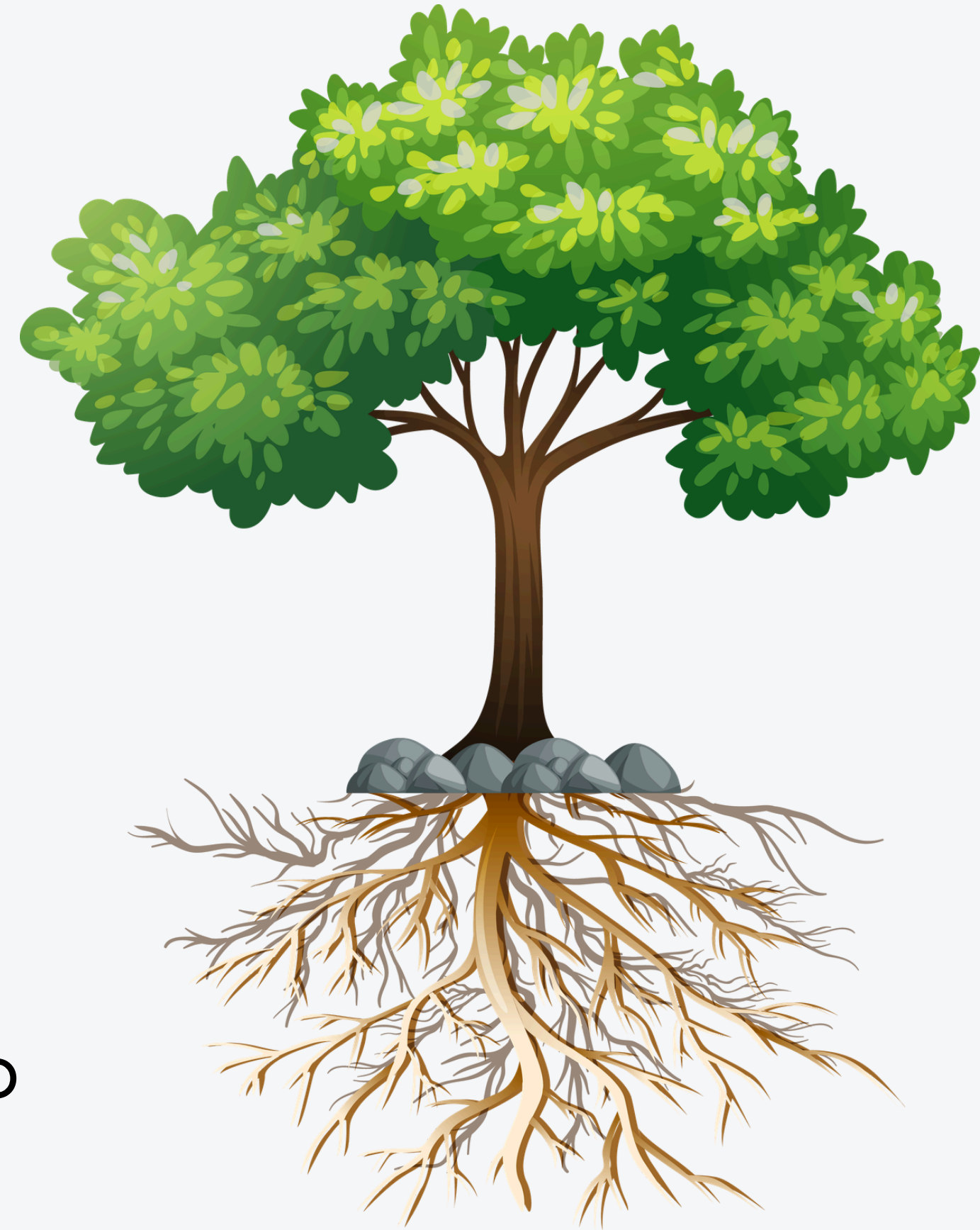


DISCOVERING AND OVERCOMING ROOT PROBLEMS AND STRONGHOLDS

Understanding **why** you do **what** you do





When I give Christ control of my life or surrender, I am complete in Christ. Jesus becomes the Lord of my life.

Colossians 2:10

"So you are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority."



When life is difficult, I may question ...

"Why am I doing what I do?" or
"Why is this happening?"



Romans 7:15-20

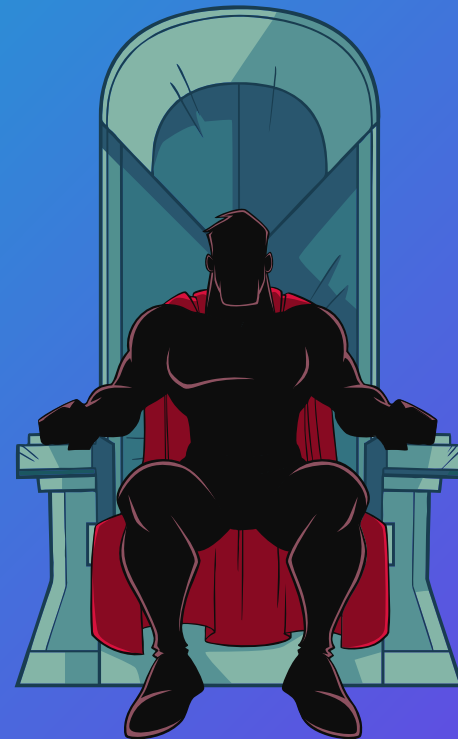
"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is the **sin living in me**... Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is **sin living in me** that does it."



Unconfessed sin



SIN



When I have sin (actions or thoughts) in my life, I am no longer complete in Christ.

Jesus is still in my life, but no longer on the throne of authority.

A root problem/stronghold begins

Jesus said in Matthew 6:33

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you ."



When I ignore sin instead of confessing it to God and asking for forgiveness, I surrender ground to Satan's control. Satan uses the authority I give him to take jurisdiction over the area of my life.

Ephesians 4:27

"and do not give the devil a foothold.."

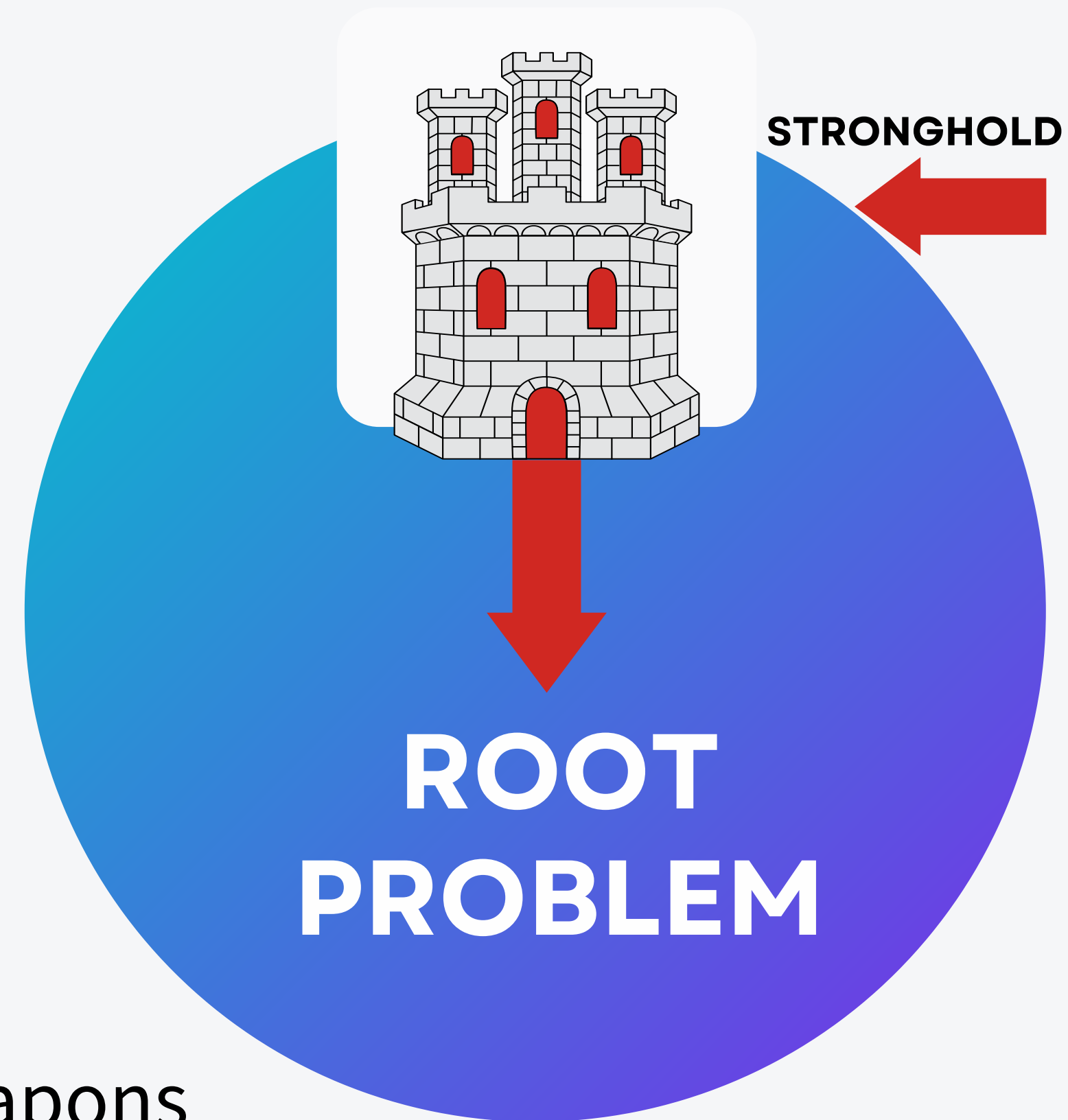


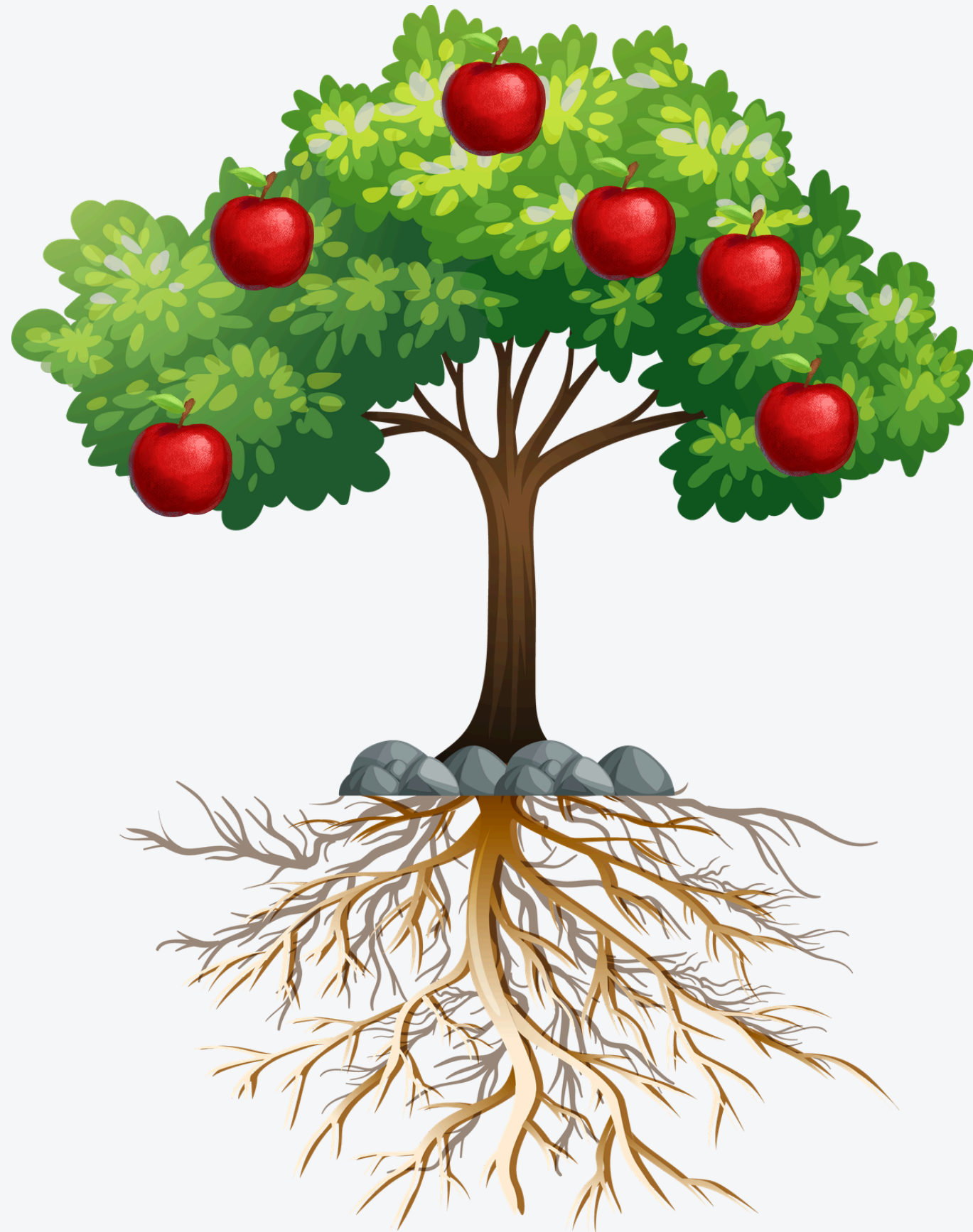


**When I give the devil
a foothold, he will
build a stronghold.
Then he will hold me
in a chokehold.**

2 Corinthians 10:4

"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds."





Tree Analogy

**This tree represents my
life and the fruit I
produced.**

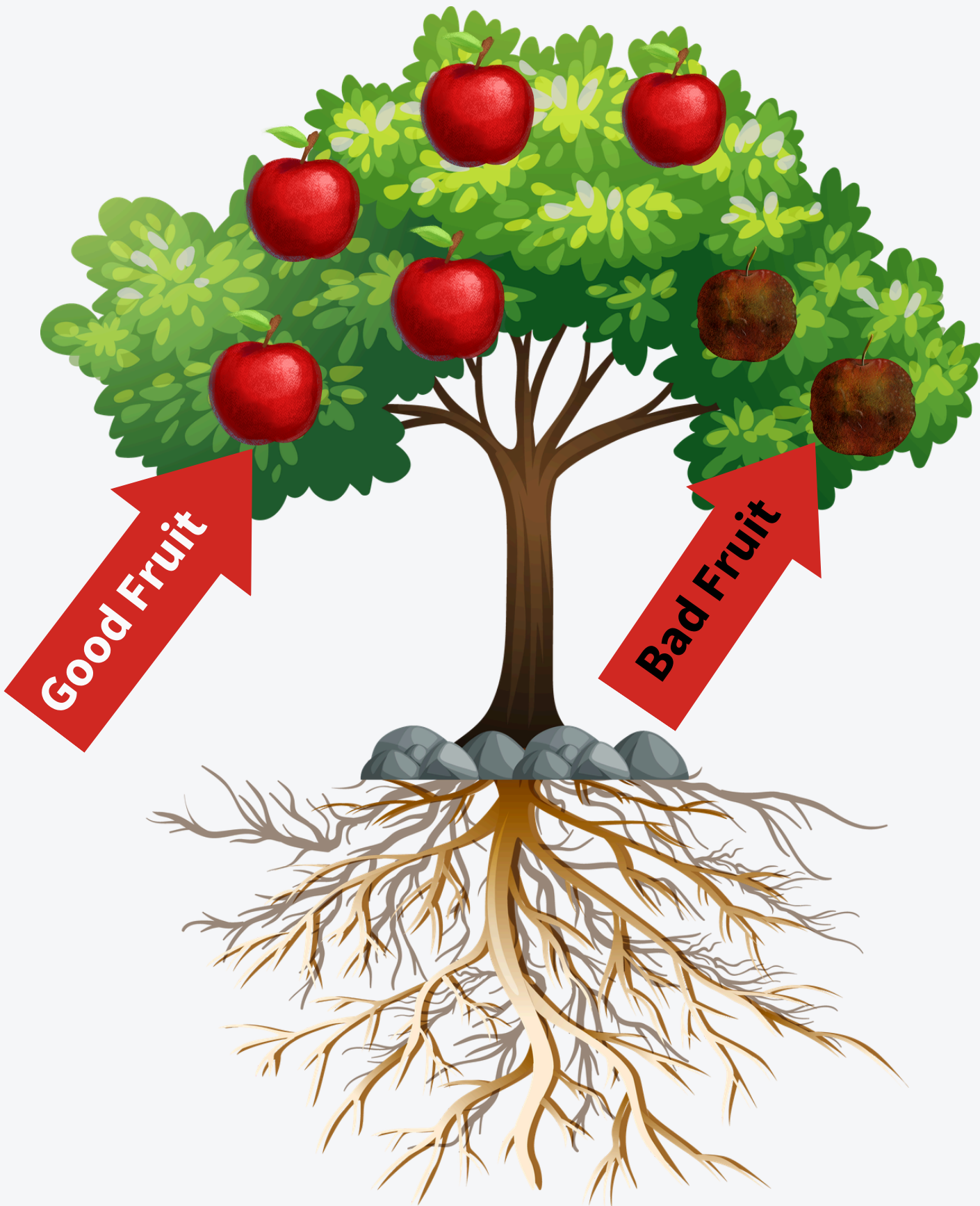
Psalm 1:3

"That person is like a tree planted by
streams of water, which yields its fruit in
season and whose leaf does not wither -
whatever they do prospers

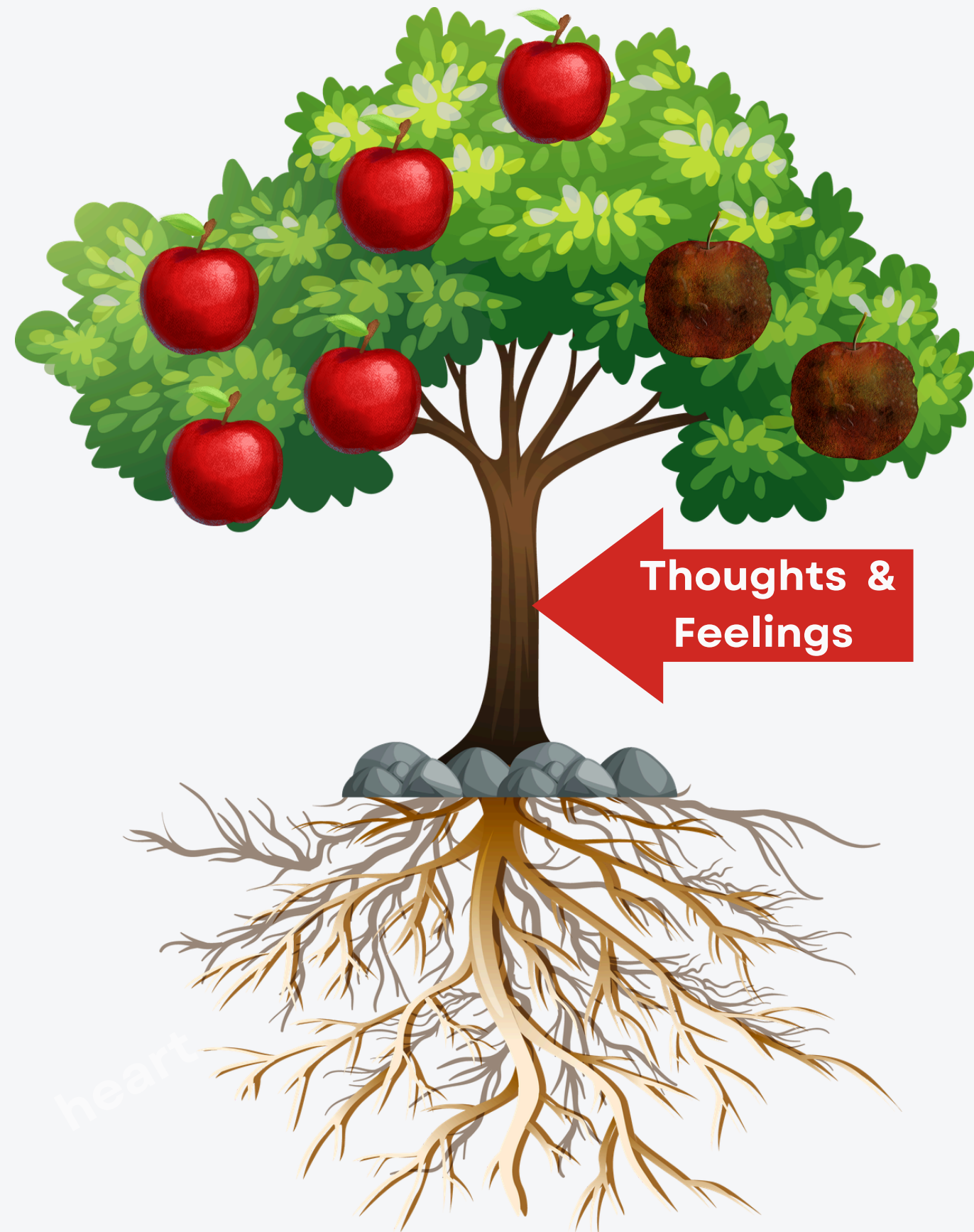


The Fruit

**I will produce good fruit and
sometimes bad fruit**



Jesus said in Matthew 7:16-17
"By their fruit, you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit."



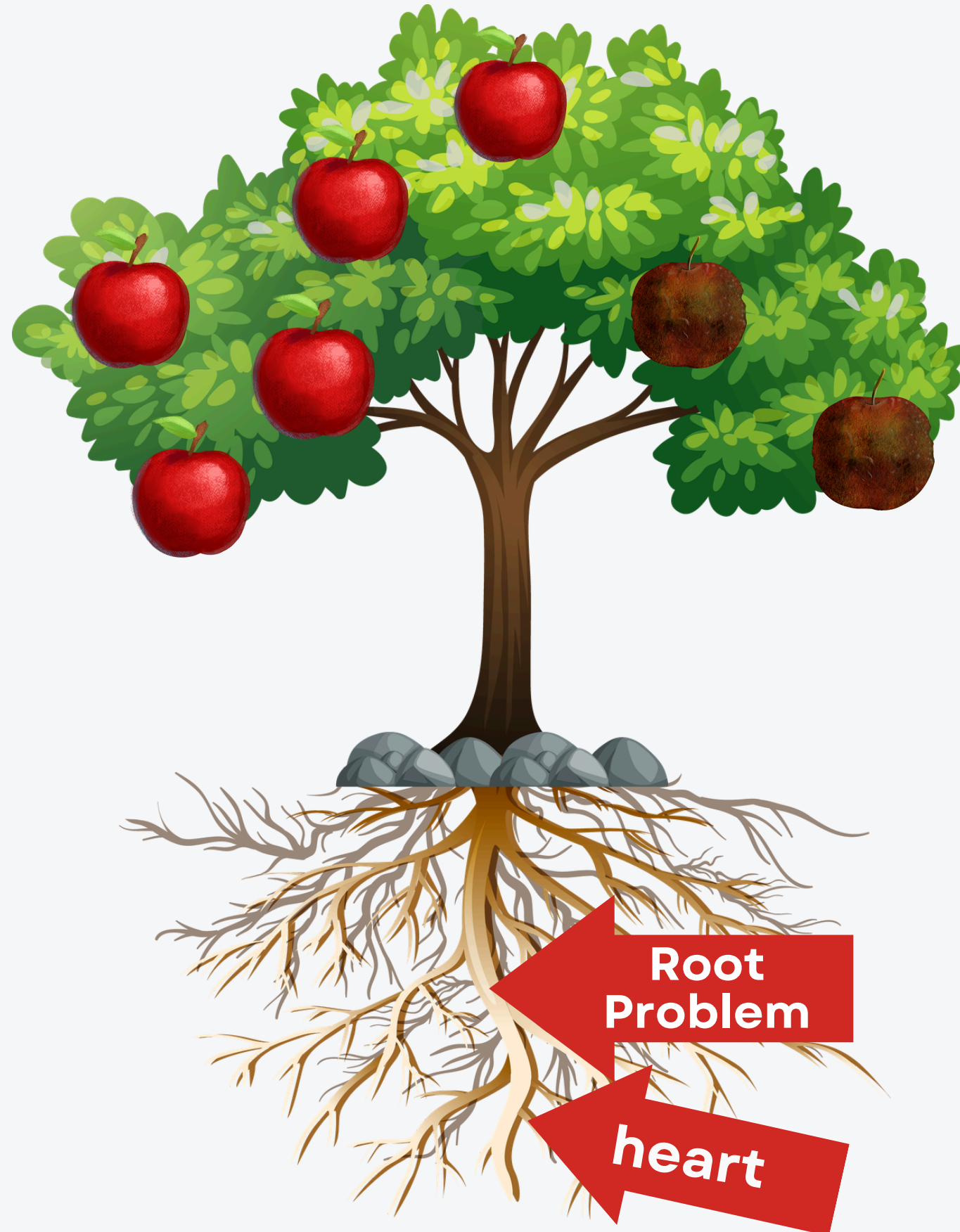
The Truck

Illustrates how my feelings
and thoughts produce
good or bad fruit.

James explains how anger caused a man to live a life that was not right with God.

James 1:20

"For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God"



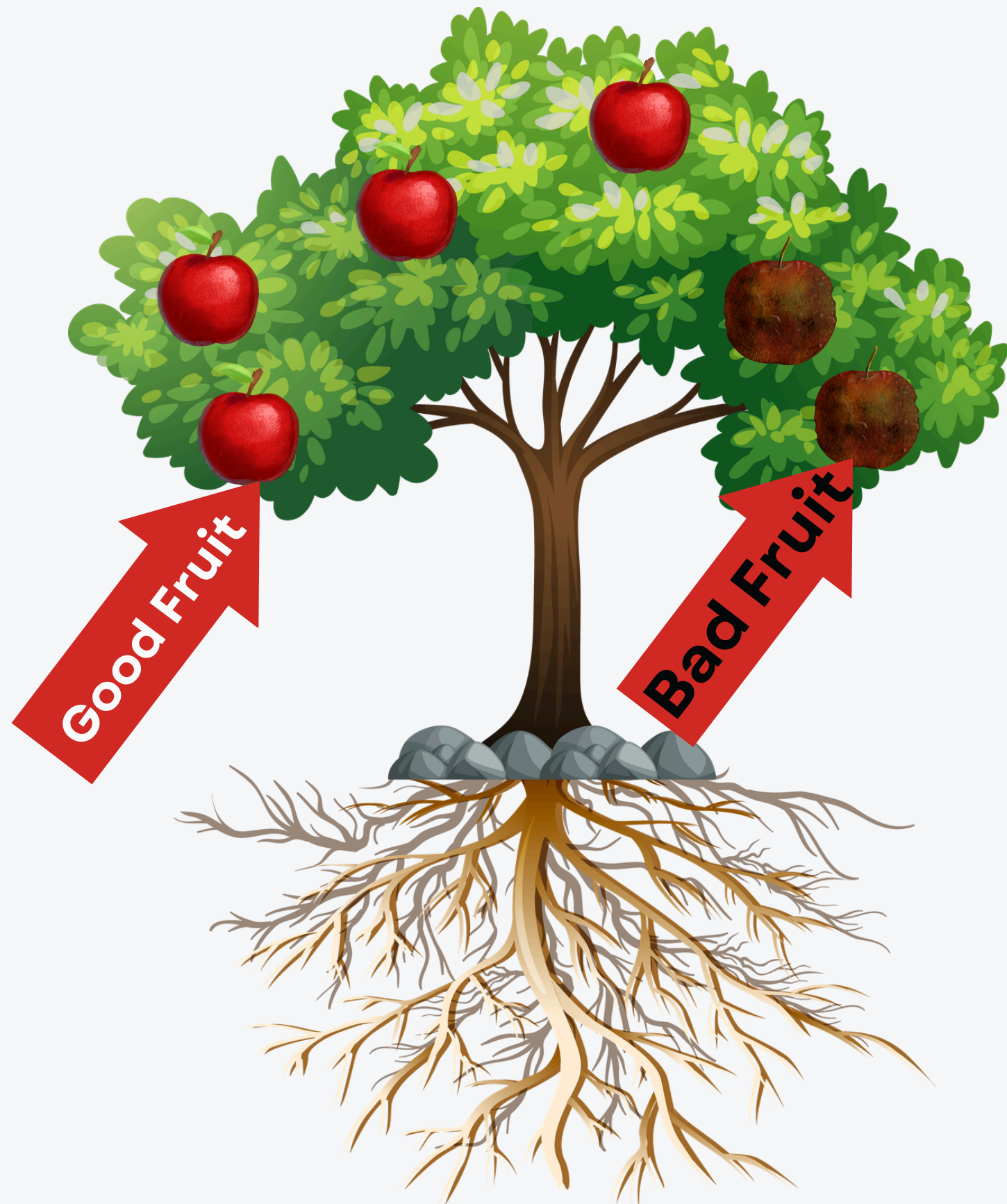
The Root

(Not the Fruit is the Problem)

- **Roots represent the human heart.**
- **Healthy roots produce good fruit.**
- **Poisoned roots produce bad fruit.**

Jesus said in Luke 6:45

"A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of."



The fruit I produce - good or bad - is easily identified by my family, friends, and co-workers by everyone around me. Yet, I am often blind to my bad fruit.

Acts 26:18

"To open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."

2 Corinthians 4:4

"The god of this age has blinded the minds..."



Claim God's Promise

Before considering whether you have a root problem, you need to claim God's promise...



1 John 5:4

"For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith."



Root Problems Grow Over Time, and Strongholds Get Stronger

First, a seed of temptation leads to sin—an action or thought that opposes God’s commands.

Second, if I never ask God to forgive that sin, it takes root in my life.

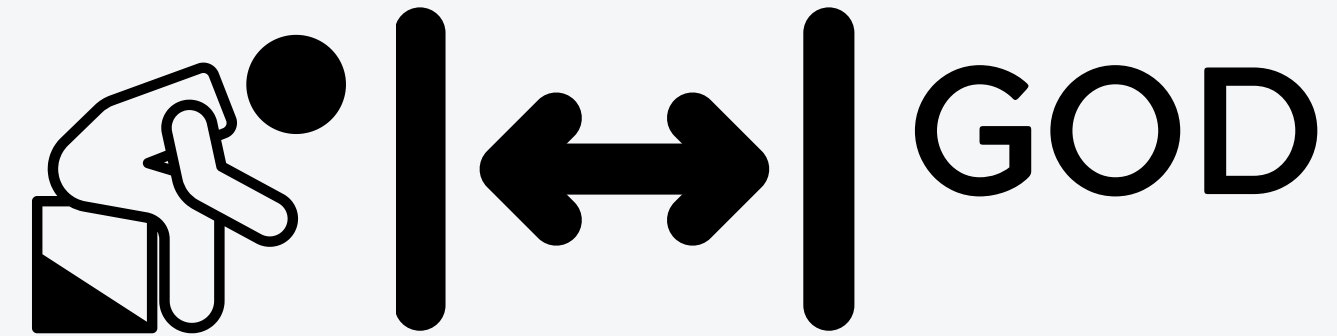
Like a cancerous cell, sin spreads, affecting other areas of my life.





Sin Separates

Sin left unattended creates a wedge or wall between God and me. I begin to feel God does not hear my prayers



Isaiah 59:2

“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.”

Psalms 66:18

“If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.”



Do I Have a Root Problem?

The Holy Spirit will help me recognize a hidden root problem in my heart.

Jesus said in John 16:8 NASB

“And He, when He comes, will convict the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment.”





Fruit of a Root Problem/Stronghold

Referring back to the tree analogy, the list of sins that Paul calls “the acts of the flesh” can create a demonic stronghold

Galatians 5:16-21

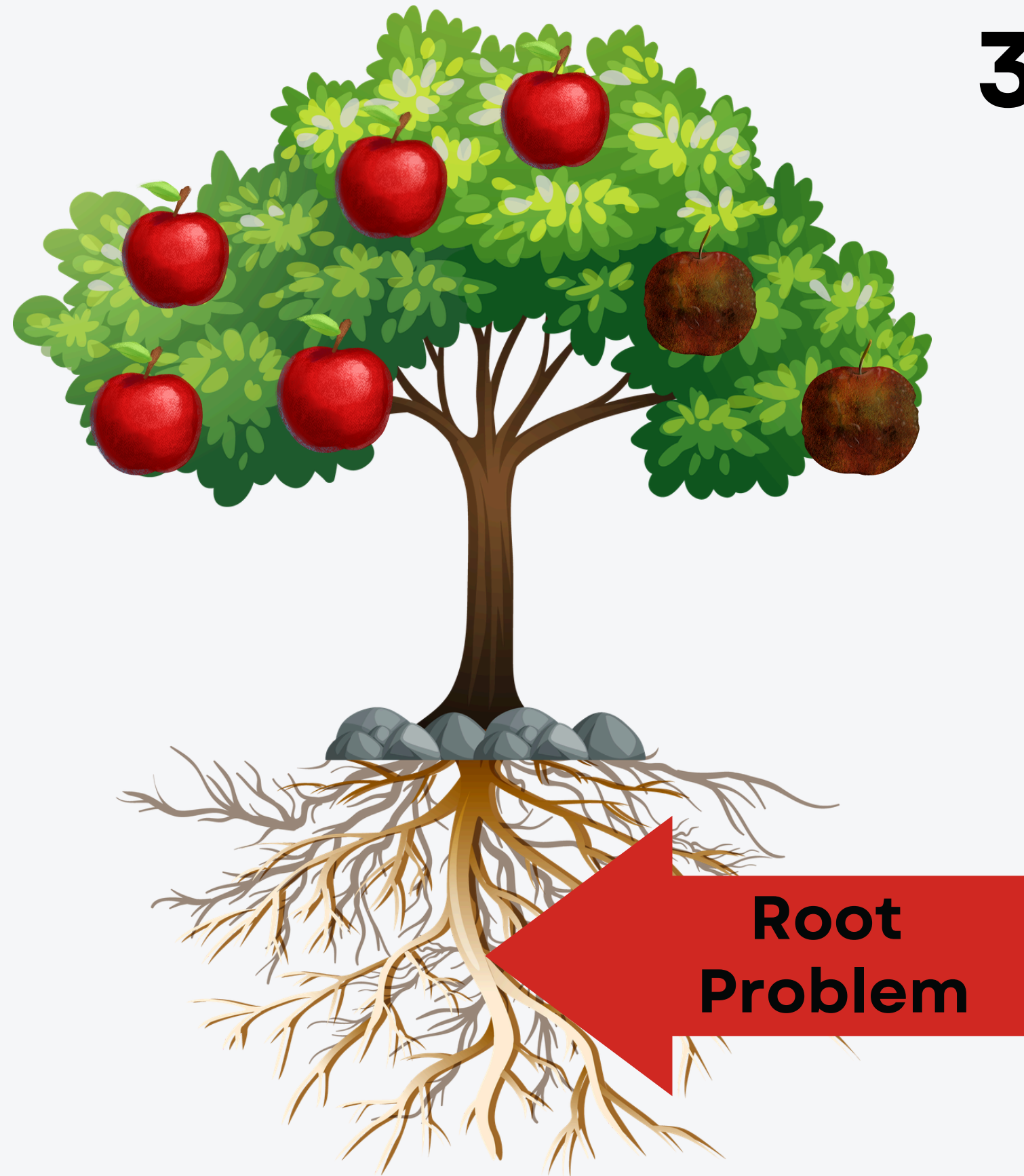
"So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want...The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."



Based on those verses, there are 3 categories of Root Problems/Strongholds:

Bitterness	Bad Morals	Greed
Hostility Discord Fits of anger Rivalries Conflicts Rebellion	Sexual Immorality Impurity Sensuality Drunkenness Sorcery (Greek - Drug abuse) Orgies	Idolatry Jealousy Envy Selfish ambition Arrogance

Note: Paul listed various fruits of the flesh in Galatians 5:16-21, Romans 1 & 2, 1 Corinthians 3, Ephesians 4, and Colossians 1.



3 MAIN ROOT PROBLEMS



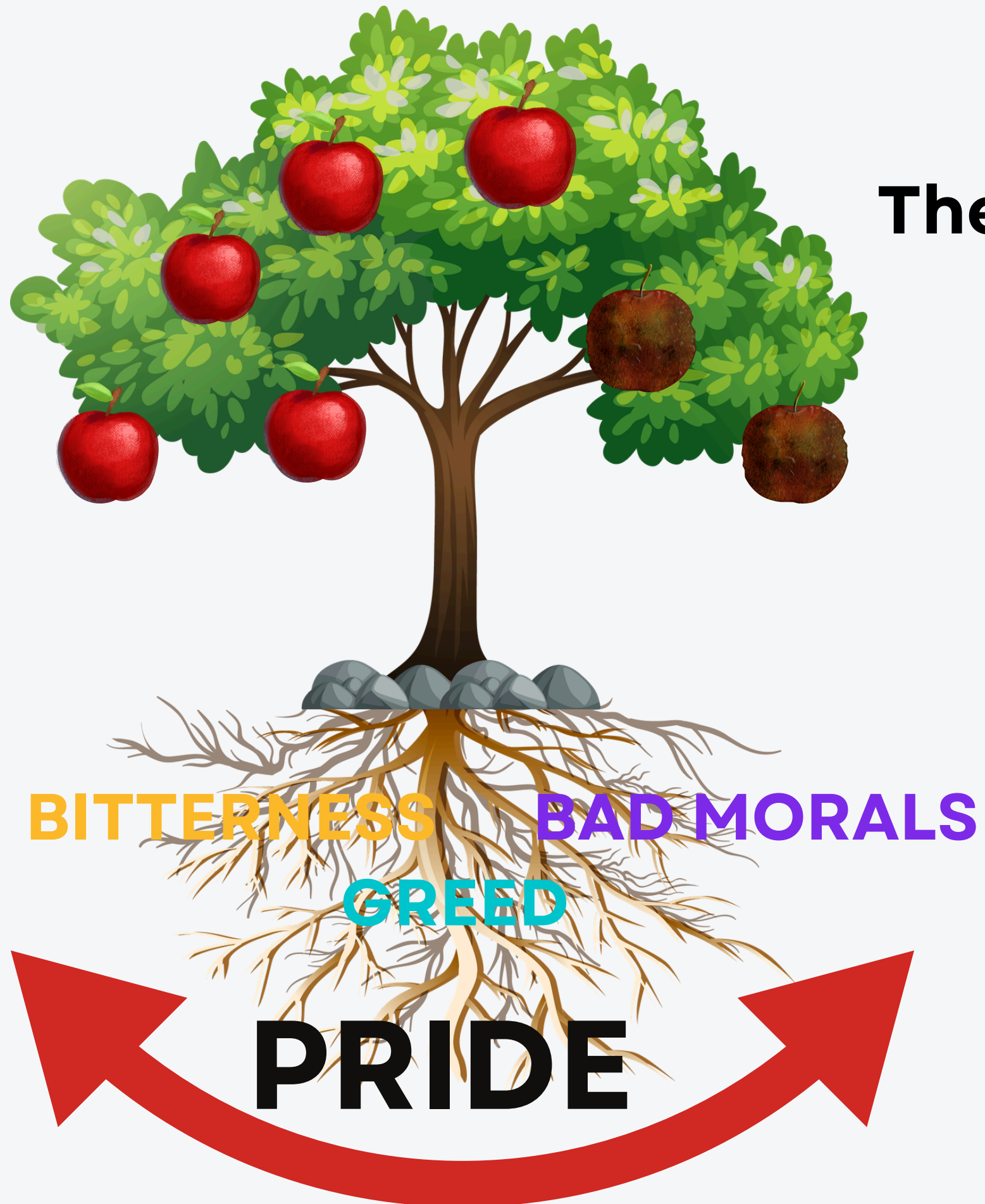
Bitterness



Greed



Bad Morals



The overarching reason for most root problems/stronghold is PRIDE

(I don't have a problem)

Proverbs 16:18

"Pride goes before destruction..."



Bitterness

Hebrews 12:15
"See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."

The Tree	Produces
BAD FRUIT - my sinful actions and attitudes , what I produce, what hurts the people around me	Prone to outbursts and fights, temperamental, argumentative, disobedient, mean, disrespectful toward God or anyone Health issues- digestive, insomnia, headaches, addictions
TRUNK - Carries my thoughts and feelings and affects my actions	Feelings of anger, insecurity, impatience, lack of self-worth and self-esteem, overwhelmed, depressed
Root Problem - the ultimate cause for my ungodly thoughts, feelings and bad fruit	Bitterness



Greed

Luke 12:15
"Then he said to them,
Watch out! Be on your
guard against all kinds of
greed; life does not
consist in an abundance
of possessions."

The Tree	Produces
BAD FRUIT - my sinful actions and attitudes , what I produce, what hurts the people around me	Greedy, selfish, lying, money-hungry, insolated, won't give to others or compromise, arrogant, aggressive, brags, blame others, disobedient, steals, suffer for addictions
TRUNK - Carries my thoughts and feelings that affect my actions	Feeling victimized, jealous, stingy, afraid of failure, insecure, low self-worth, and self-esteem, fearful, paranoid, anxious
Root Problem - the ultimate cause for my ungodly thoughts, feelings and bad fruit	Greed



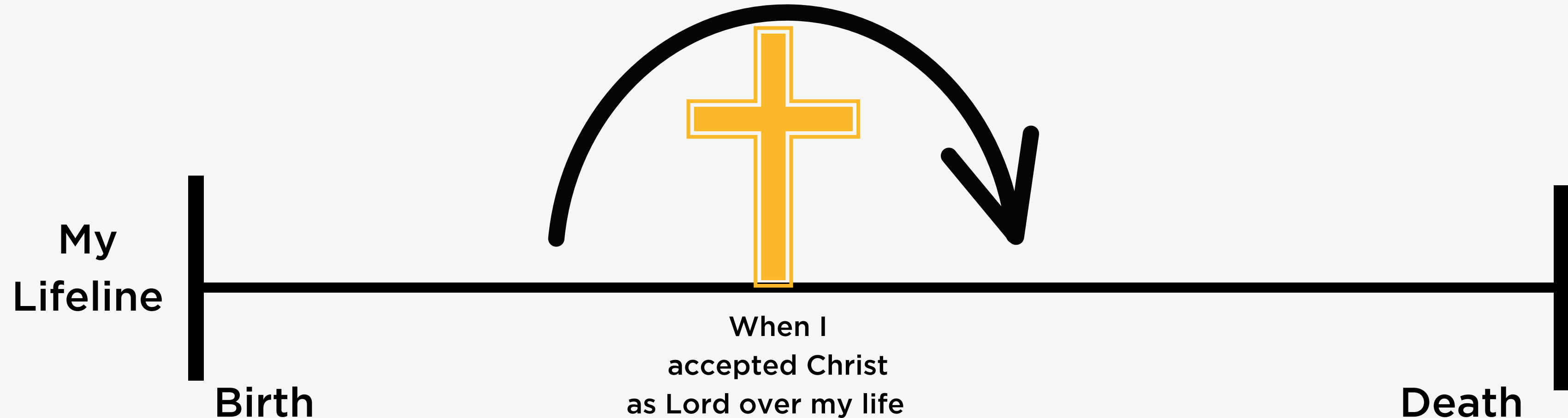
Bad Morals

Matthew 7:13-14
“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

The Tree	Produces
BAD FRUIT - my sinful actions and attitudes , what I produce, what hurts the people around me	Dishonorable choices, unethical decisions, lying, profane or degrading speech, adultery, immorality, pornography, negative thoughts, stealing, lust, addictions
TRUNK - Carries my thoughts and feelings that affect my actions	Conflicted when choosing right from wrong, insecure, lust, entitled, covetous, impatient, fearful, shame, justification for bad behavior
Root Problem - the ultimate cause for my ungodly thoughts, feelings and bad fruit	Bad Morals



Even though I accepted Christ and He forgave me for all my sins, a sin from the past can get reseeded this side of the cross. If I don't confess the sin to Christ, it will grow into a new root problem or stronghold.



Romans 6:12-14

"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace."



Steps to Overcome Root Problems



Admit

**Confess +
Repent**

Claim

Ask

Protect



Admit

The first step to overcoming any sin or root problem is admitting it exists—to myself and God. Then, admit the sin or root problem to a godly friend, pastor, counselor, or spouse.

James 5:16

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

Romans 3:10

"There is no one righteous, not even one"

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"



2

Confess + Repent

- **Confess and ask God to forgive you of your sin**
- **Repent of your sin. ‘Repent’ means to turn around and move in the opposite direction and stop repeating the sin.**

1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”

Acts 3:19

"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,"

- During this step, you may need to forgive yourself, accept God’s forgiveness forgive someone, and/or initiate restoration with someone



3

Claim

As a born-again Jesus follower, claim the blood of Jesus over your sin. Remember Jesus suffered for you on the cross and shed His blood to wash away your sins - to give you freedom from sin and defeat.

Isaiah 1:18

“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

Ephesians 1:7

“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace”

Hebrews 9:14

“How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!”



Ask

- **Humbly ask God to take back the ground in your life that Satan controlled.**
- **Ask God to tear down the root problem or stronghold in your life.**
- **Surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ**

Matthew 7:7

“Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

James 4:7

“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

Romans 10:9

"If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”



Protect

Protect the ground that God took back from Satan against new attacks and temptations.

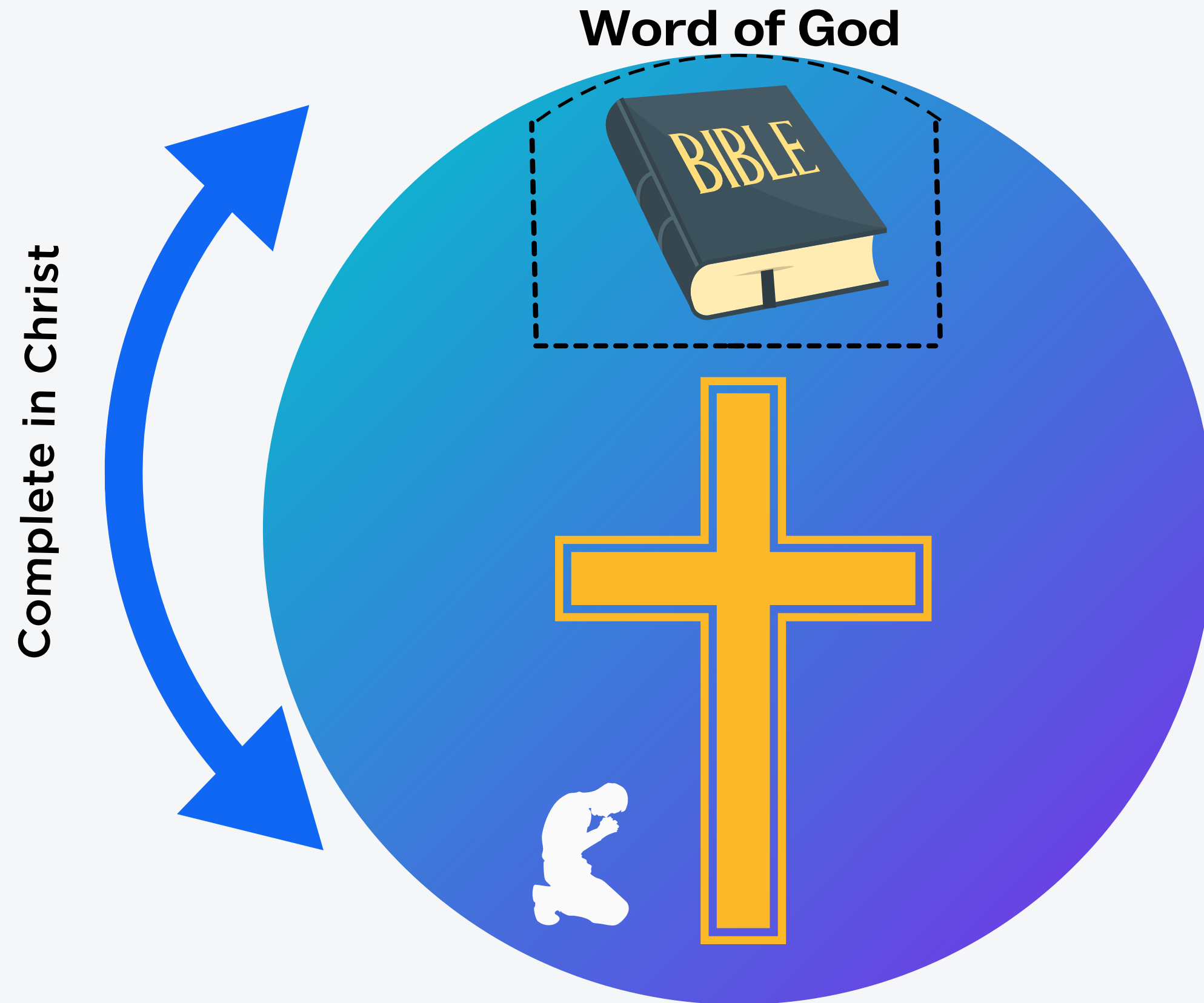
- **Ask God to help you discover a scripture verse that applies to your root problem.**
- **Memorize and quote the verse when tempted to return to that sin.**

Psalm 119:11

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

Ephesians 6:17

"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."



Protection

Find and memorize a scripture verse to protect your heart.

When you surrender your life to Christ, Jesus returns to the throne of your life, and you are whole and secure in His completeness.

Matthew 4:1-11 records that Satan even tempted Jesus. Tempted with three different things, Jesus responded to Satan each time with Scripture. Then Satan left Him.

-Follow Jesus' Example-



God Always Provides an Escape Route

Always remember - You don't have to go back to the old life. The Bible confirms that God is faithful. He will never let you be tempted beyond what you can handle. He will guide and strengthen you to escape temptation.

1 Corinthians 10:13

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."





Once God leads you to overcome a root problem/stronghold, begin walking through life as a new person.

Claim this scripture over your life, watch for God to “do something new” within you, and live in victory.



Isaiah 43:18-19

"Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, Rivers in the desert."

Note: If you discover a root problem, we recommend discussing it with a Christian counselor or coach.