

The Fruit of the Spirit is Goodness

Cultivating an active lifestyle of Christian love and holiness.

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An Unplanned Friday Afternoon

The Interruption (3:30 PM)

Charles is dropped off alone at the church door. He lost his ID and needs \$20 for the DMV.

The Human Instinct

"You shouldn't have sent your ride away... it's going to be a long walk."
(Self-preservation)

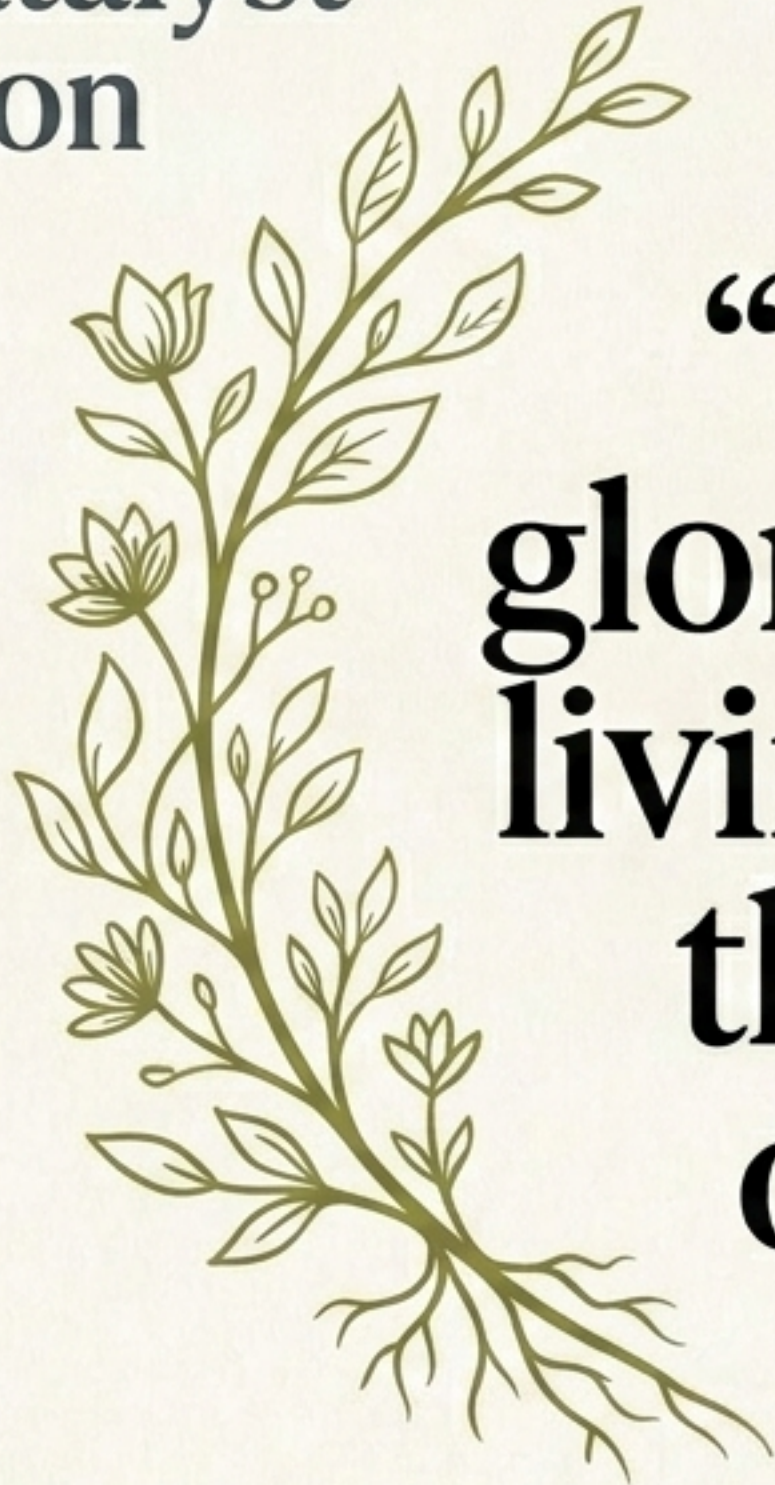
The Spirit's Prompting

A sharp reminder of Galatians 5. The Good Samaritan showed mercy.
"Go and do the same."

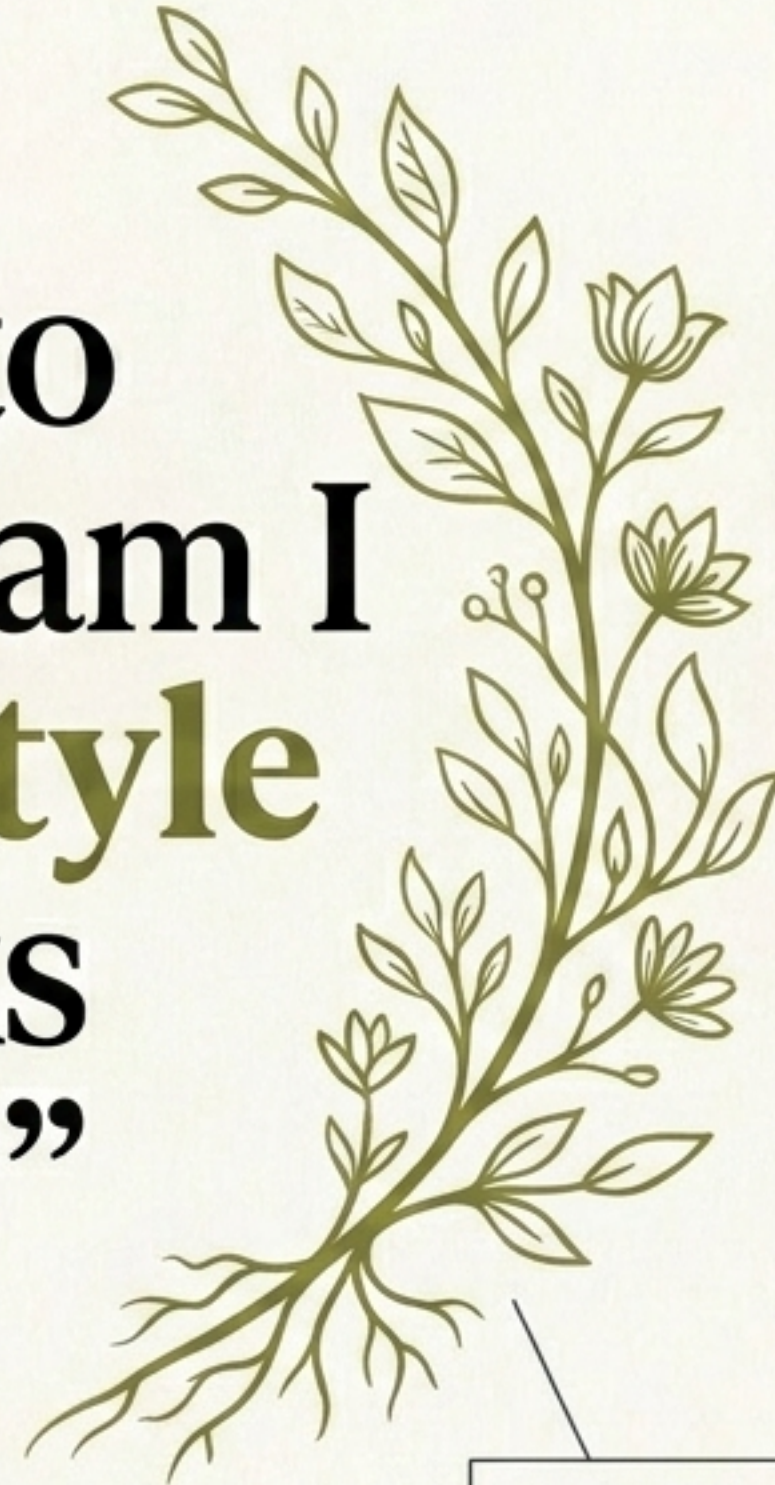
The Active Goodness

A drive to the Tilton DMV.
A stop at the drive-thru.
Two McChicks, fries, and a vanilla shake.

The Catalyst Question

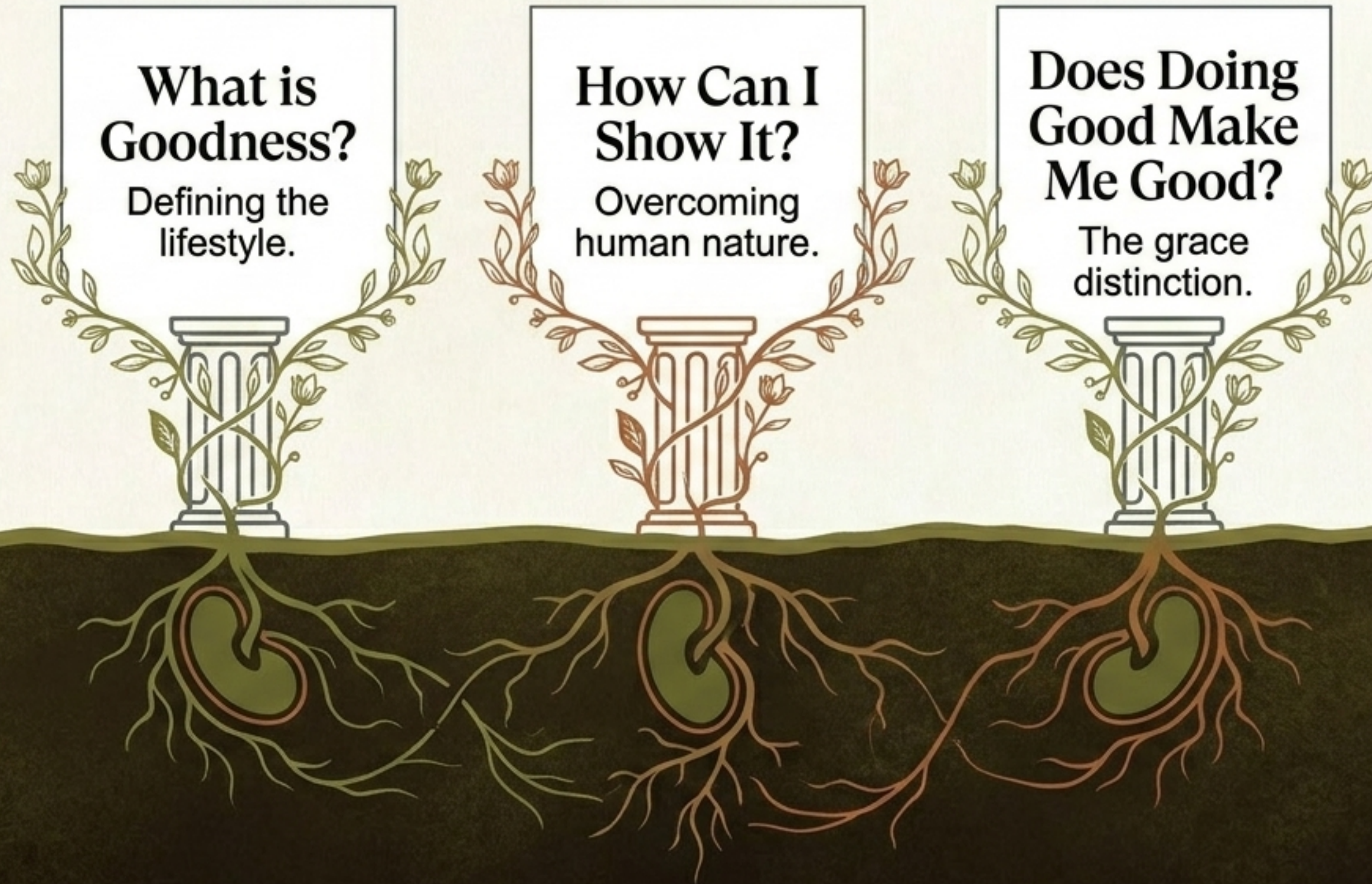


“If I exist to
glorify God, am I
living a **lifestyle**
that speaks
of Christ?”



The Holy Spirit uses the Word
to disrupt our natural instincts.

The Anatomy of Goodness



Question 1: What is Goodness?



WHAT IT IS NOT

Just an effort at positive thinking or tucking away head knowledge about Jesus.



WHAT IT IS

A lifestyle produced by the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit.

Goodness is the active presence of Christian love and holiness in action.

Goodness Has Legs



Goodness describes a person whose presence makes them useful.

It fulfills God's purposes through faithful, physical activity.

It is allowing the life of Jesus to be lived through us to impact the world.

It's not just what we say. It's what we do.

Question 2: How Can I Show It? (The Obstacle)



Since the fall, humanity has an inborn tendency to be attracted to evil, not good. We are naturally skewed away from goodness.

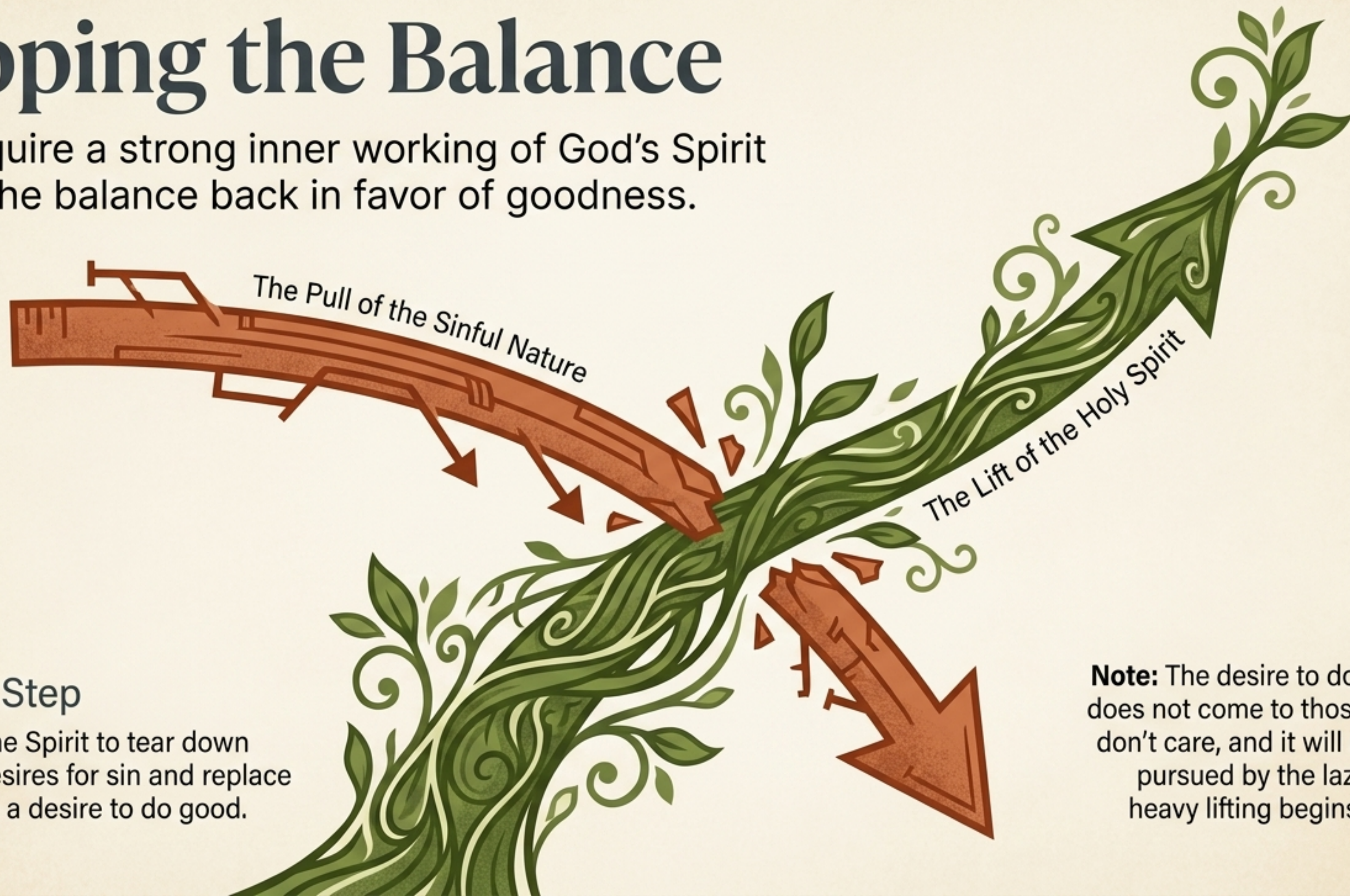
Romans 3

There is no one righteous, not even one... There is no one who does good, not even one.

Theology calls this Total Depravity. Our default trajectory is downward.

Tipping the Balance

We require a strong inner working of God's Spirit to tip the balance back in favor of goodness.



Action Step

Pray for the Spirit to tear down explicit desires for sin and replace them with a desire to do good.

Note: The desire to do good does not come to those who don't care, and it will not be pursued by the lazy. The heavy lifting begins here.



The Spheres of Goodness

Family

Cooking dinners, cleaning, mowing the lawn, fixing the car, balancing the labor in dual-income homes.

Workplace

Getting to work on time, following instructions diligently, being fair to co-workers, helping others solve problems.

The Yielded Christian

Church

Teaching younger Christians, visiting the sick, comforting the sorrowing, cleaning the building, practicing hospitality.

Community

Spreading the good news, living a consistent public life, praying for those who don't know Jesus.

Question 3: Does Doing Good Make Me Good?

The Myth of the
Heavenly Scale



Many world religions teach that doing just enough good will tip a cosmic scale and satisfy God's righteous demands.

Conclusion: Doing good things does not enable us to find favor or earn salvation.

The Reality of the Living Tree

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad... The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him.”

— Jesus

You cannot staple good fruit onto a dead, bad tree. Being good (through salvation and the Spirit) results in doing good, not the other way around.



Diagnostic Matrix: Two Types of Goodness

	Worldly Goodness	Spirit-Led Goodness
THE INNER LIFE	<p>Harbors secret sins (pride, envy, hatred).</p> 	<p>Transforms the inner heart to match the outer actions.</p> 
THE FOCUS	<p>Strains out a gnat, swallows a camel (superficial rules).</p> 	<p>Prioritizes justice, mercy, and faithfulness.</p> 
THE VESSEL	<p>Cleans only the outside of the cup.</p> 	<p>Cleans the inside (greed and self-indulgence removed).</p> 
THE RESULT	<p>Superficial before God.</p> 	<p>Authentic fruit of eternal life.</p> 

Salvation is the Gift of God

Jesus offered himself to die for the sin of the world. "Whoever believes the Son has eternal life."

Doing good does not make you good. But if you have received the goodness and forgiveness of God, it will overflow into good works.



“Salvation is the gift of God, not by works so that no one could boast.”
(Paul)

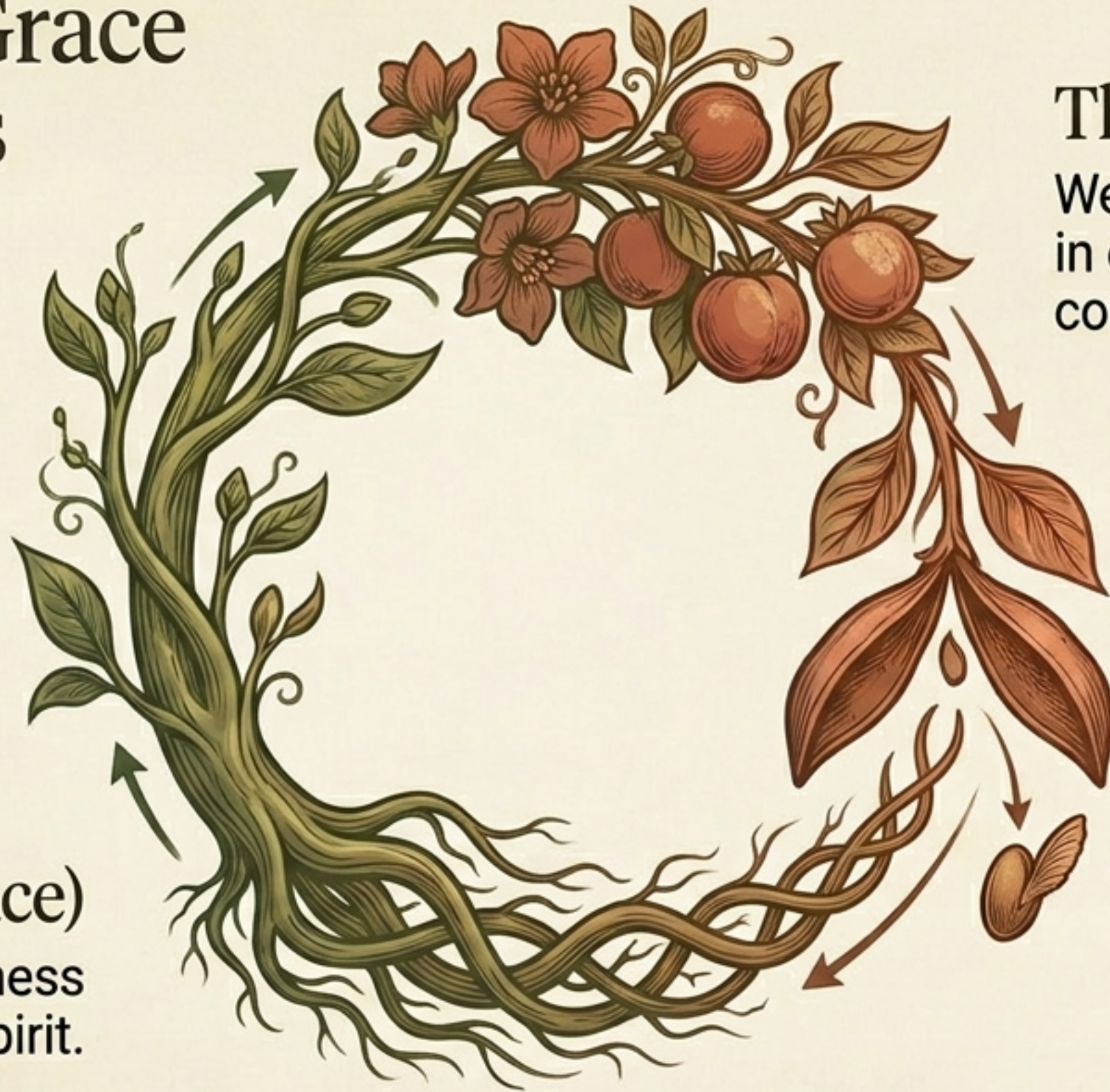
The Cycle of Grace and Goodness

The Growth (Transformation)

The Spirit tears down
sinful cravings.

The Root (Grace)

We receive forgiveness
and the Holy Spirit.



The Fruit (Action)

We do the heavy lifting
in our family, work, and
community.

The Seed (Witness)

Others experience
God's goodness
through us and are
drawn to the Root.

Summary: Goodness is not how we earn God's grace; it is how the world encounters God's grace through us.



Look for Your “Charles” This Week

God will bring opportunities directly into your path—sometimes inconveniently, on a Friday afternoon.

Yield to the Spirit. Be prepared to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Look out for the unexpected interruptions where you can share a message of grace (and maybe even a chicken sandwich).