

Maturing through Our Trials

James 1: 1-15

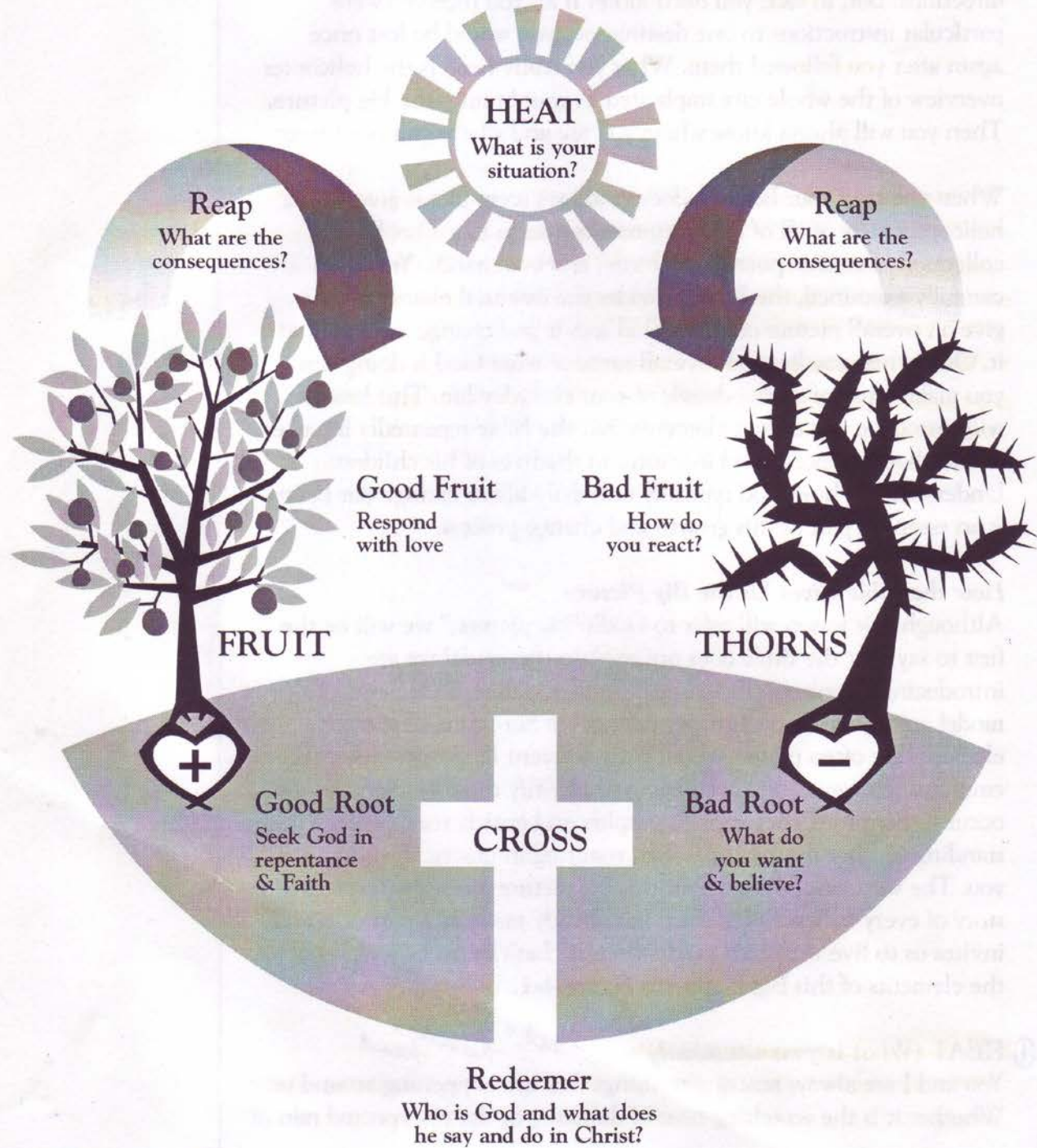
Share and Discuss ...

True or False?

- Life is hard.
 - Life is hard sometimes.
 - Life is hard all the time.
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- Struggles and trials are inevitable in our journey as believers of Jesus Christ.
 - Struggles and trials are ultimately beneficial for followers of Jesus Christ.

#1 Q when going through a trial?

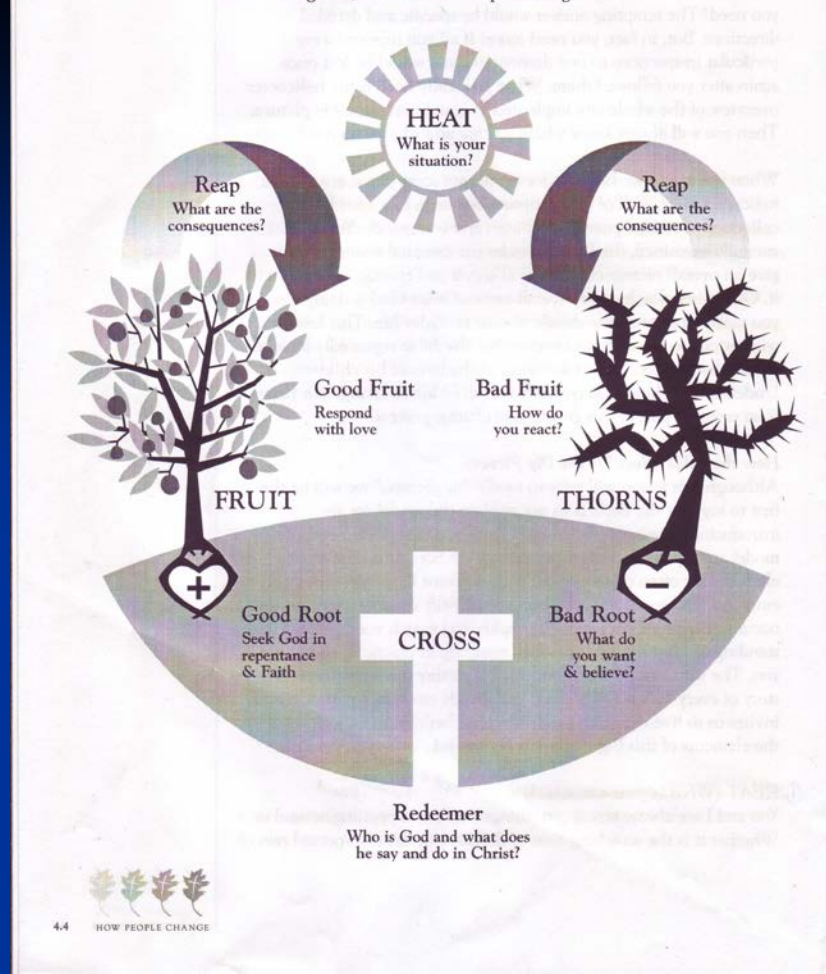
- “WHY is this happening to me?”



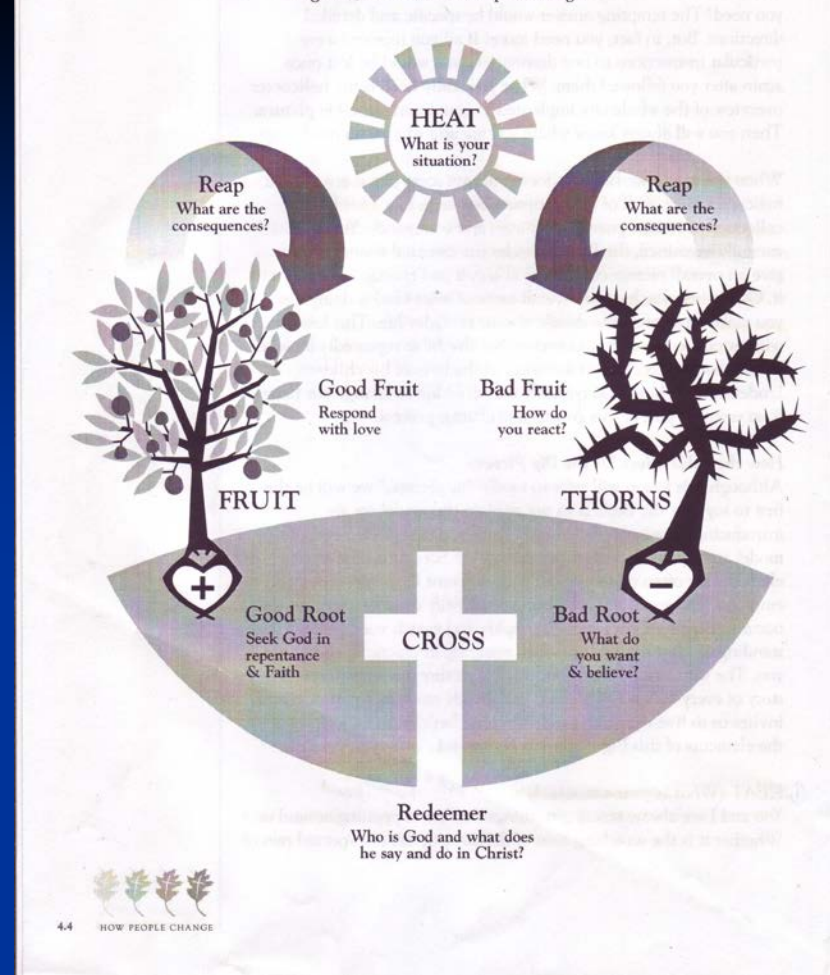
Jeremiah 17: 5-10

❑ Heat: life in our fallen world; our situation in daily life with difficulties, blessings, trials & temptations

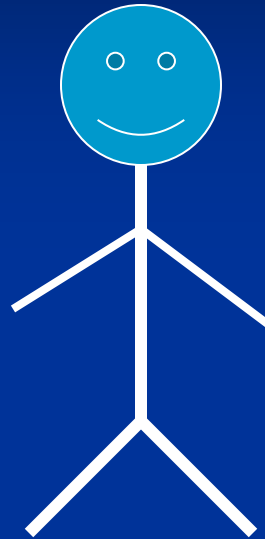
❑ Thorns: ungodly response to the situation; includes behavior, the heart driving the behavior, & the consequences



- ❑ Cross: God's presence in our life, bringing comfort, cleansing & power to change
- ❑ Fruit: new godly response to the situation; result of God's power at work in one's heart; includes behavior, the heart renewed by grace, & the harvest of consequences



Heat / Rain

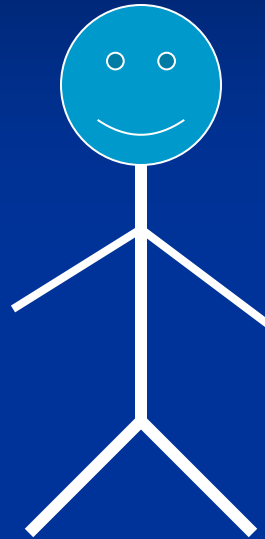


Respond sinfully



Seek God in
repentance and faith

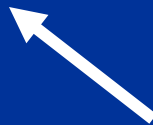
Heat / Rain



godly response



sinful response



Seek God in
repentance and faith

Heat / Rain



Respond supernaturally ?



Respond naturally ?

James - writing to believers experiencing persecution

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:
Greetings.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers & sisters, whenever
you face trials of many kinds, because you know that
the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let
perseverance finish its work so that you may be
mature and complete, not lacking anything.

(James 1: 1-4)

How James 1: 2 has been translated/paraphrased

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. (James 1:2; NLT)

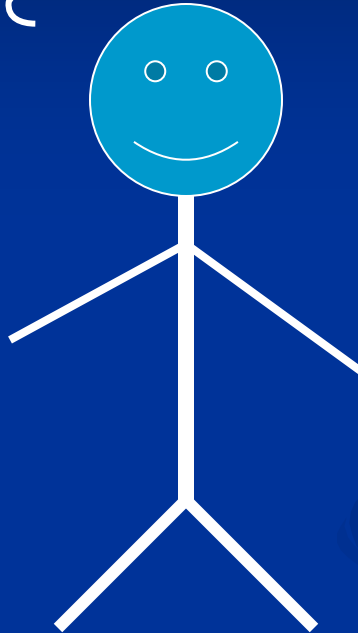
Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. (MSG)

When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! (Phillips)

We all are in one of these 3 situations

- ❑ Coming out of a trial
 - ❑ In the midst of a trial
 - ❑ About to fall into a season of trial
-
- ❑ Trial: an external situation that reveals what's happening in our heart

Heat / Rain



Get angry
Complain
Despair
Get even
Run away

When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realise that they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become men of mature character with the right sort of independence. (James 1: 2-4; Phillips)

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. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James 1: 2-4; NIV)

- ❑ trials: many kinds
- ❑ trials: test our faith
- ❑ trials: produces perseverance or endurance
- ❑ By enduring through them, we will mature and develop more godly character

- ❑ perseverance (NIV)
- ❑ endurance (NLT, Phillips)
- ❑ steadfastness (ESV)
- ❑ patience (NKJV)
- ❑ *Hupomonē* (*hupo* = *under*; *menō* = *to abide or remain*)
- ❑ ability to remain under the pressure or testing
- ❑ ability to “stick with it” under that difficult circumstance

Consider the reverse situation ...

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. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James 1: 2-4; NIV)

Facing trials of many kinds is a certainty. However

- ❑ if the testing of our faith doesn't produce perseverance ...
- ❑ or, if we don't let perseverance finish its work ...
- ❑ then we will be immature and incomplete, lacking many things

Students

- ❑ What do students lack?
- ❑ What many kinds of “testing” do they get?
- ❑ How do these tests develop perseverance or endurance?
- ❑ What will a “mature and complete” student be like?

Employees/Staff

- ❑ What do new employees lack?
- ❑ What many kinds of “testing” do they get?
- ❑ How do these tests develop perseverance or endurance?
- ❑ What will a “mature and complete” employee be like?

Followers of Jesus Christ

- ❑ What do new followers of Jesus lack?
- ❑ What many kinds of “testing” do they get?
- ❑ How do these tests develop perseverance or endurance?
- ❑ What will a “mature and complete” follower of Jesus be like?

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. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James 1: 2-4; NIV)

“Why is this happening to me?”

And if, in the process, any of you does not know how to meet any particular problem he has only to ask God—who gives generously to all men without making them feel foolish or guilty—and he may be quite sure that the necessary wisdom will be given him. But he must ask in sincere faith without secret doubts as to whether he really wants God’s help or not. The man who trusts God, but with inward reservations, is like a wave of the sea, carried forward by the wind one moment and driven back the next. That sort of man cannot hope to receive anything from God, and the life of a man of divided loyalty will reveal instability at every turn. (James 1: 5-8; Phillips)

Don't run away from God; run to Him

- ❑ God never shouts: “What are you asking me that for?”
- ❑ Instead: “I’m so glad you finally asked Me why I’ve allowed this trial to come into your life.”

Wisdom in handling trials

- ❑ Who God is – is He good or not?
- ❑ Who God is – is He in control of things or not?
- ❑ What is God doing through these trials in our lives?

Wise questions to ask God

- ❑ Lord, what are you trying to teach me ?
- ❑ Lord, what kind of person do you want me to become through this trial ?

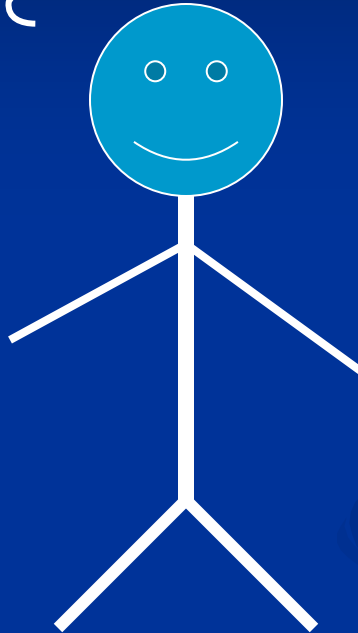
Our trials and suffering ...

- ❑ not connected to the bad things we have done
- ❑ connected to the good things God wants for us and is working to produce in us

Heat / Rain



Run to him
Trust him
Ask him for His
grace & mercy



Get angry
Complain
Despair
Get even
Run away

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial (*peirasmon*) because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. When tempted (*peirazomenos*), no one should say, “God is tempting (*peirazomai*) me.” For God cannot be tempted (*apeirastos*) by evil, nor does he tempt (*peirazei*) anyone; but each person is tempted (*peirazetai*) when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (James 1: 12-15)

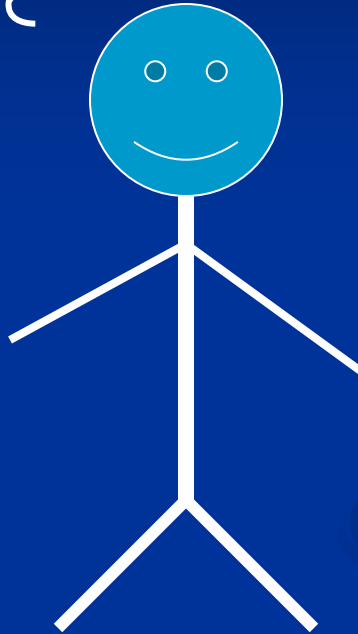
The same Greek word can be translated as
“trial” or “temptation”

- Any event in one’s life can be both a trial and a temptation

God wants to test us to make us grow

- *Peirazo* 
Satan wants to tempt us to make us sin

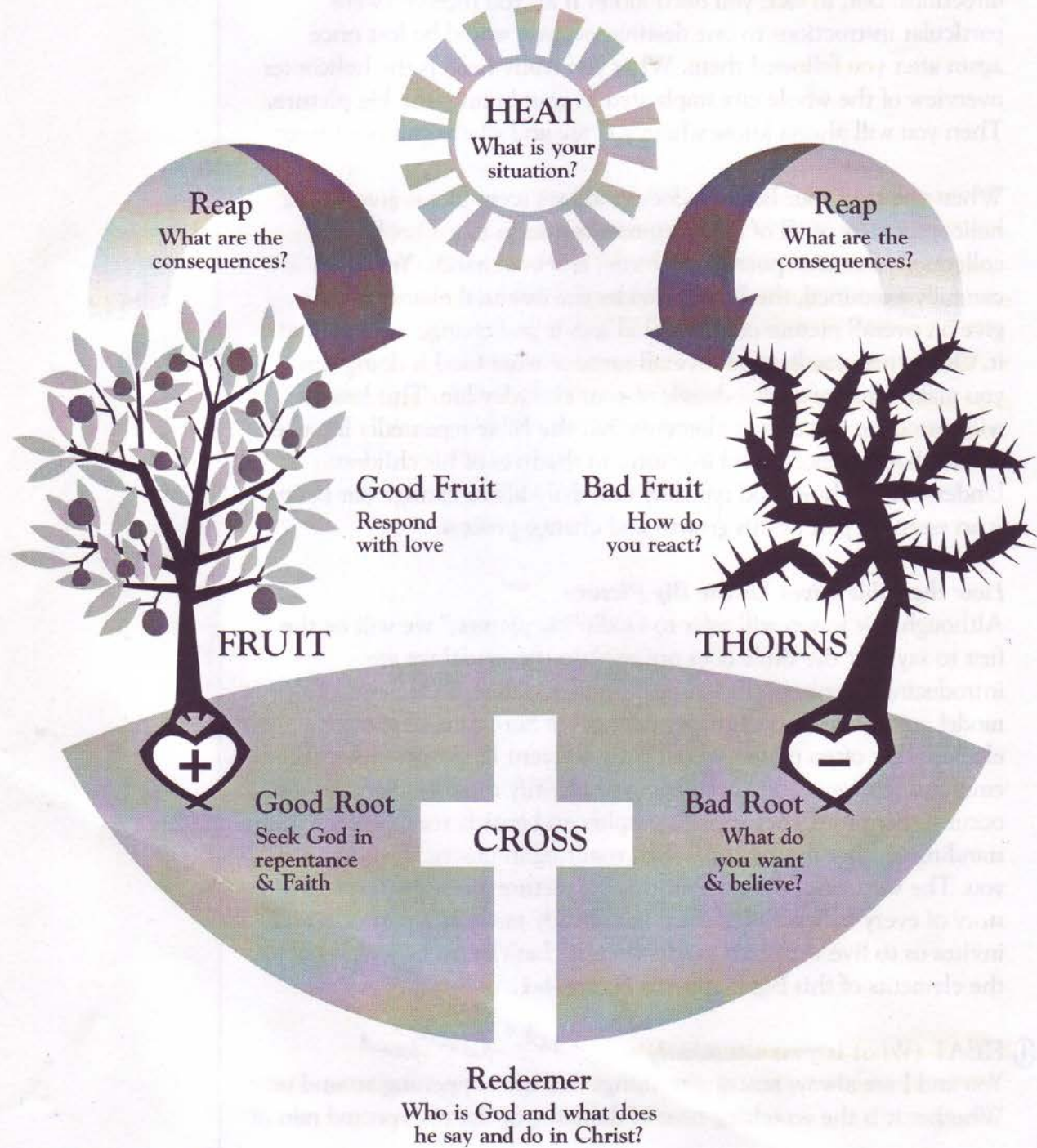
Heat / Rain



godly response



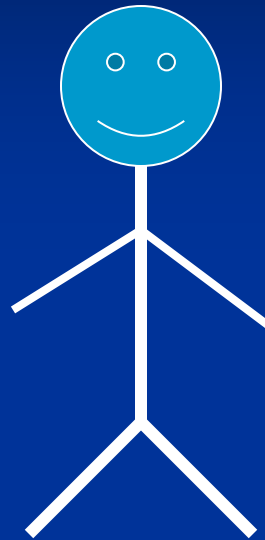
sinful response



Trials/Temptations

- Trials do not cause us to sin
- God does not tempt us to sin by sending trials into our lives
- If we respond sinfully to the trials, it is because our hearts have chosen to do so
- Trials reveal what is really in our hearts all along

Heat / Rain

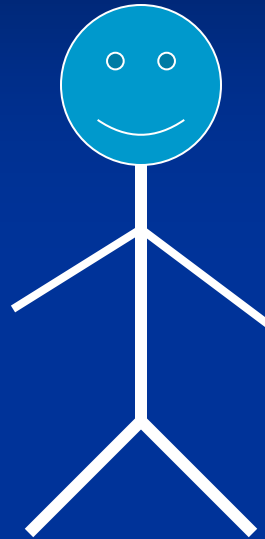


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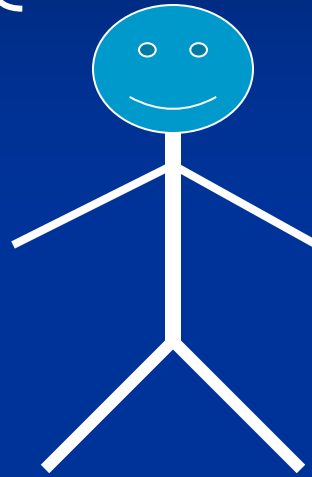
Seek God in
repentance and faith

What have we learned from God's Word?
How are we going to put it into practice?

Heat / Rain



Respond supernaturally



Respond naturally

Come to the cross of Jesus; let Him forgive our sins; allow Him to transform our heart. Then we can respond supernaturally to the heat/rain