  
Traffic  
People  
Job  
Satan



## Behaviors

Sleeping  
Drugs/Alcohol  
Spending  
Exercise  
Injury  
Sex  
Hiding  
Exploding  
Religion  
Eating

 Idols

 Emotions

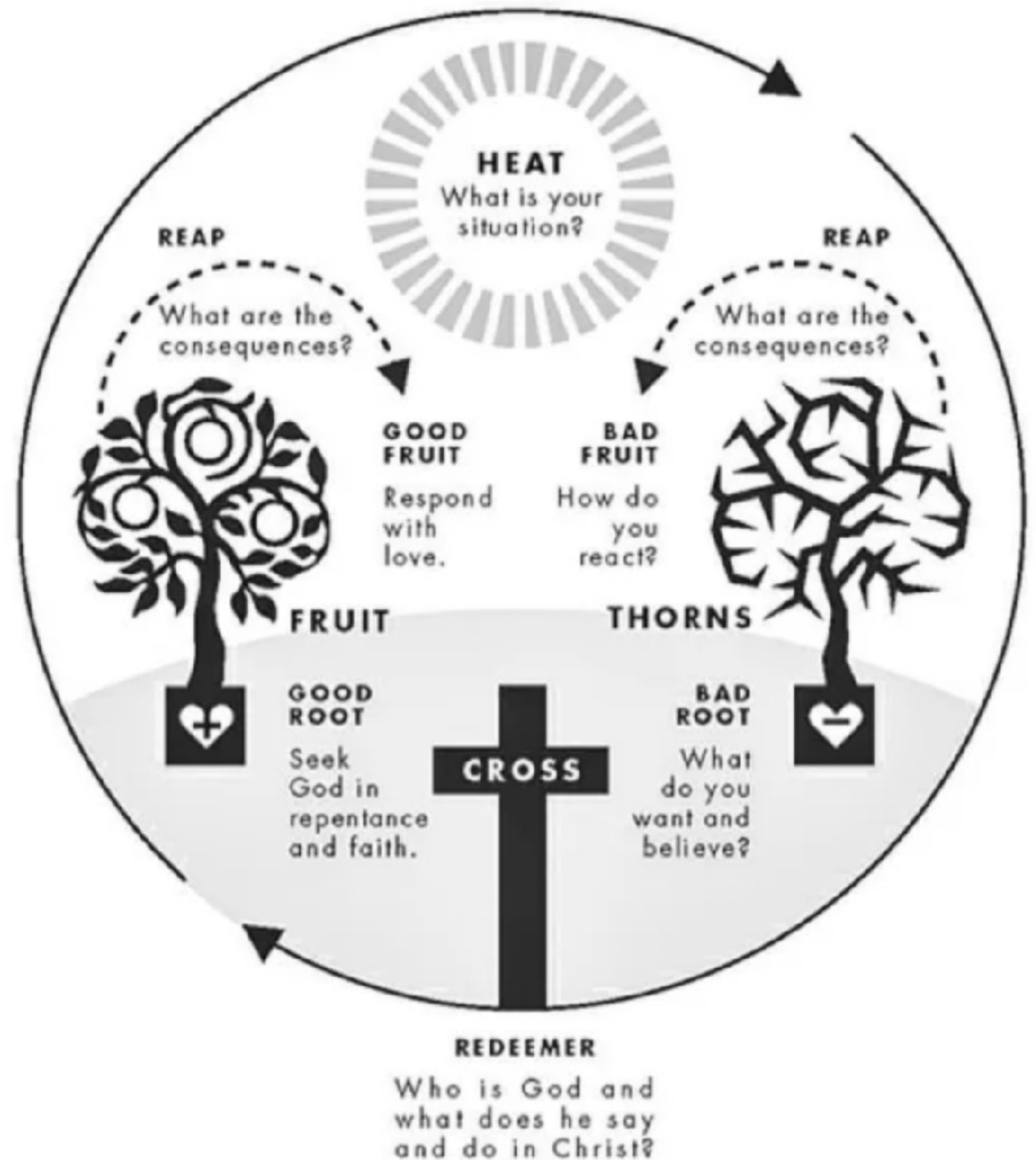
## How to identify idols?

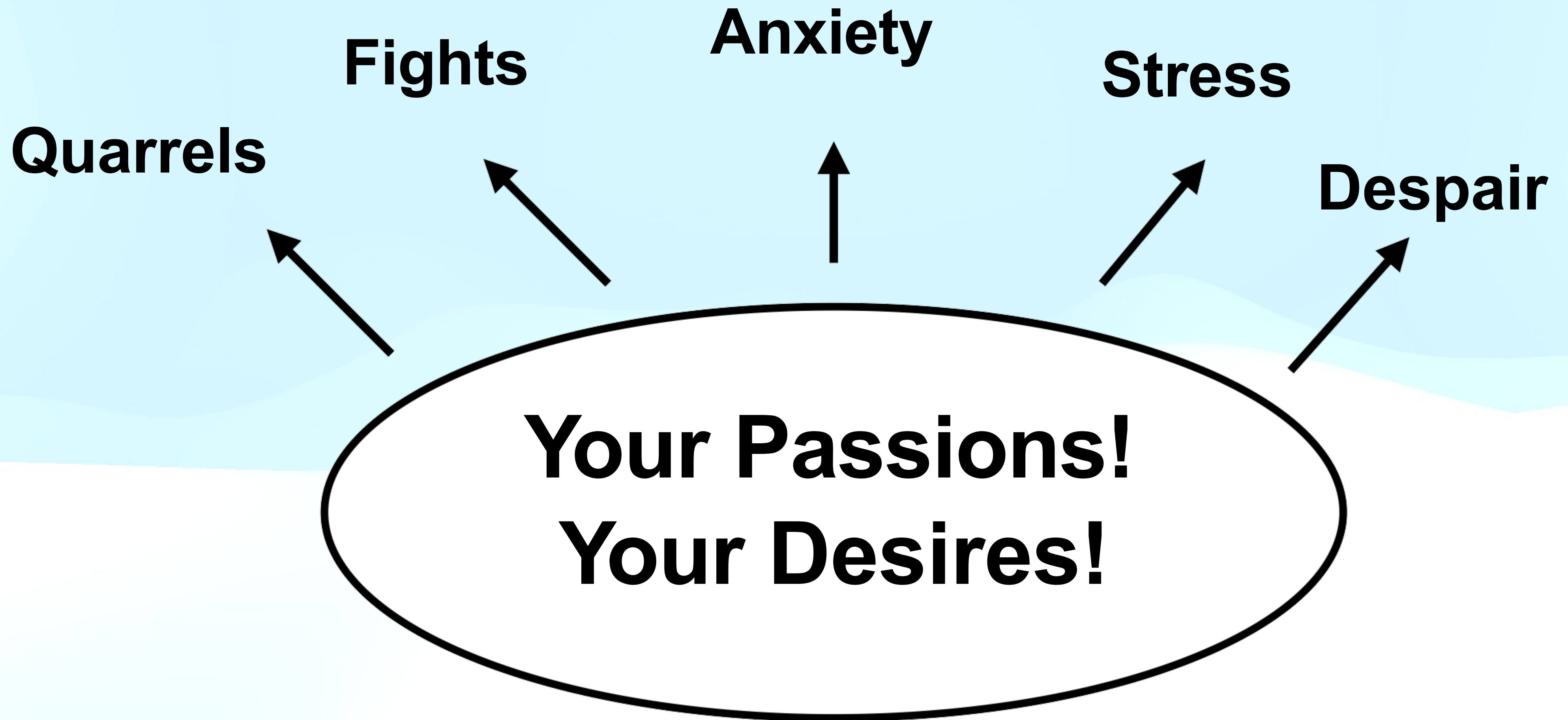
1. I will sin if I don't get...
2. I will sin in order to get...
3. I need this...
4. I want this...
5. I must have this...
6. I have the right to...

**Jeremiah 17:5-10, Ezekiel 14:1-11 & 37:26-27, 1 Corinthians 10:1-14**

# Sessions 4 & 5

1. Heat
2. Thorns
3. Cross
4. Fruit



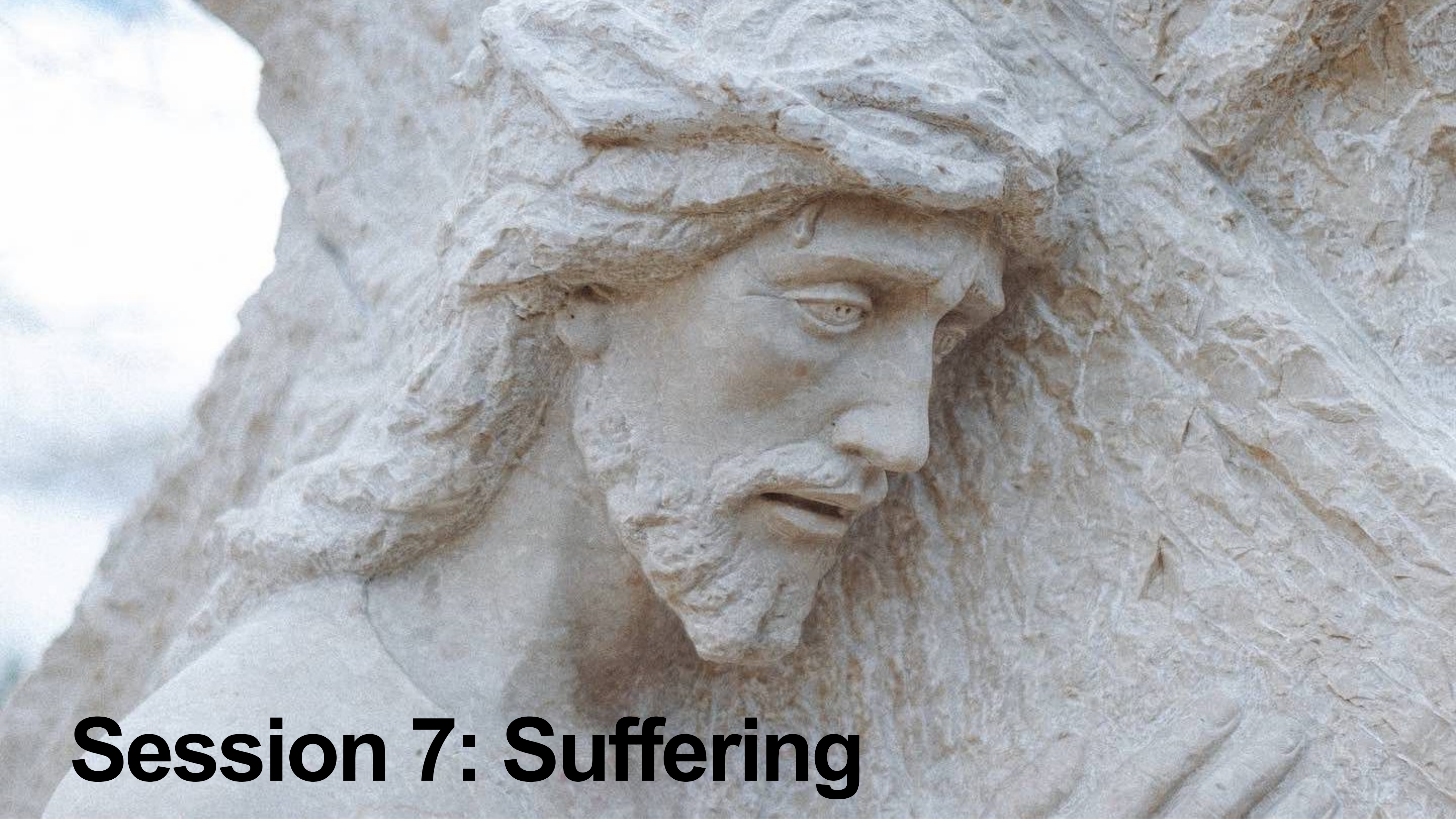


**James 4:1a**





# Session 6: Spiritual Disciplines



# **Session 7: Suffering**



**“For *to this you have been called*, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.”**

**1 Peter 2:21**

“People are not prepared or able to rejoice in suffering unless they experience *a massive biblical revolution of how they think and feel about the meaning of life.* Human nature and American culture make it impossible to rejoice in suffering. This is a miracle in the human soul wrought by God through his Word.”

John Piper

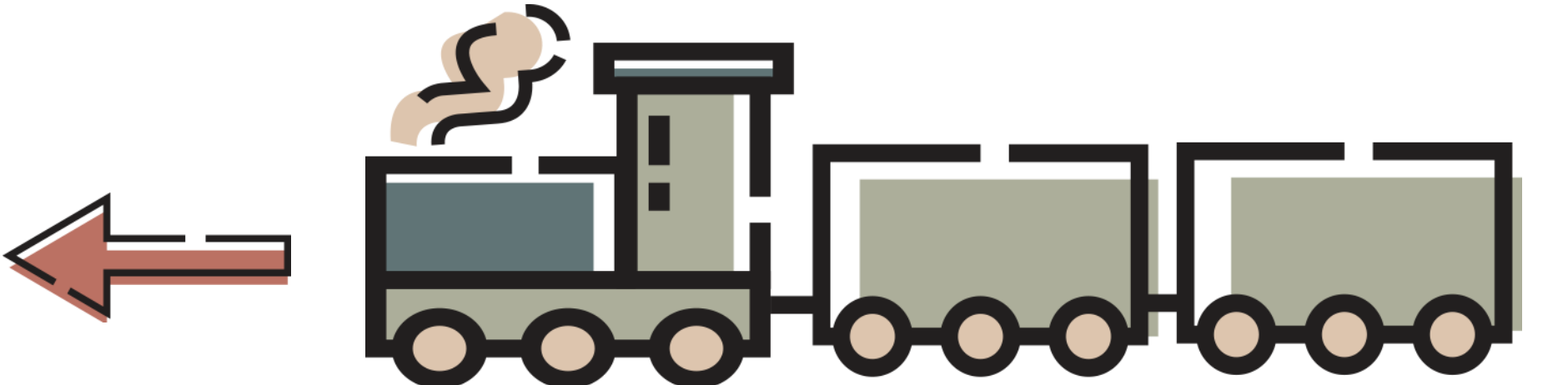




# **Session 8: Decision Making & Daily Living**

# Don't Let Your Feelings Drive the Bus

## Pleasing God



Thinking

Act

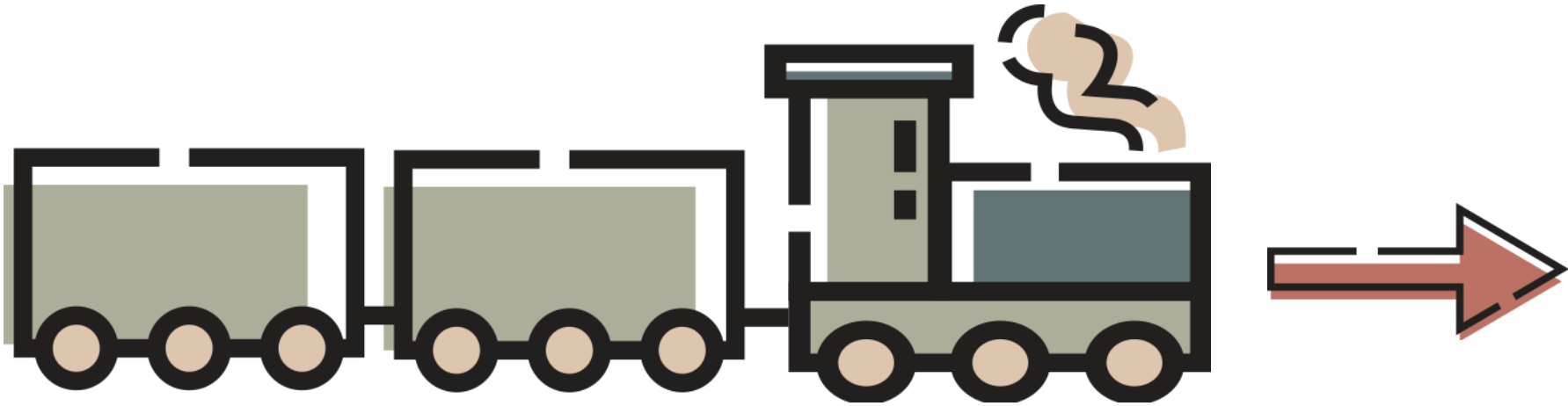
Feelings

think about God's Word  
believe God's Word  
**Isaiah 40:8, Psalm 19**

happiness,  
contentment,  
and peace  
**Matthew 11:28-30**

act wisely and behave godly

## Pleasing Me



Thinking

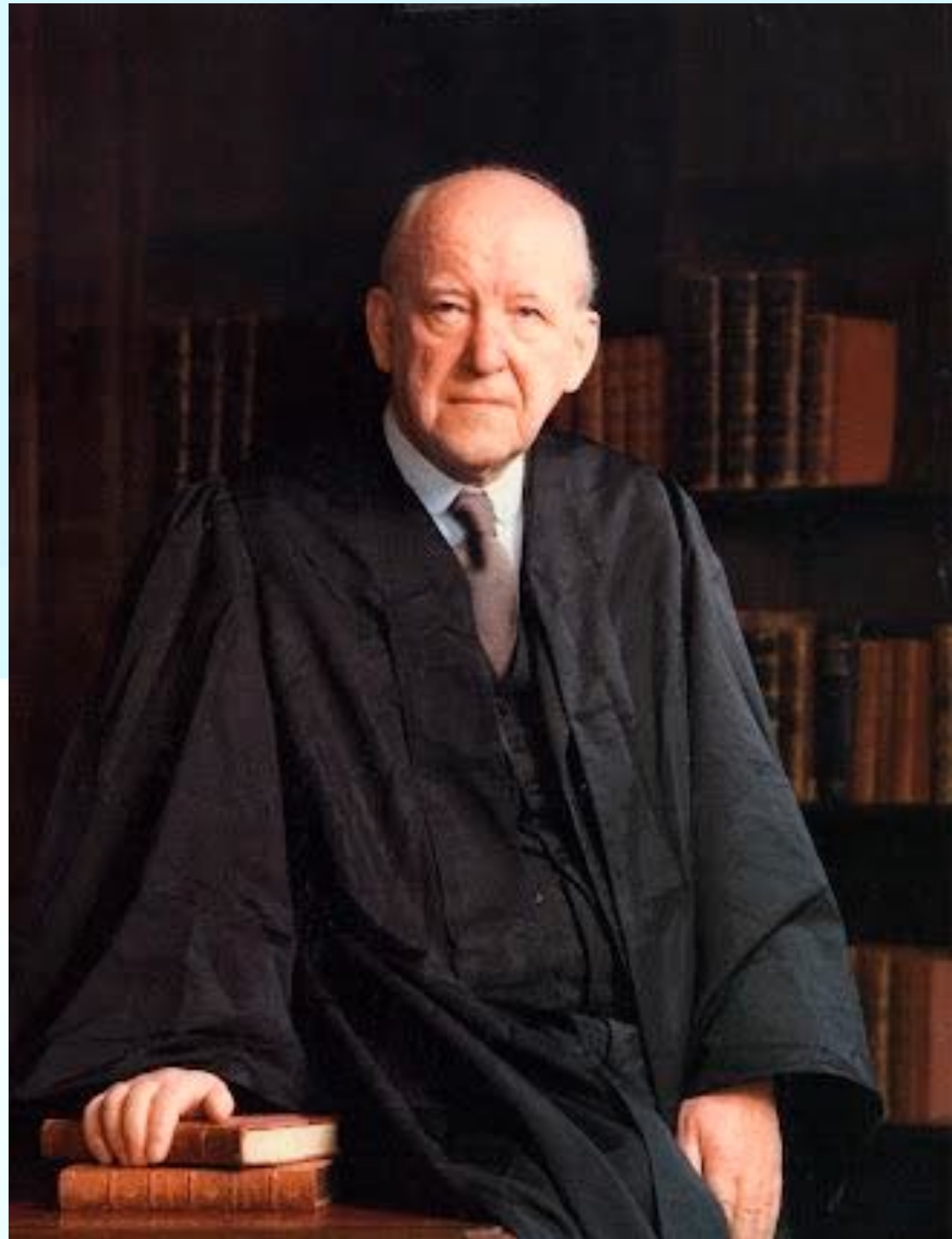
React

Feelings

think about self,  
others, or God

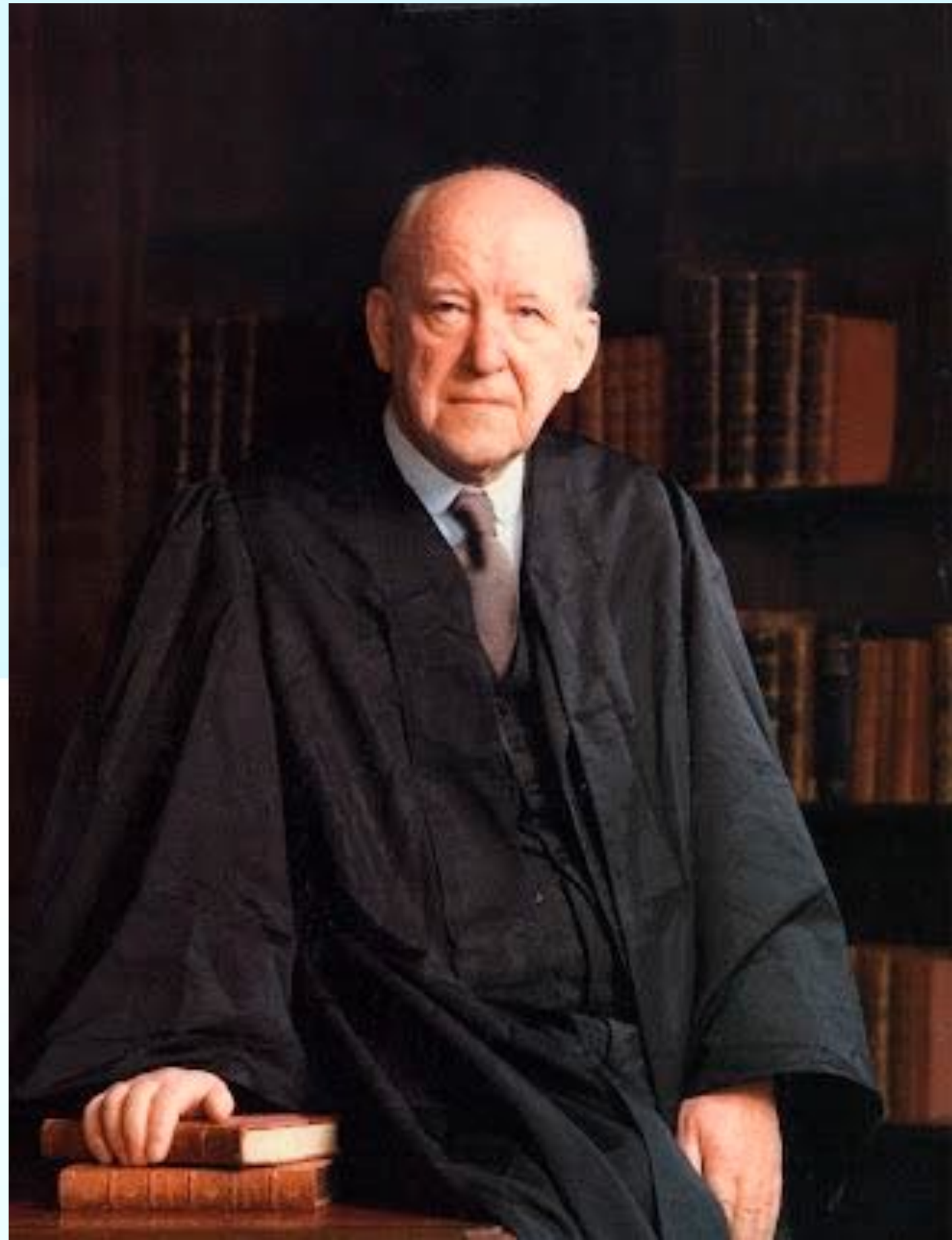
anger, frustration,  
sadness, loneliness, pride,  
jealousy, or disappointment  
**Proverbs 25:28**

act selfishly and behave ungodly



“The main art in the matter of spiritual living is to know how to handle yourself. You have to take yourself in hand, you have to address yourself, preach to yourself, question yourself. You must say to your soul: ‘Why art thou cast down’—what business have you to be disquieted?”





“And then you must go on to remind yourself of God, Who God is, and what God is and what God has done, and what God has pledged Himself to do. Then having done that, end on this great note: defy yourself, and defy other people, and defy the devil and the whole world, and say with this man: ‘I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance, who is also the health of my countenance and my God’.

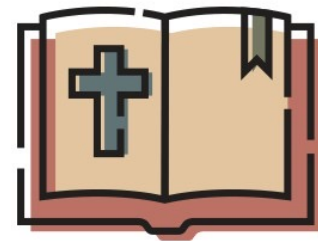
# LENS OF LIFE

## How do you view life?

Workmanship  
God's child

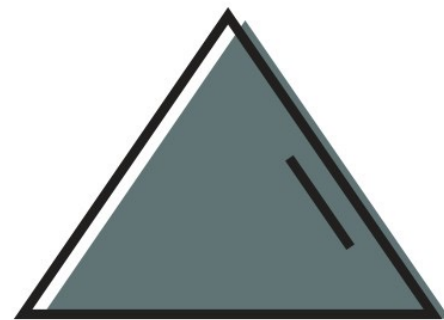


Love God  
Love others



You allow Scripture to inform your view of God

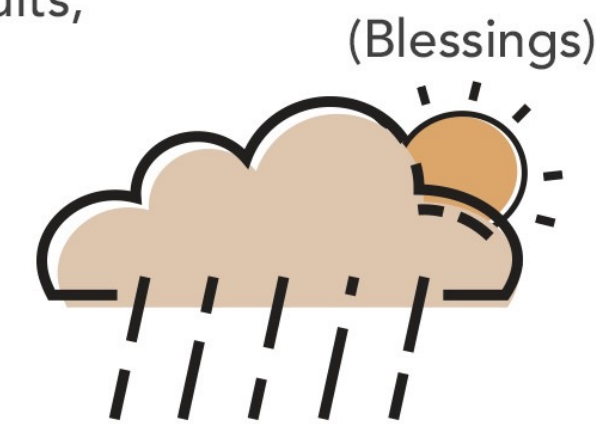
Accurate view of God's attributes and promises



God

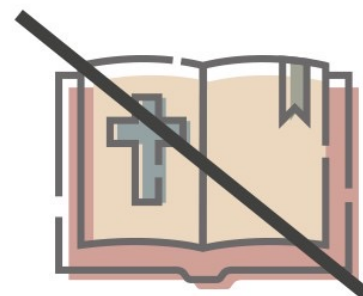
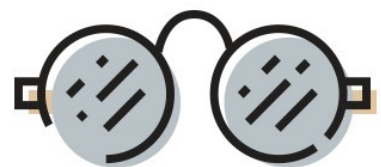
Afflicted, perplexed, persecuted, struck down, weak, calamities, insults, and hardships

You will still have trials and hardships but you see God's purpose and sovereignty behind every experience



Hope, press on, meditate on God's Word, depend on Him, seek God's will, fellowship with others, His power in you

"Victim-like"

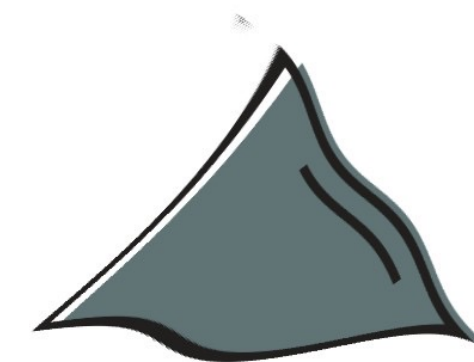


You neglect the Bible and only focus on your trials. The difficulties and sufferings shape the way you see God, rather than trusting in God's Word for how God reveals Himself



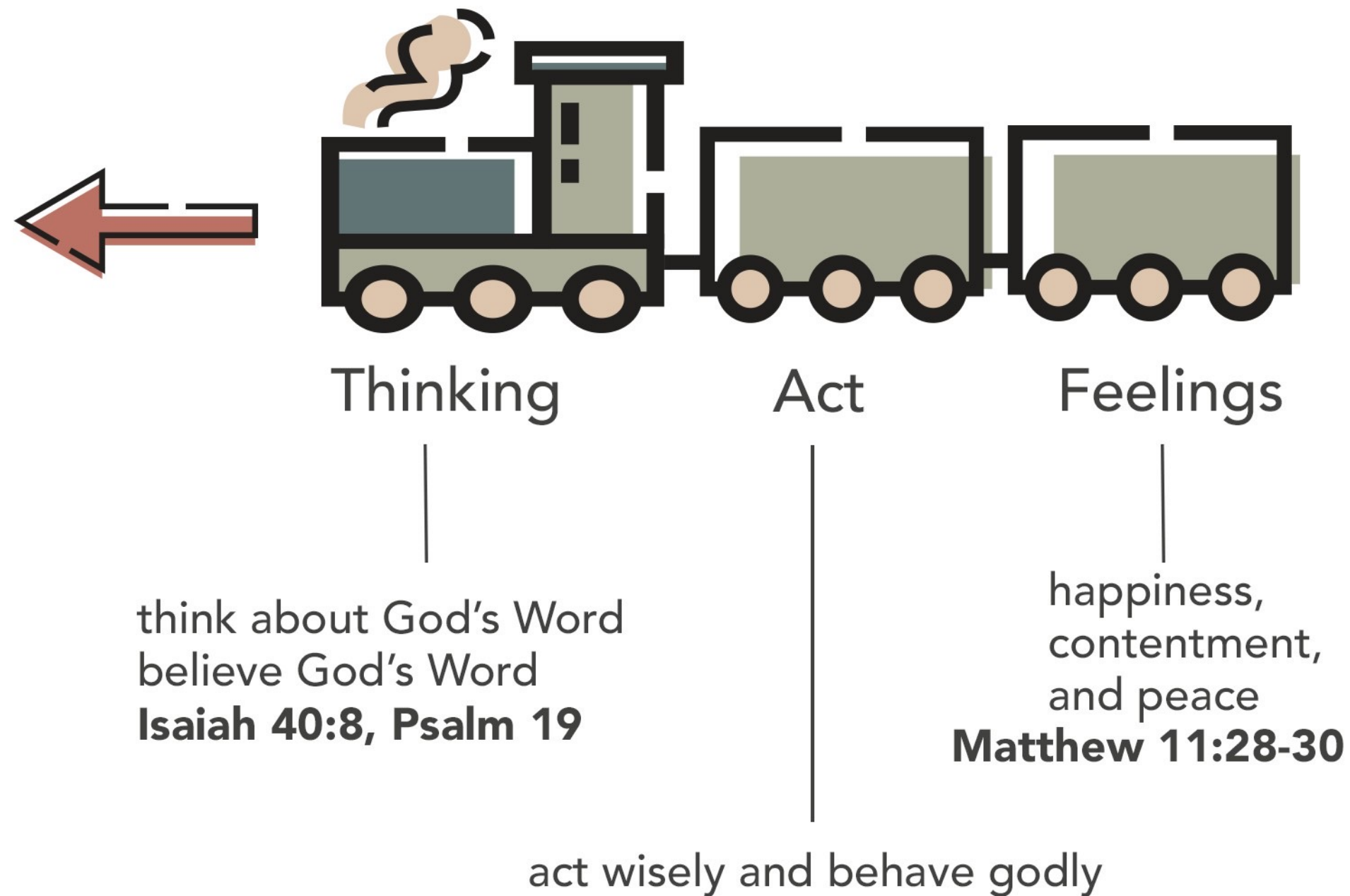
Afflicted, perplexed, persecuted, struck down, weak, calamities, insults, and hardships

God is distorted, you allow your circumstances to distort your view of God as unwise, not good, unfair, unloving, etc.



Discouraged, depressed, give up, don't study Scripture, pray only for deliverance, seek own will, rely on own strength, self-pity, isolate

## Pleasing God



...think about these things.

...practice these things,

...the God of peace will be with you.”

**Philippians 4:8-9**

# CIRCLES OF RESPONSIBILITY

## Your Responsibility

Bible study/pursuit of holiness  
Prayer/church involvement  
Marriage/parenting  
Effort at work/home  
Obedience to God's Word  
Caring for your body  
Time with friends



## God's Responsibility

Salvation of friends and family  
Health/Illness  
Weather  
Feelings of others  
Natural disasters  
Children's behavior  
Provision for family  
Friendships  
Your future  
Family

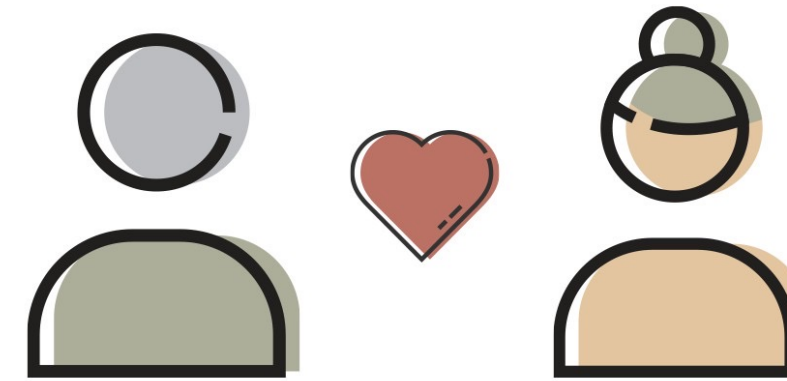
(You can trust Him and pray for these things)

**When we attempt to control what is God's responsibility, it results in anxiety, frustration and disappointment.**

# KINGDOM DIAGRAM



VS.



## Kingdom of self

Options for when people get in the way of my goal:

**Manipulation:** "Hop in the tank with me"

**Intimidation:** "Get out of my way"

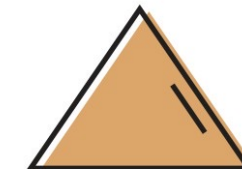
**Destruction:** "I am running you over"

## Kingdom of God

When I arrive at my **neighbor**, I have arrived at my **goal**. I am not to manipulate, intimidate, nor destroy them; rather, I am to **SERVE** them and consider them as more important than myself, my wants, my wishes, and my desires.

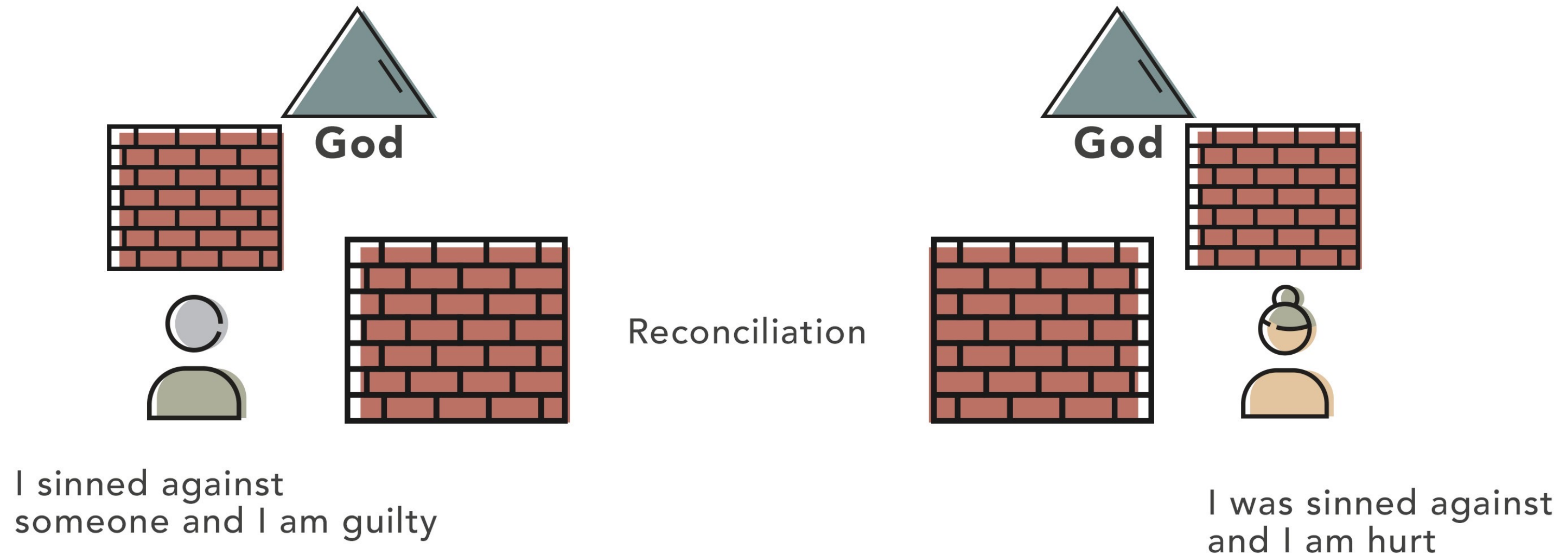


**Goal: Whatever will make me happy**



**Goal: Love God and love my neighbor**  
Matthew 22:37-39

# RECONCILIATION



## Repentance:

Contemplation → Remorse → Confession → Restitution → Change → Reconciliation

## Forgiveness:

I promise I will not bring it up to others, I will not bring it up to myself, I will not bring it up to you, unless it would be for your benefit.

A high-angle photograph of a diverse group of people standing in a circle on a wooden floor. They are all reaching their hands towards the center, stacking them on top of each other. The people are wearing various casual and business-casual clothing, including denim, patterned shirts, and blouses. The lighting is warm and natural, creating a sense of unity and collaboration.

# Community

The Context and Means for Growth

# The Goal

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<sup>15</sup> I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

<sup>20</sup> “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup> **that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.** <sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.





# Why Not?

- “As believers, we hunger for both greater Christlikeness (to be less selfish) and for deeper relationships (to feel less isolated). That these two desires work in tandem shouldn’t surprise us; God created us for relationships.( p. 236)”
- “God is a community and we as his creation reflect this quality. Moreover, he brings us into community and places the desire for community within us. Ultimately, we can never escape our essential nature, who and what God designed us to be. This relational characteristic is central to who we are . . . you cannot talk about human beings made in God’s image without talking about relationships. Yet it is often the first thing we overlook. Only when human beings live in community do we fully reflect the likeness of God. (p. 237).”



CHRIST  
FORMED IN YOU

The Power of the Gospel for Personal Change

# Why Not?

- “At one level we want friendships. At another level we don’t want them! In creation, we were made to live in community, but because of the fall, we tend to run from the very friendships we need. Quite often, our longing for them is tainted by sin. We pursue them only as long as they satisfy our own desires and needs. We have a love-hate relationship with relationships!” (p. 237).
- “Of course, renewed relationships are not only the result of God’s transforming grace, they are also a means for transformation. God uses relationships as tools for changing our lives [C.S Lewis says] ‘The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose.’ The goal of redemption is to make you a “little Christ.” God wants to renew his image within you. But spiritual renewal doesn’t happen in isolation from others. It happens in relationships.. (p. 238).



CHRIST  
FORMED IN YOU

The Power of the Gospel for Personal Change

# An illustration

[Illustration of The Image of Christ](#)



# Obstacles to Community

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Individualism

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Compartmentalization

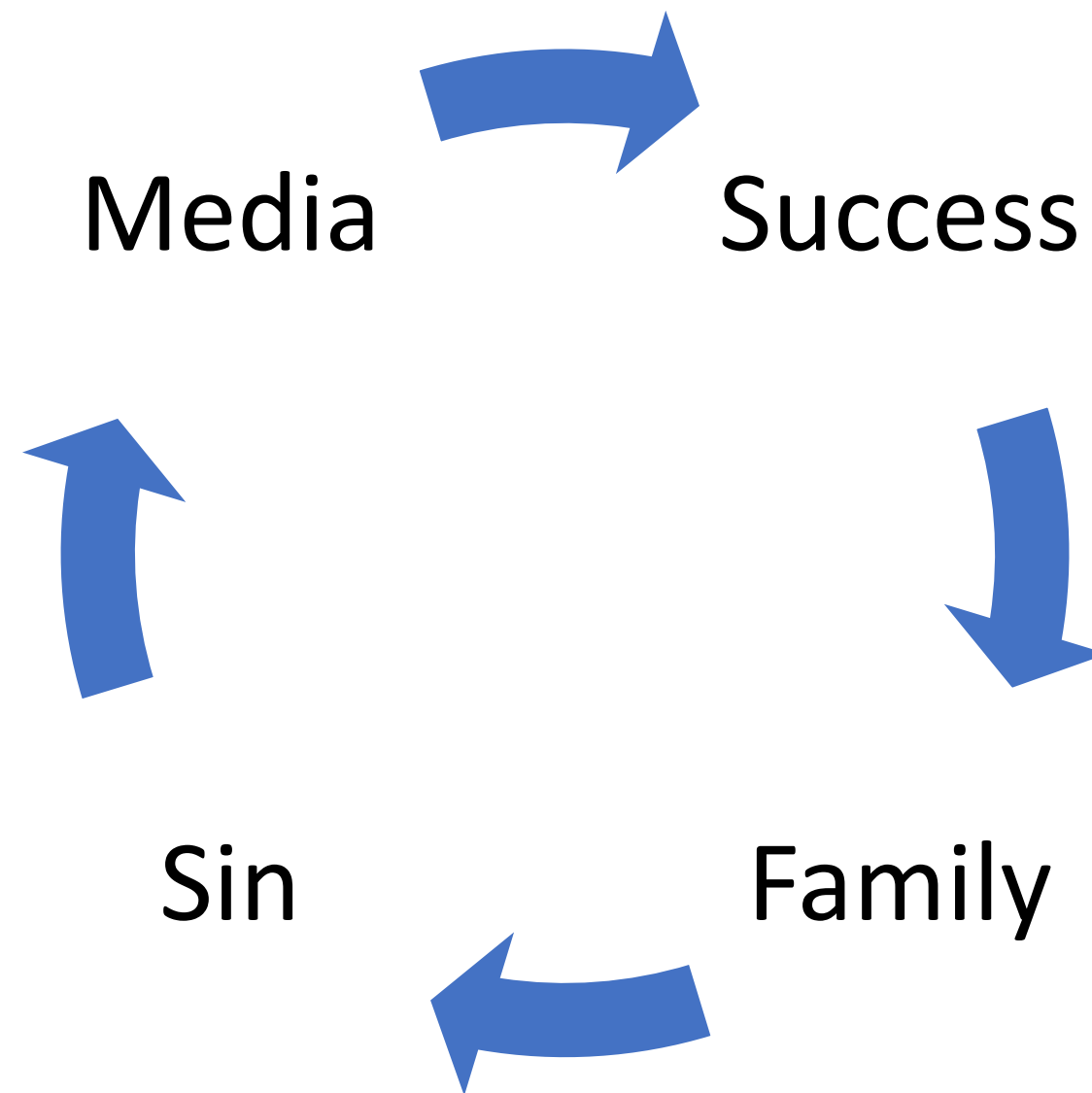
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Busyness

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Misleading Expectations

# Obstacles to Community: Individualism



“Most of us spend our lives talking and thinking about ourselves. Apart from grace, we are hopelessly narcissistic and self-focused. We admire self-made people and covet the independence we think we see in them. We build our lives with the brick and mortar of self-interest and erect monuments to our own delusional self-esteem. Such attitudes are both foreign to Scripture and deadly for relationships. They produce only estranged siblings, broken vows, shattered marriages, alienated children, sour friendships, split churches, and warring nations.

# Compartmentalization

- Church
- Friends
- Family
- Work
- School
- Kids Activities



# Busyness

- Always in a Hurry
- Always Distracted
- Burned Out
- Flee to Comfort and Entertainment

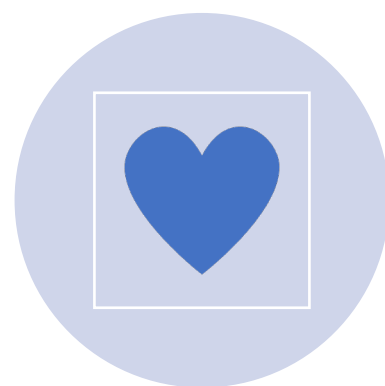
“The requirement for true intimacy is chunks of unhurried time. If you think you can fit deep community into the cracks of an overloaded schedule—think again. Wise people do not try to microwave friendship, parenting, or marriage. You can’t do community in a hurry. If you want authentic community, you will have to do less of something else.” (p. 242).



# Misleading Expectations



NO PERFECT PEOPLE

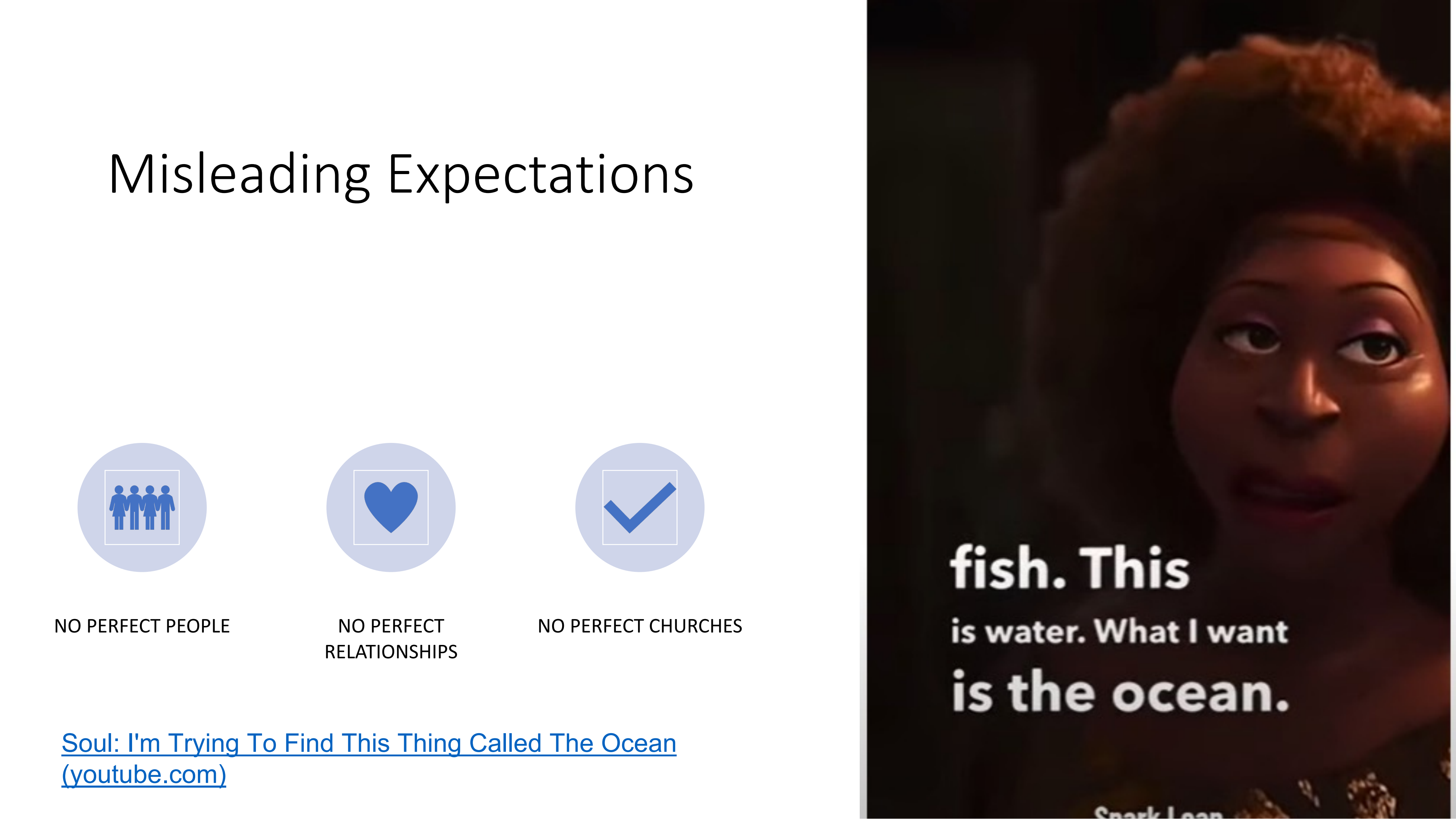


NO PERFECT  
RELATIONSHIPS



NO PERFECT CHURCHES

[Soul: I'm Trying To Find This Thing Called The Ocean](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)  
([youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com))



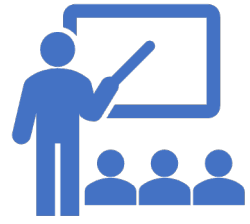
**fish. This**  
**is water. What I want**  
**is the ocean.**

Spark Leap



# A Vision for the Church

Growing into a Christ-Like Community Through the Community of Christ



## Acts 2:42-45

<sup>42</sup> And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.



## Acts 2:42-45

- **Dedicated to the Apostles Teaching (42)**
- **Worship (47)**
- **Sacramental (42)**
- **Sacrificial Love (42, 44-46)**
- **Fruitful (47)**

How Do We Get There?

# Community: Summary From Ephesians 4

- 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,
- 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, **for building up the body of Christ,**
- 13 until we all attain to the **unity of the faith** and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, **to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,**
- 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.
- 15 Rather, **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,
- 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, **when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**

# Speaking The Truth in Love

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- :As it turns out, however, “ ‘Speaking the truth in love’ is not the best rendering of his expression, for the Greek verb makes no reference to our speech. Literally, it means ‘truthing . . . in love,’ and includes the notions of ‘maintaining,’ ‘living,’ and ‘doing’ the truth.” (p. 249).
- “This balance of truth-plus-love is crucial. As Tim Chester writes, “Love without truth is like doing heart surgery with a wet fish. But truth without love is like doing heart surgery with a hammer.” We must embody truth, not just express it. So truth, fused with love, is incarnated in our lives as we live it out with one another. Paul David Tripp concurs: “God transforms people’s lives as people bring his Word to others . . . . The combination of powerful truth wrapped in self-sacrificing love is what God uses to transform people.” (p. 249).

# Transformed in Community: Get Together

- 1 Pet 4:8-10 “8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace”
- Rom 15:5-7: 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
  - The Power for Getting Together (God, 5)
  - The model for getting together (Christ, 5)
  - The reason for getting together (to glorify God and Christ, 6-7)

# Transformed in Community: Show Love

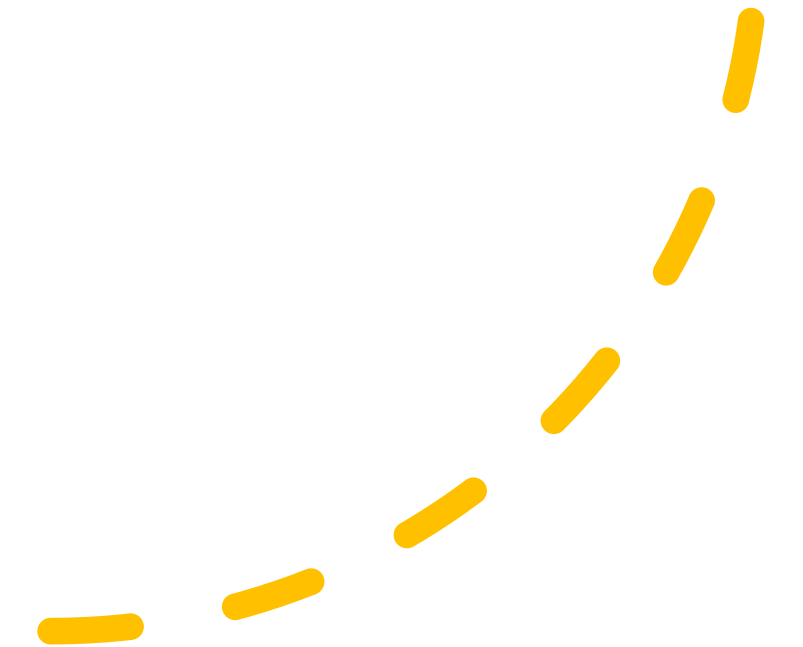
- Col 3:12-13: “12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”





# Transformed in Community: Share Truth

- 1 Thess 5:9-11: “9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing..”



# Transformed in Community: Confront Sin

- Heb 3:12-14: “12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.



# Transformed in Community: Stir Up

- Heb 10:24-25: “24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”



# Revelation 7:9-12

- <sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” <sup>11</sup> And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”



**THREE WEEKENDS**  
AUGUST 16-17  
SEPTEMBER 20-21  
OCTOBER 18-19

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