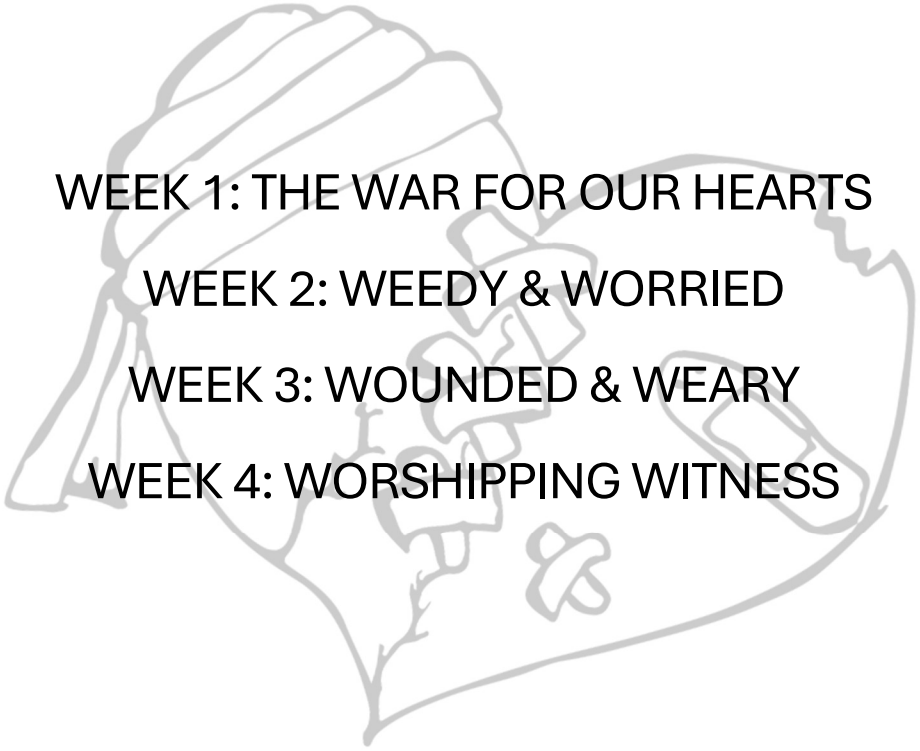
HEARTS WHOLLY TRUE

A biblical study of our hearts

for Flourish Bible Study Groups



WEEK 1: THE WAR FOR OUR HEARTS

WEEK 2: WEEDY & WORRIED

WEEK 3: WOUNDED & WEARY

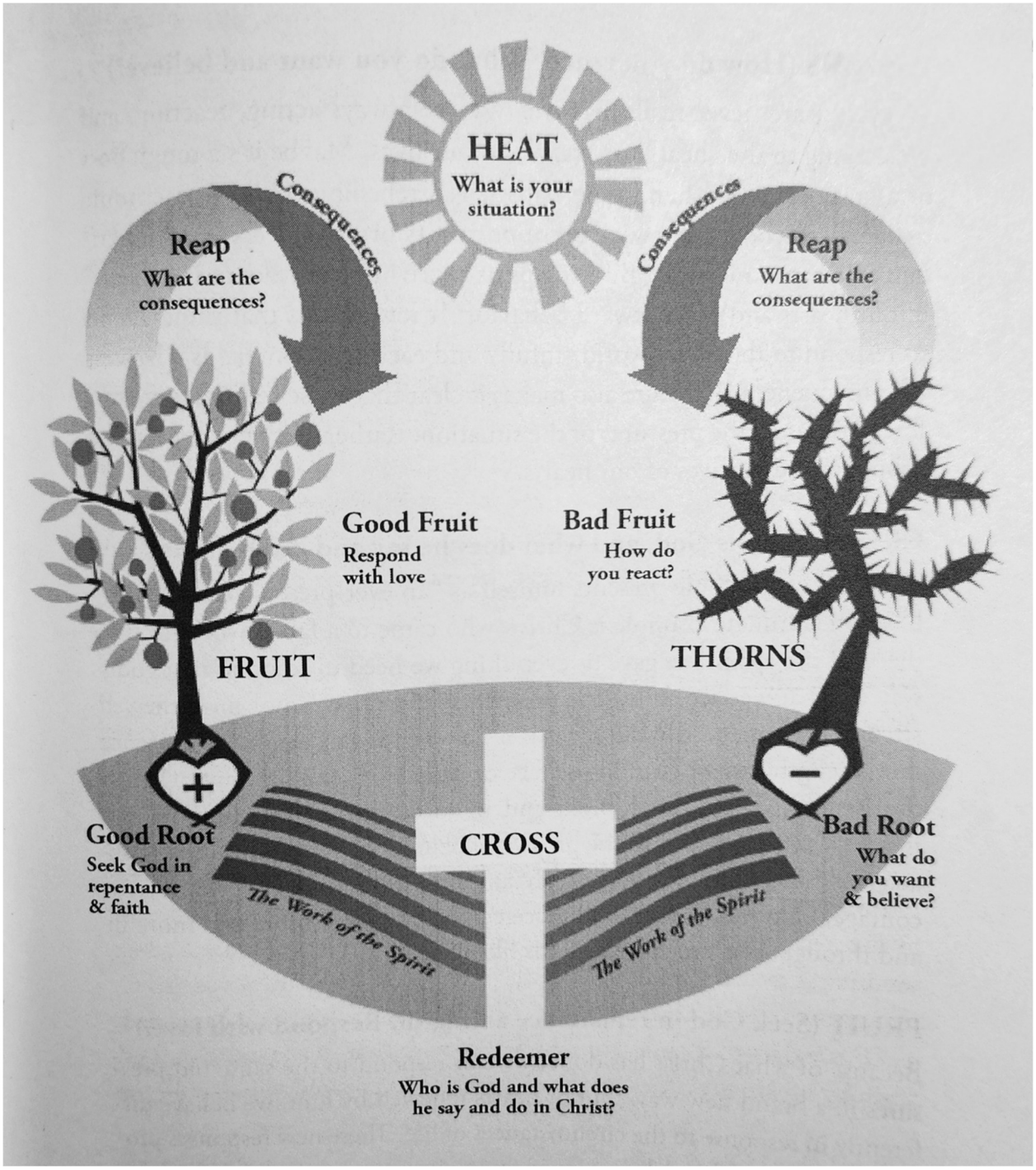
WEEK 4: WORSHIPPING WITNESS

Tea Tree Gully
ANGLICAN CHURCH

Oct-Nov 2026

Week 1 Talk: The War for our Hearts

Image 1: The "3-Trees"



How People Change, Lane & Tripp, 2003

Extra Notes / Questions / Prayers:

Week 1 Small Group Questions:

1. Discuss as a group – was there anything from the talk about what God has said about our heart that expanded your understanding, encouraged, or was a helpful reminder to you? Why or how? Or, what questions or push-back has it raised for you about our hearts?

2. Discuss together ways the world (including us) defines or use the word 'heart' and as you do, consider how each might be missing something of the biblical definition of our heart:

3. God has made it clear that our biggest problem isn't "out-there", or "in them", but in me.

a. What do you see and hear as things people in your corner of Adelaide blame or point to as being humanity's biggest problem/s if not the sin of our own hearts?

b. As a group, spend a few minutes brainstorming how you might graciously and winsomely have a conversation with someone who holds one of the above positions.

- Consider what you might have in common with them and their view and reasoning
- Consider how their view may have gaps or inconsistencies
- Consider how our hearts being in need of complete renewal could be a good thing

4. Our hearts are the control centre of our lives, but they are influenced and shaped by many things. Out of the following, which do you think your heart is most easily impacted by:

- Circumstances and experiences,
- Beliefs, narratives and thought life, or
- Wants, fears, desires and motives.

a. What temptations does that particular influence bring with it? What examples can you think of?

b. What could be the possible good to come from being more easily formed through that influence?

5. Ultimately God has revealed that it is His Word renewing our mind with His truth, which keeps us from being conformed to the things, fears, desires and ways of the world and instead, with the help of the Holy Spirit unites our heart to increasingly love, serve, trust and worship Him with all that we are.

a. If you're a believer – what is an example of God using his word to bring light, expose false stories or trusts, teach more of who he is, or other understanding over the past year? Or maybe longer?

If you're not yet saved by faith in Jesus Christ – are there any truths from the Bible you currently agree with? Has it changed anything about how you live?

b. How did that new, deeper or refined understanding impact your worship? (like the pattern in Rom 12:1-2) Perhaps it grew/changed your prayer life, your singing, involvement in church, relationships with others, direction in life, attitude towards work/rest/retirement – or so many other things!

6. We are going to continue to look at the battle for our heart and in our heart over the next 3 weeks. Is there already something you will be seeking God's help for lasting, fruitful change in your heart that you can invite your group to be praying with you about?

- Is it a habitual sin, struggle or reaction?
- A weakness, suffering, grief or conflict not worked through?
- Could there be things, wants, fears or simply other things distracting or dividing your heart from being wholly true to God?
- Is there a weariness, burden or pain that is weighing heavily you need God's help to endure?
- Something else?

Week 2 Study Questions: Weedy & Worried

1. This week we're looking at the battle for our heart and how the weeds of sin, and the worries that come from our various wants influence that battle.

Before we dive in, bring your own heart, mind and others in your group to God in prayer – seeking His help and wisdom.

2. The following portions of Israel's history relate to a time when Saul was King. The people had God as their true King, yet they have lived as if, "there was no King in Israel, everyone did what was right in their own eyes" and asked God for a king that would make them like the nations. God had his prophet Samuel warn them that a king like that would be characterised by taking, taking and taking from them for his own gain leading the people to cry out to God. But they still said yes – give him to us (1 Sam 8 & 10:17-19).

a. Read 1 Samuel 15:1-26, then read it again, to familiarise yourself with the details. Then give the following questions a go, if you aren't sure on any – give it some thought and then move on to the next one if you're still unsure.

b. Looking at what was said by the author, summarise the circumstances Saul was in at the beginning of the chapter:

c. List Saul's responses to those circumstances, and his later response to Samuel's rebuke:

d. What do those responses and actions reveal about the heart of Saul?

i. What was he wanting and fearing?

ii. What was he choosing to believe, what was shaping his perspective or motives?

e. What were some of the consequences/impacts of Saul's corrupted heart?

f. What truths did Samuel expose about Saul's actions and heart?

g. What truths should have influenced and controlled Saul's heart from this passage?

h. What fruits and impact would they have likely had?

If you have made it this far – well done! You have "3-tree'd" Saul and the bleating sheep!

Working through those questions has been to help us dig under the circumstances and behavioural reactions, to get to the heart level of motives, fears and beliefs.

4. Summarise what you understand God makes most clear from this passage about:

- God: - Human behaviours: - Human hearts:

5. As you consider those truths – which of them is searching out your own heart, mind or behaviours? Where is there a call, command or comfort to you from God through His word?

6. If you are up for some more – have a quick read of the following passages: **1 Kings 10:23-11:8, 1 Kings 21:1-16, and Acts 4:32-5:11**

a. What were common battles for the hearts of those in these accounts?

b. How would you summarise their responses/behaviours?

c. What impact did it have on them, those around them and their relationship with God?

We will get to some great Gospel truths when we gather, but for now spend time in prayer – considering what you have read, what God's revealed about his truth, your heart and how he's at work.

***Optional* Personal Reflection Activity**

Consider your own day, or perhaps the last few days or weeks even. You won't answer all of these! But try to be attentive to seeking God's help in the opportunities he gives to have our hearts transformed through our battles with the weeds of sin, and worries of our wants.

- What situations have you faced regularly, that prompt a response in you in some way? (It could be something as simple as driving and encountering traffic, asking children to do chores, or relationship tension)
- What 'thorny' behaviours keep popping up in your words, actions, relationships or stewarding?
- What things do you most fear losing, happening or getting?
- What/who/when do you avoid thinking about, seek escape from, or avoid encountering?
- What consumes your thoughts when you are going about your day?
- What narratives, 'what-if' scenarios or scenes are being replayed over in your mind?
- What are you striving, seeking, wanting or working most for at the moment?
- What is causing you grief, pain, or despair?

Week 2 Talk: Weedy & Worried

Extra Notes / Questions / Prayers:

Week 3 Study Questions: Wounded & Weary

1. This week we're looking at the battle for our heart and how the wounds of the sins of others, and our weakness, and the sufferings of a broken world often leave us feeling battle scarred and weary.

   Before we dive in, like last week - bring your own heart, mind and others in your group to God in prayer – seeking His help and wisdom.

2. This week read the historical account of Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:1-2:11. There are many truths and lessons that could be drawn out from this passage. But we are going to focus in on matters of the heart again.

   a. Read 1 Samuel 1:1-2:11, all the way through.

   b. Utilise the "3-tree" worksheet on p13 to note the main points you observe about Hannah's situation, beliefs, wants, thoughts, behaviours and their impact as revealed in the text.

   c. Then also, consider those same things for someone else in the story – perhaps the priest.

   d. What stands out to you most from doing that?

3. We're going to look at one more example, from the new testament.

   a. Read 2 Corinthians 1:1-11.

   b. Utilise the "3-tree" worksheet on p14, and again note all that the passage reveals about Paul's heat, fruit, and roots.

   c. Now consider what the thorny side could resemble if such circumstances were responded to differently, noting those things on the relevant tree.

   d. What truths encourage, comfort, or call you to respond to God in prayer today?

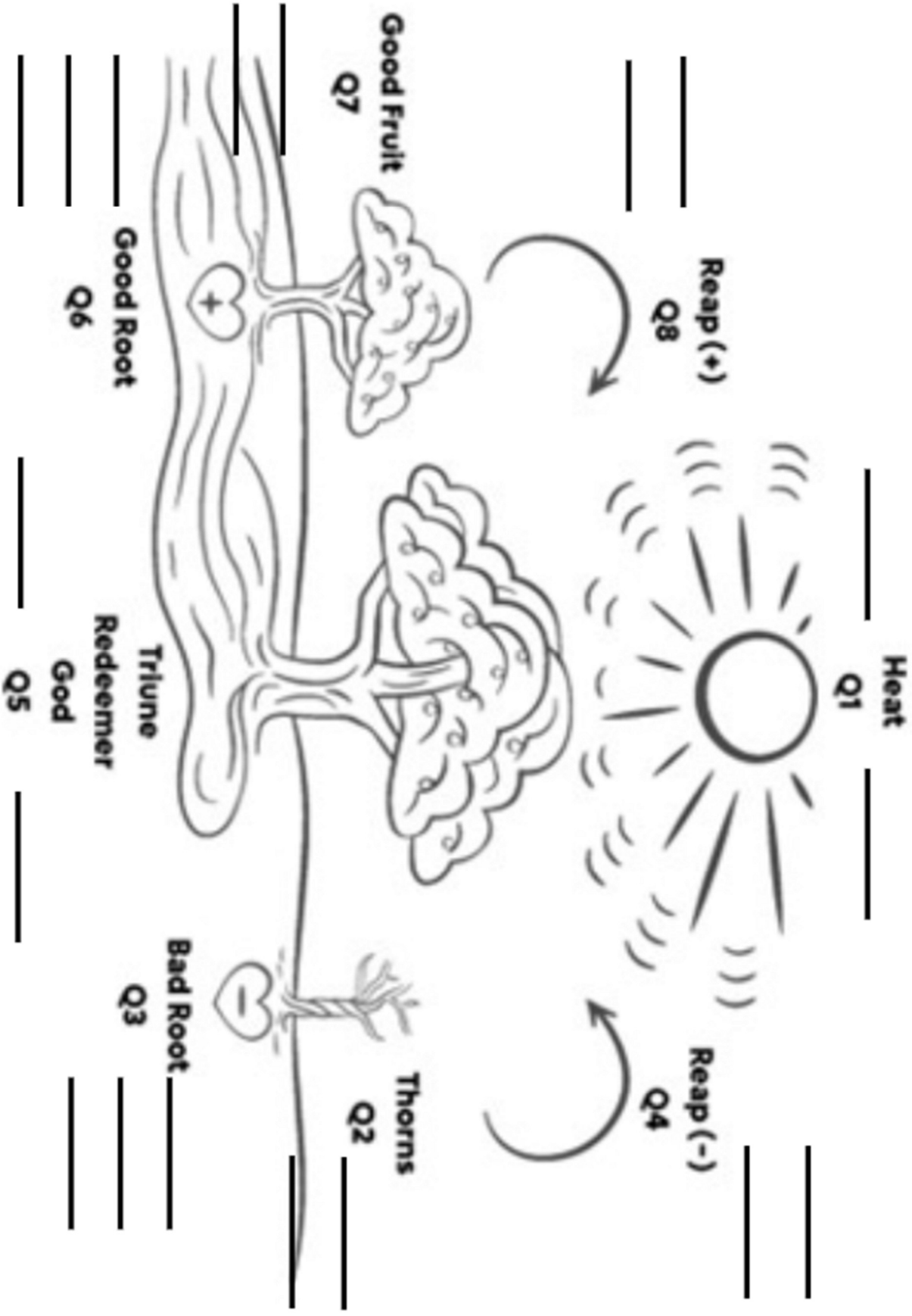
4. Utilising the last "3-tree" diagram on p15, take the time to consider where there is a 'heat' in your life that has wounded or brought weariness to your heart. It may or may not be on a 'major' scale, it could be something that is wearisome even because of its mundane-ness.

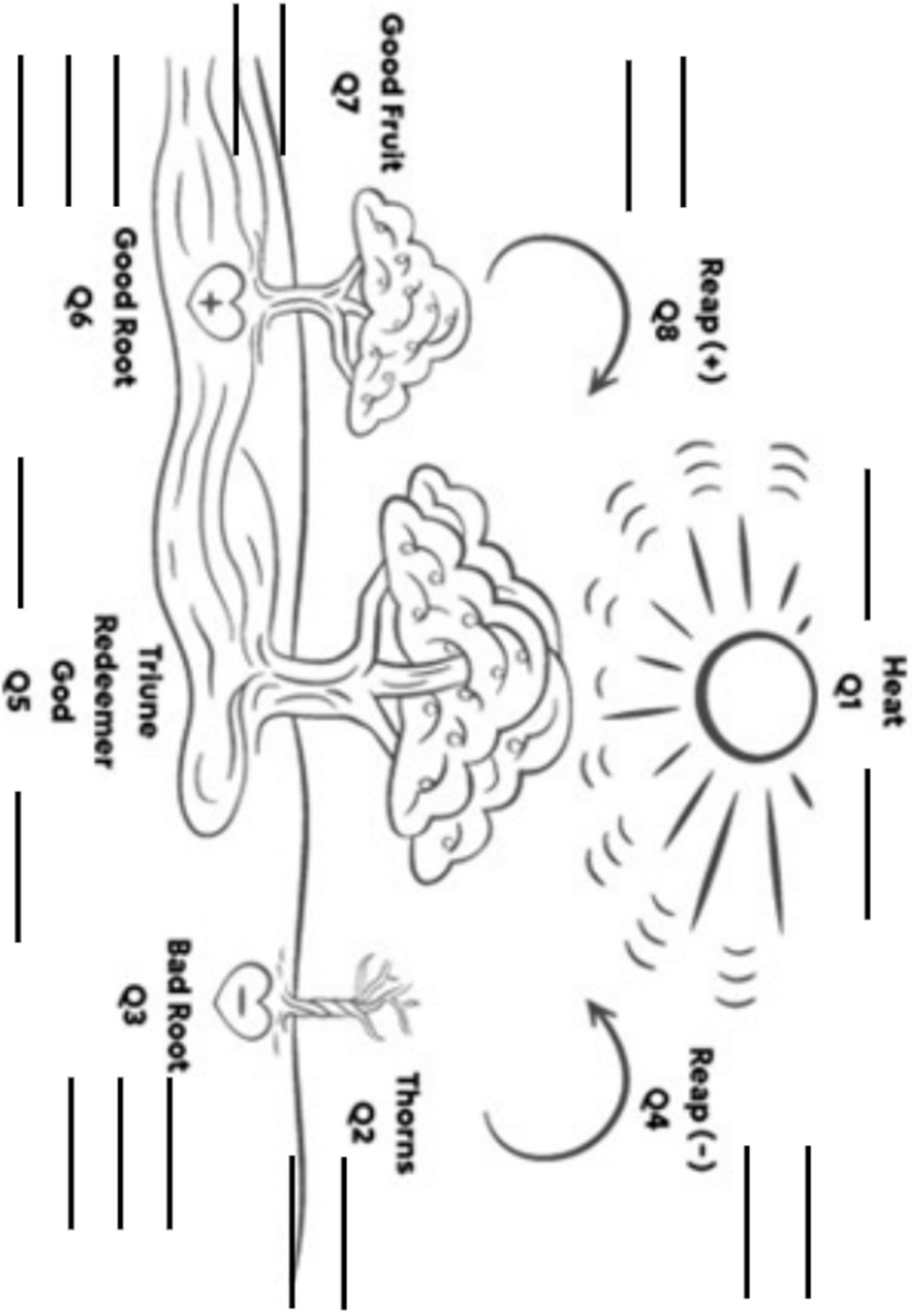
   a. Slowly, consider how you are responding to that situation and complete the diagram as best as you can. Perhaps it includes times that see you respond in faith and trust in the Gospel, but also times when it is difficult, and you can see evidence of thorny fruits or roots.

   b. Perhaps you aren't sure how to respond differently or what the other 'side' of the tree should look like - that's ok! Bring those things to the Lord, and bring them to your group when we meet next and seek their support, counsel and wisdom.

Optional As we prepare to meet together, some other passages you could read and meditate on: 2 Corinthians 4:7-5:10 & Matthew 18:15-39.

Again, we will discuss some refreshingly restful and renewing Gospel truths when we come together – but if you have any questions or prayers to bring to the group, note them below so you don't forget:


Heat
Q1
Reap (+)
Q8
Good Fruit
Q7
Good Root
Q6
Triune
Redeemer
God
Q5
Bad Root
Q3
Thorns
Q2
Reap (-)
Q4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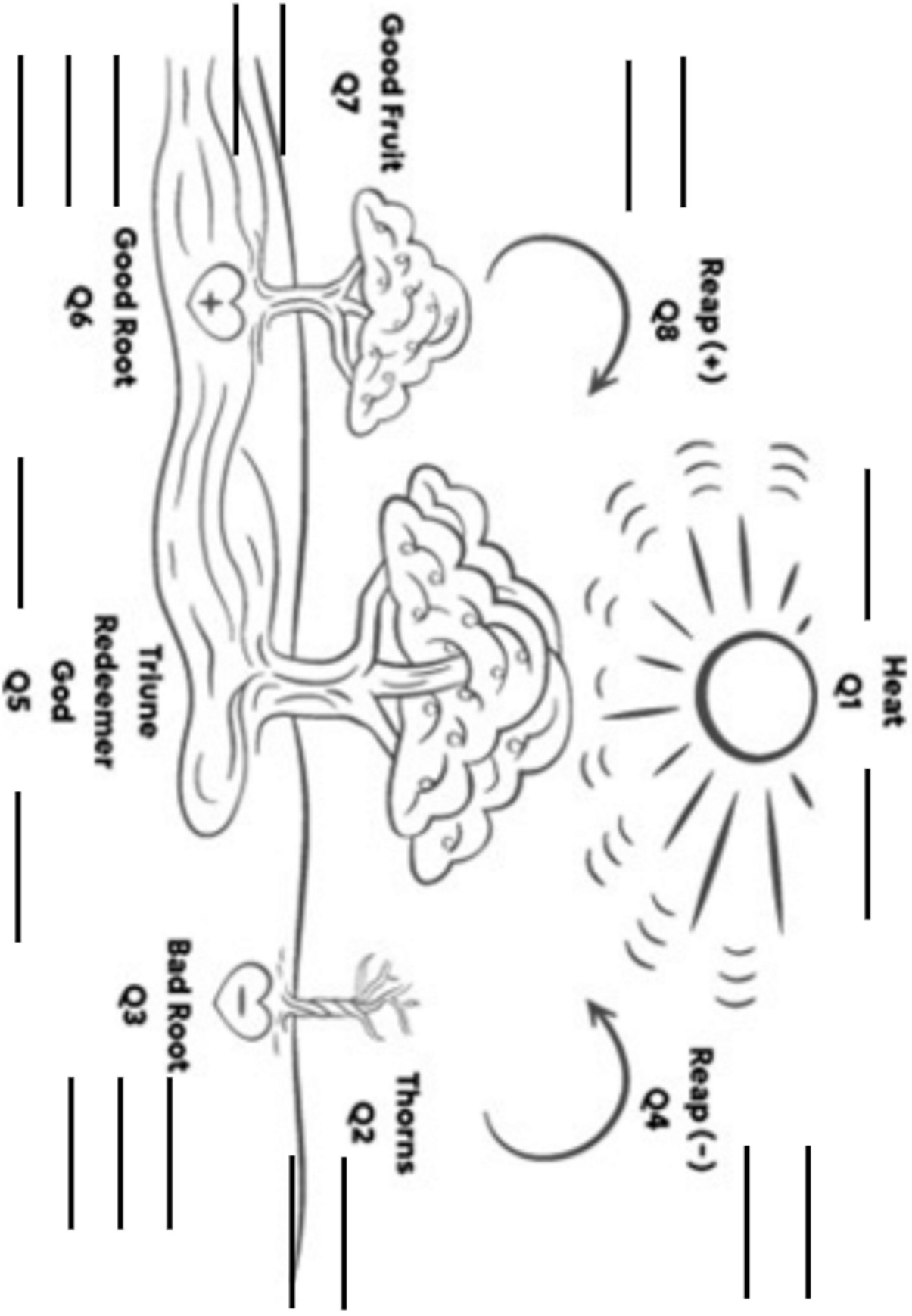
Thorns
Q2
Reap (-)
Q4

You!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Q3
Thorns
Q2
Reap (-)
Q4

Week 3 Talk: Wounded & Weary

Extra Notes / Questions / Prayers:

Week 4 Study Questions: A Worshipping Witness

1. This week, we're going to look at two final passages. Pause now to draw near to God, bringing to him the worries, wants, fears, wounds or weariness that is wanting to do war with your heart. Seek his help, Lord – help unite my heart to fear your name! Note any other questions, struggles or prayers to bring to God, and to your group:

2. We pick up the story during Israel's time under the Kings, but the kingdom has been divided since King David's rule into two. We pick up at a time when King Ahab has been reigning over the northern tribes of Israel. When Ahab was introduced to the readers in 1 Kings 16:29-34 the writer made clear that he did not lead the people of God in the ways of the LORD. Rather, he continued further down the path of Baal worship and 'did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the Kings of Israel before him.'

   But despite all the idolatry and rebellion – God still mercifully sends his prophet Elijah to repeatedly call the King back, and call the people back to worship Him.

3. Read: To observe the facts written back then, about then, for them and why

   a. Read 1 Kings 17:1, then jump to 18:1, and then read through 18:20-46.

   b. Break up 1 Kings 18:20-46 into chunks, like scenes in a movie or chapters in a book. Give each a heading, and note the main actions and words spoken in each section:

   c. What impact do you think these events were purposed to have on those there?

   d. What about on those to hear it read later, perhaps while exiled and ruled by Assyria/Babylon? (Israel would ultimately remain in rebellion and so God had them taken out of the promised land and enslaved under the rule of other nations)

4. Relate: Connect what was written with what was happening and with the rest of Scripture

a. Why do you think Baal worship had become so 'popular' and was practiced so widely in Israel? What warning might that give to us today who may say, "I'd never to do that!"?

b. Are there any themes, practices or events that remind you of other similar ones in scripture? Utilise a concordance (your own memory), or you may have a bible with cross-references you could look up. Note any extra details that help understand and unpack these events.

5. Reveal: Seek below the surface facts to what timeless truths God makes most clear

What is revealed about:

a. God? (consider his character/attributes, will/purposes, as well as his behaviours)

b. Humanity?

c. Idols?

d. Worship?

e. The Word of God?

6. Reflect & Respond: Spend time in prayer talking with God about what you have read, discerned and understood of His Word today.

a. What challenge has God made clear in this passage is good to keep having him search out our hearts with? Give time to do that between you and God in prayer now.

b. What encouragement has God made clear in this passage when considering what it reveals about God's heart? How does that speak into your heart, mind or life today?

c. Spend some time thinking about the truths of our tendency to limp between wants and idols of our hearts, and the truth of God's grace that calls us back from our limping, and brings to nothing the gods of this world we were trusting in.
- Who does that lead you to pray for, to intercede on their behalf? Is there someone limping and hurting in their pursuit of other things who needs the reminder of God's grace and mercy that can turn their hearts back to him?

7. Lastly – slow down and spend a few minutes reading Proverbs 3:1-18.

a. Read Prov 3:1-18 again, this time aloud, perhaps try a different translation.
b. What does God say and reveal through this passage about our heart?

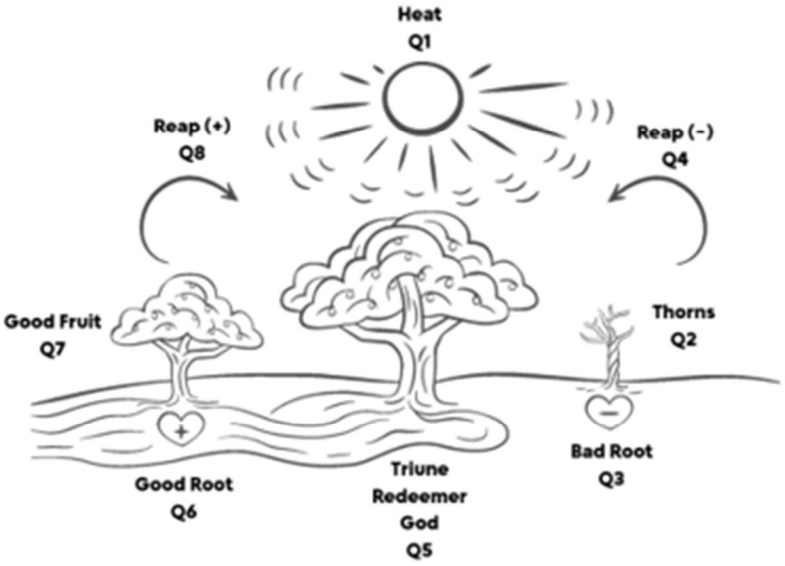
c. Read it through once more – as you do – turn each portion into your own prayer.
Note any further reflections, questions, or prayers below:

Week 4 Talk: A Worshipping Witness

Extra Notes / Questions / Prayers:

Resources:

3 Trees and 8 Questions Model



Q1 **Heat**
What is your situation? What happens to you that brings pressure, temptation, trouble, beguilement? When, where, and with whom do you struggle? In other words, what is the significant context, situation, or circumstance that pushes your buttons?

Q2 **Thorns**
How do you (sinfully) react? How are you reacting? What do you typically do? Thoughts, words, actions, emotions, choices, relationships? How are you tempted to react?

Q3 **Bad Root**
What do you (sinfully) want and believe? What rules you, hijacks your heart, replaces God as the chief object of your affections and focus of attention? I want___? I fear___? I functionally believe___? I trust___? What are your 'buttons'?

Q4 **Reap (-)**
What is the effect of your sinful/thorny behavior? What are the consequences and ripple effects? How do your reactions affect relationships, work life, mood, finances, situation, health, etc.?

Q5 **Triune Redeemer God**
How does "who God is" matter in this situation? Who is God – relevant to *this* struggle? What does He say? What does He promise? What does He do? His person, words, and actions intend to enter, address, and change how you see your situation, how you react, and the reasons for your reactions.

Q6 **Good Root**
What should you want and believe? Engage the Lord. Respond to God from the heart. Stop. Listen. Ponder. Turn. Trust. Come. Seek. Ask. Talk. Transact with Him. How will you have a candid, intelligent, pointed conversation with God?

Q7 **Good Fruit**
How should you (faithfully) respond? Respond constructively into your situation. Speak. Act. Do. Don't do. Choose. How will you show intelligent love for others (the opposite of every sin)?

Q8 **Reap (+)**
What is the effect of your good/faithful behavior? What are the good consequences? How do God (#5) and faith (#6) and love (#7) create ripple effects in relationships, work life, mood, finances, situation, health, etc.?

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20 "X-Ray" Questions: *(Taken from D.Powlison, Seeing with New Eyes)*

To help look deeper than morals and behaviour change…

Consider: When I sin . . . .

1. What am I loving?

2. What am I seeking, aiming for, pursuing?

3. Where am I putting my hope?

4. What am I fearing? What do I not want? What am I worrying about?

5. Where am I looking for refuge, safety, and comfort?

6. What or whom am I trusting that is not the Lord?

7. Whose performance or control is making life work for me?

8. Whose opinion of me counts most? From whom do I desire approval and fear rejection?

9. What is making me feel rich, secure, and prosperous?

10. Whose victory or success am I hoping will make my life happy?

11. What am I thinking are my rights? What am I feeling entitled to?

12. What am I praying for?

13. What am I thinking about most? What preoccupies me? What am I obsessed with? In the morning, where does my mind instinctively drift?

14. What am I talking about? What is important to me? What attitudes am I communicating?

15. How am I spending my time?

16. What are my priorities?

17. What are my characteristic fantasies, either pleasurable or fearful? Daydreams? What do my night dreams revolve around?

18. What are my idols and false gods? In what do I place my trust or set my hopes? What do I turn to or seek? Where do I take refuge?

19. How do I implicitly say, "If only . . . " (to get what I want, avoid what I don't want, keep what I have)?

20. Where do I find my identity? How do I define who I am?

Books: the heart, worship and transformation

- Counterfeit Gods, Tim Keller
- How people change, Timothy Lane & Paul Tripp
- Seeing with new eyes, David Powlison
- When people are big and God is small, Edward Welch
- Untangling Emotions, Alasdair Groves & Winston Smith
- The heart of anger, Christopher Ash & Steve Midgley
- Real Change, Andrew Nicholls & Helen Thorne
- Instruments in the Redeemer's hands, Paul Tripp
- Rejoice & Tremble, Michael Reeves
- The Expulsive Power of a New Affection, Thomas Chalmers
- What does it mean to fear the Lord? Michael Reeves
- How does God change us? Dane C. Ortlund