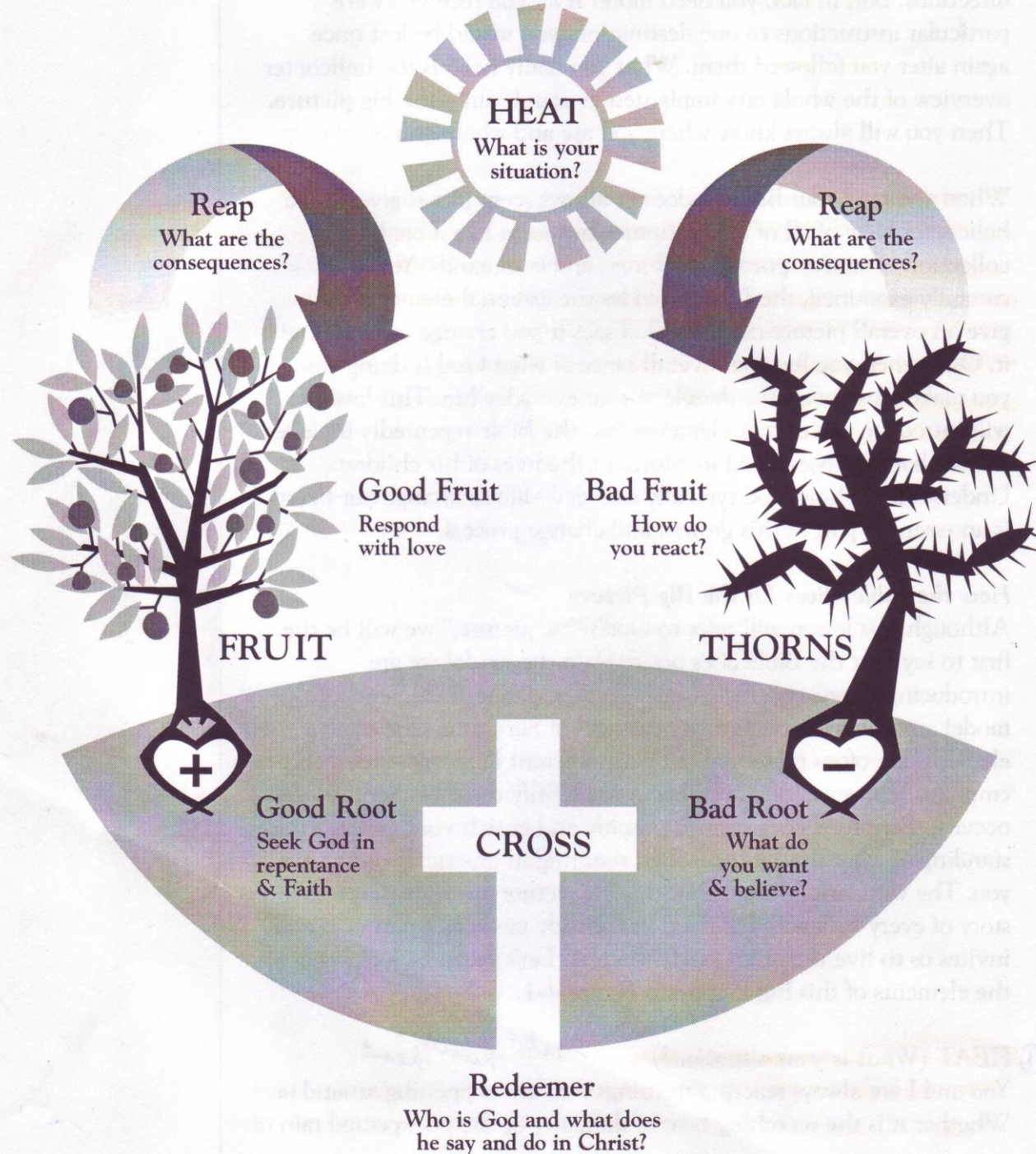


Mortification: Licensed to Kill

Colossians 3: 1-6



Col. 3: 1-17; transitional paragraphs

It all starts “with Christ”

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Col. 3: 1-4)

²⁰ Since you died with Christ ... (Col. 2: 20)

Life can be difficult and harsh ...

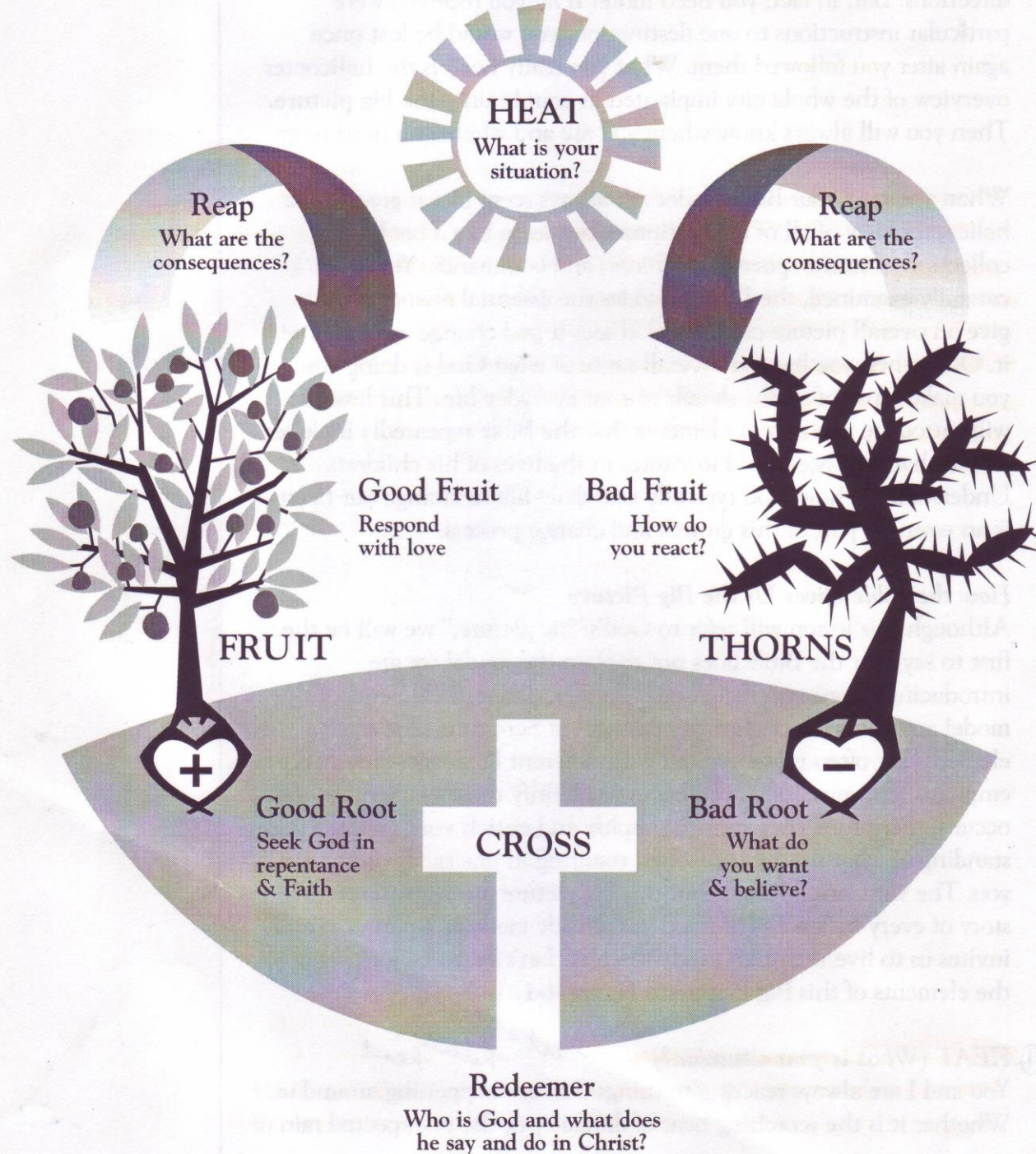
- but let's keep our focus on Christ
- look at life from eternity's perspective

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Col. 3: 1-4)

Where God is taking us

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col. 3: 17)

- Close the gap between our words & deeds
- Make us grateful & glad people



What are these?



Progressive Sanctification

Justification

Sanctification

Glorification

instantaneous

life-long process

instantaneous

God does this We cooperate with God God does this

Past

Present

Future

Past

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Col. 3: 1-4)

Present; Future

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ,
set your hearts on things above,
where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3 For you died,
and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will
appear with him in glory.

(Col. 3: 1-4)

So, the crucial question is ...

- Are you “in Christ”?
- Have you been justified through Christ’s death on the cross?

What's mortification?

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. (Colossians 3: 5-6; cf. Rom. 8: 13)

- John Owen (1616-1683)
- **The Mortification of Sin**

What does “put to death” mean?

- To kill something is a very definite thing
- However, we know sin will be present until our glorification
- So, what does Paul mean?

Now that you're "in Christ", what's happening?

8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

(1 Pt. 5: 8-10)

Now that you're "in Christ", what's happening?

For the accuser of our brothers and sisters,
who accuses them before our God day and night,
has been hurled down.

They triumphed over him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony;
they did not love their lives so much
as to shrink from death. (Rev. 12: 10-11)

Now that you're "in Christ", what's happening?

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (James 1: 13-15)

"And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one." (Matt. 6: 13)

Now that you're "in Christ", what's happening?

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. (Eph. 6: 10-13)

- schemes = *methodeia*: scheming; craftiness; strategy

Now that you're "in Christ", what's happening?

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And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11:14)

What's happening when you and I sin?

- Circumstances & struggles can trigger sin, but sin is caused by thoughts & desires of our heart
- We think or believe in “lies” instead of trusting in God
- We desire/worship/treasure an “idol” instead of God

Who talks to you the most ?

- You do!
- Crucial that you know what you're saying to yourself
- Crucial that what you're saying is true
- Spiritual strongholds – constructed through false beliefs we have
- strongholds gives Satan and his minions great advantage over us
- strongholds prevent us from enjoying the blessings Christ wants us to have

Example: our identity

- **received** identity – someone from outside gives it to me
- **achieved** identity – I achieve it on my own
- Timothy Keller, *Making Sense of God*, Viking Press, 2016

Climb Every Mountain
from *The Sound of Music*

Climb every mountain,
Ford every stream.

Follow every rainbow
‘Til you find your dream

Which song is this?

Let it go, let it go
Can't hold it back anymore
Let it go, let it go
Turn away and slam the door
I don't care what they're going to say
Let the storm rage on
The cold never bothered me anyway

It's time to see what I can do
To test the limits and break through
No right, no wrong, no rules for me
I'm free

What's wrong with the “modern” approach to our identity?

- It's incoherent
 - It's illusory
 - It's unstable
 - It's crushing
-
- based on success, achievement or some human love relationship
 - if any of these things is threatened or lost, lose the identity

What's happening when you and I sin?

- Sin is caused by the thoughts & desires of our heart
- We think or believe in “lies” instead of trusting in God
- We desire/worship/treasure an “idol” instead of God

What truths do we need to turn to?

- We sin when we think or believe a lie instead of trusting God
- Change takes place as, in response to God's goodness and grace, we turn to him in faith
- “Faith is trusting God to do what he has promised because we are convinced by his provisions that God is willing and able to keep his word.” - Scott Hafemann

What desires do we need to turn from?

- We sin when we desire or worship or treasure an idol instead of worshipping God
- Change takes place as, in response to God's goodness and grace, we turn from idolatrous desires in repentance
- This repentance is a continual act of turning from sin and denying self
- This repentance often called 'mortification'—putting to death whatever belongs to the sinful nature

Two sides of the same coin

Repentance: we turn from sin

Faith: we recognize that God is bigger and better
than anything sin offers

How to “kill” sin

- Intentional weakening of sin when we turn to God in faith and turn away from sin
- Gradual progress
- External & Internal activities both needed
- A daily ongoing battle

■ “... before you can kill sin, you have to look to the Lord who was lifted up on the cross for you. You cannot fight sin unless you have found rest in the inexhaustible sufficiency of doing and dying of Jesus Christ in your place. You cannot mortify sin unless that sin has been already nailed to the cross of Christ. There is no death of sin without the death of Christ.” - Brian Hedges, *Licensed to Kill—A Field Manual for Mortifying Sin*; Cruciform Press, 2011.

Christian life:
not only *doing* transformative things,
but *being* a transformed people

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (Titus 2:11-14)

Christian life:
not only *doing* transformative things,
but *being* a transformed people

- Transformed identity results in obedience
- “zealous for good work”

The process of sanctification



