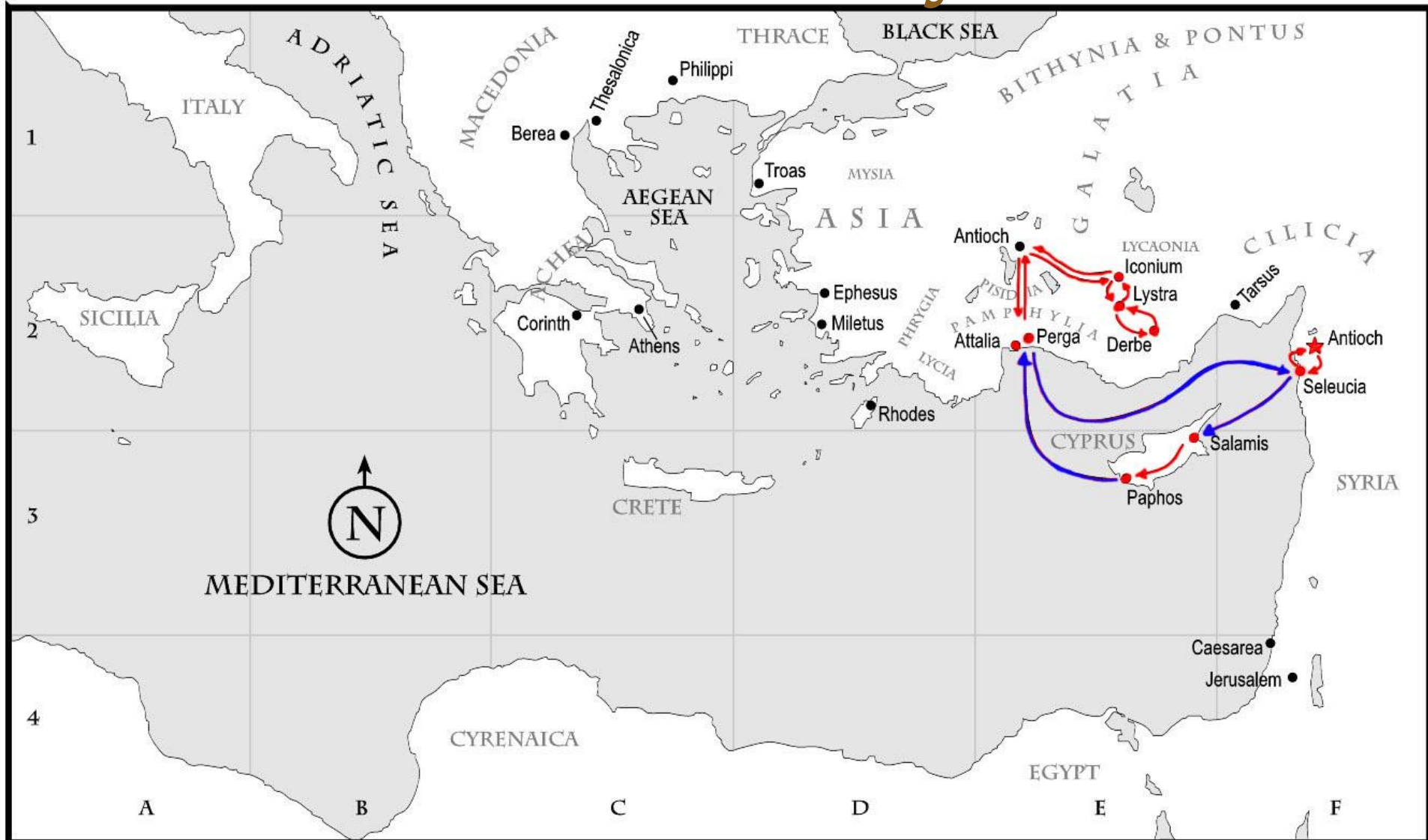


# Suffering and Purpose



Monday Night Meeting

# Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Journey: 47-48



# Acts 14:21-22

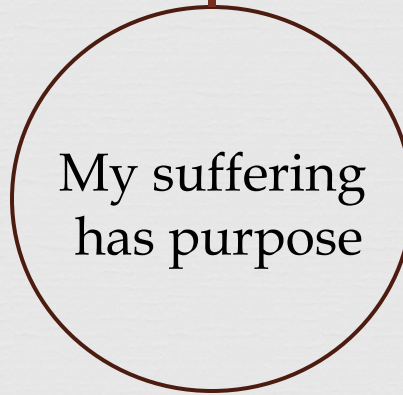


After they had preached the gospel to that city [Derbe] and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, **strengthening** the souls of the disciples, **encouraging** them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."



 **Big Idea:** I and My Suffering have a Purpose

Person



My suffering  
has purpose

# Purpose indicates a Person

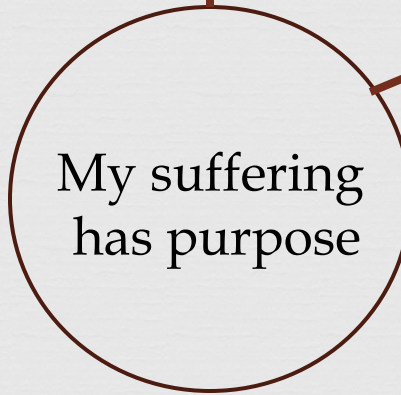


- ☞ Behind every purpose is a mind, a being.
- ☞ Peter understands God to be in absolute control of all my circumstances.
- ☞ **Summary:** The circumstances of my life are determined by a God who is merciful and mighty, holy and righteous, patient and faithful, full of grace.

Person



Plan



My suffering  
has purpose

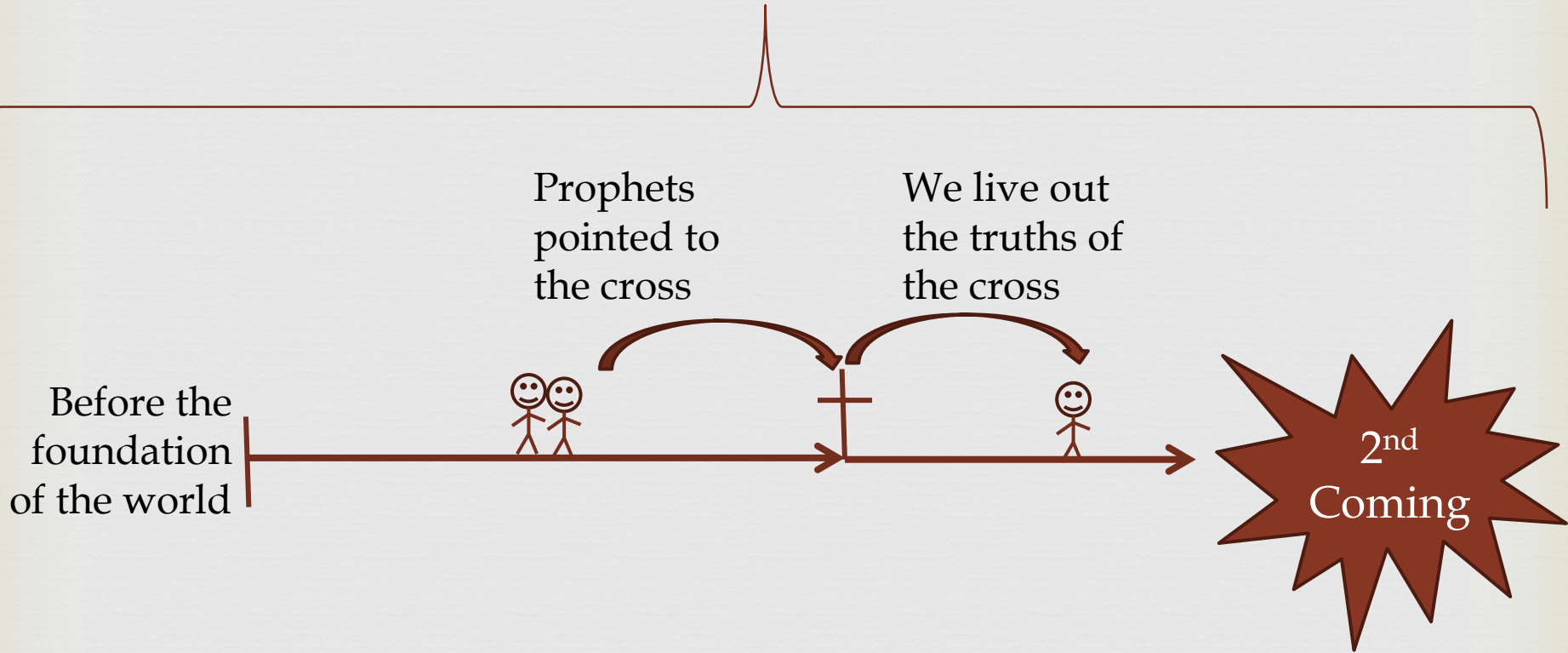
# Purpose indicates a Plan



- ☞ To have purpose is to have plans. There is nothing accidental about purpose. Purpose implies strategy, organization, progress.
- ☞ Peter works hard to unveil the bigger picture of God's plan. He wants to free us from spiritual tunnel vision.



# God's Plan of Redemption



## Christ's descent (2:21-25)

Physical Realm: "in the flesh"

Christ is our Example

- Quiet
- Meek
- No Retribution

LOSERS

Our fight is not  
against flesh & blood

*This path (If we suffer with him...)*

## Christ's ascent (3:18-22)

Spiritual Realm: "by the Spirit"

Christ is our Confidence

- Loud
- Bold
- In Your Face

VICTORS

...but against spiritual  
forces of darkness

*Leads to this path (...we will reign with him)*

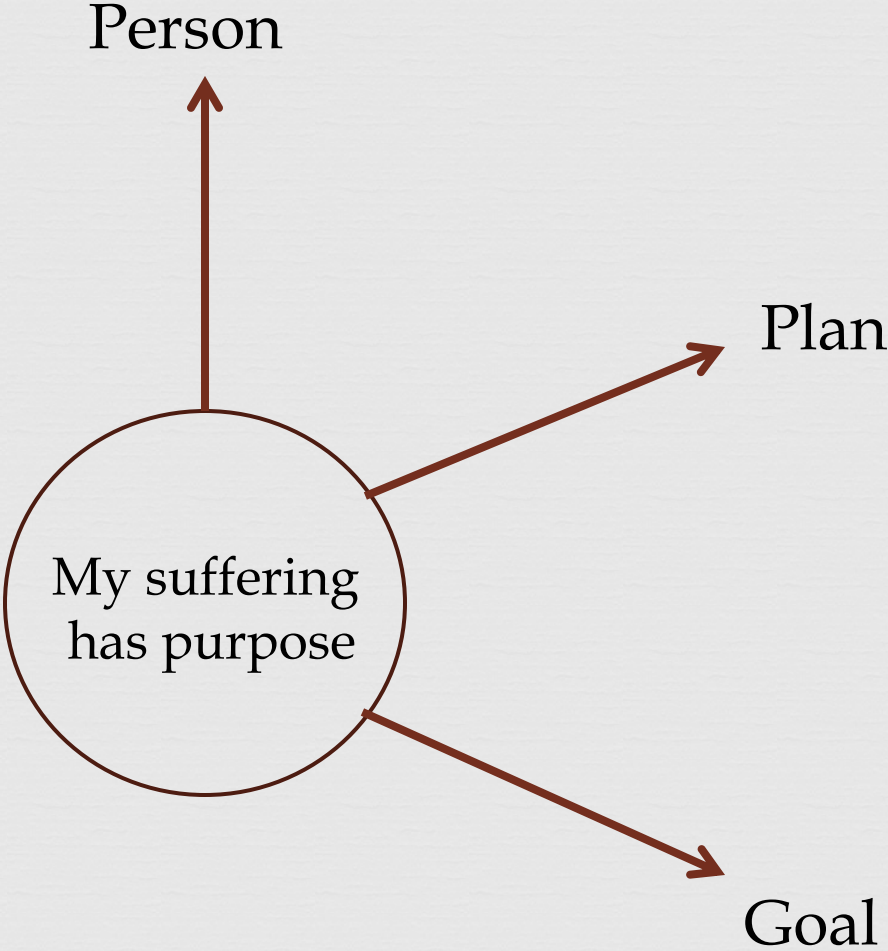
Physical death is  
not the last word!



# Purpose indicates a Plan



- ☞ To have purpose is to have plans. There is nothing accidental about purpose. Purpose implies strategy, organization, progress.
- ☞ Peter works hard to unveil the bigger picture of God's plan. He wants to free us from spiritual tunnel vision.
- ☞ **Summary:** My suffering is a necessary experience in the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan.

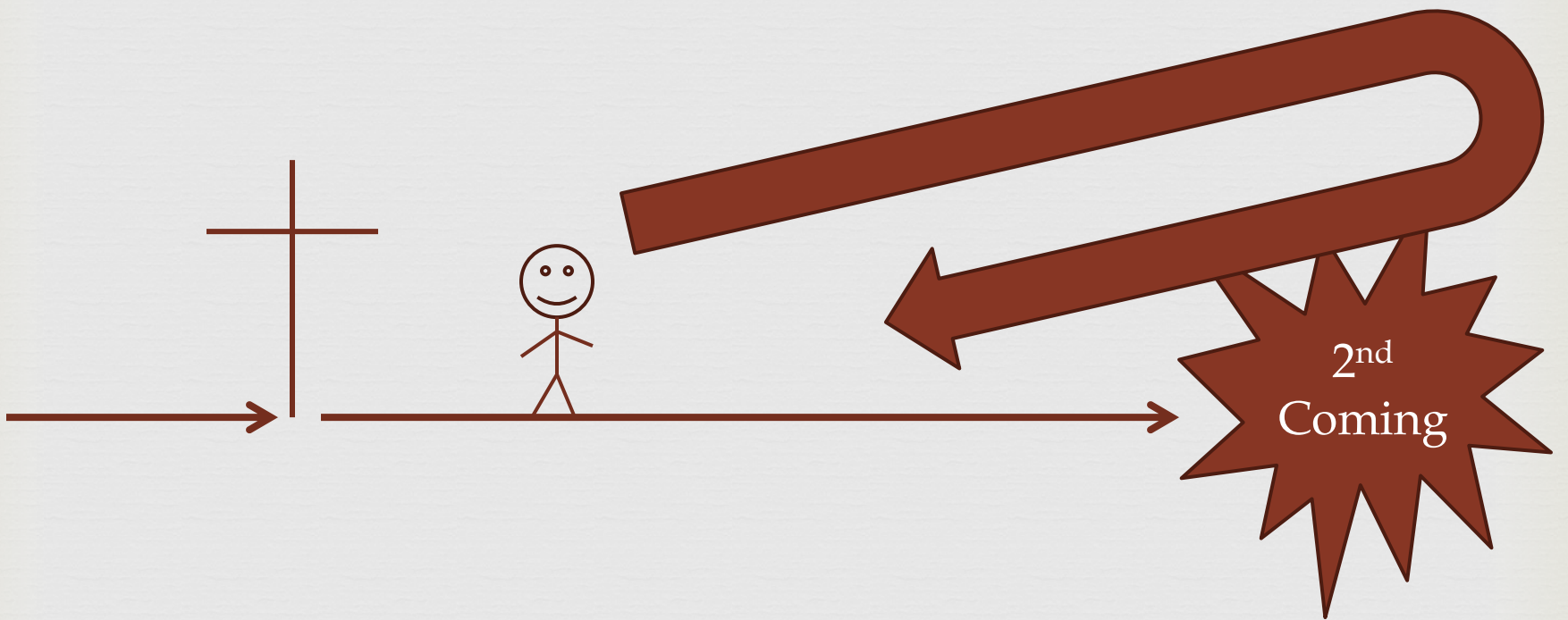


# Purpose indicates a Goal



- ❧ For something to have purpose, it must contribute in some way to an objective. Purpose is oriented forward to the future.
- ❧ For Peter, the goal is full salvation experienced at the revelation of Jesus Christ.



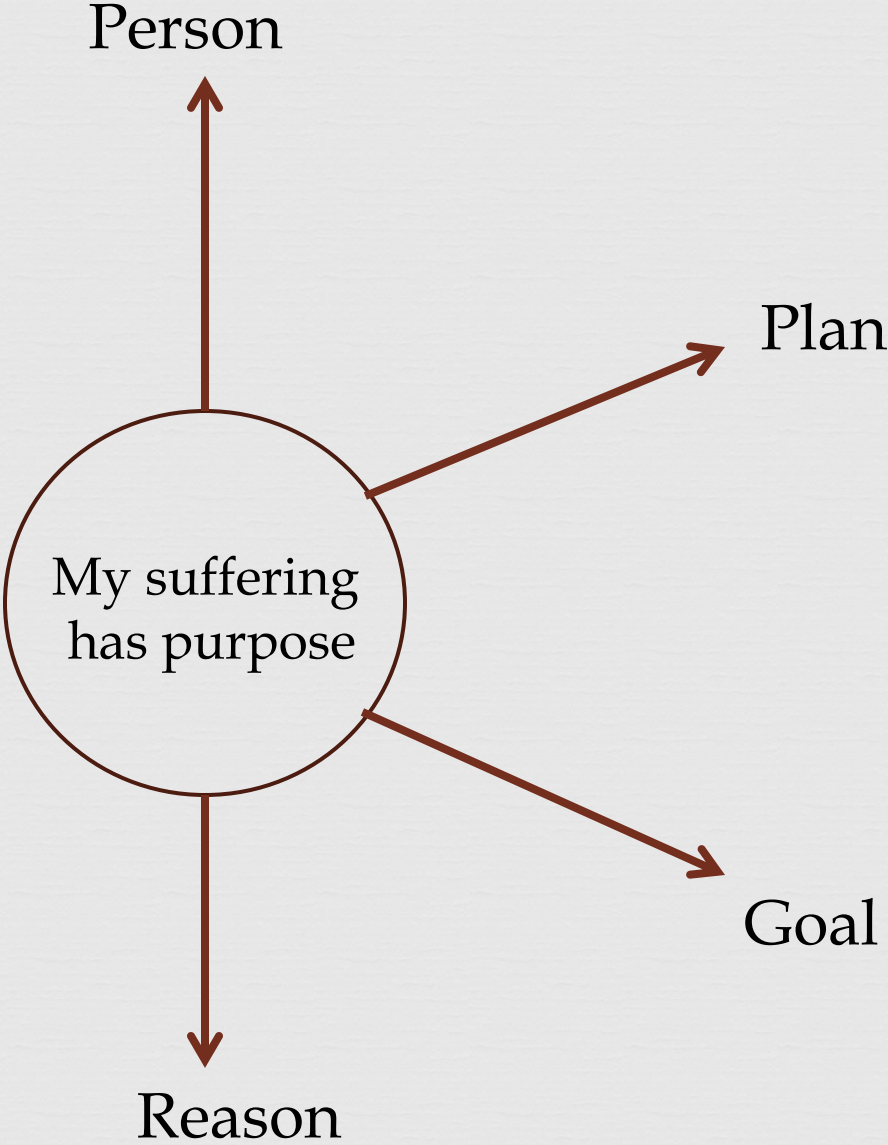


# Purpose indicates a Goal



- ❧ For something to have purpose, it must contribute in some way to an objective. Purpose is oriented forward to the future.
- ❧ For Peter, the goal is full salvation experienced at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- ❧ **Summary:** My suffering in this present time is not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to me. (Rom. 8:18)

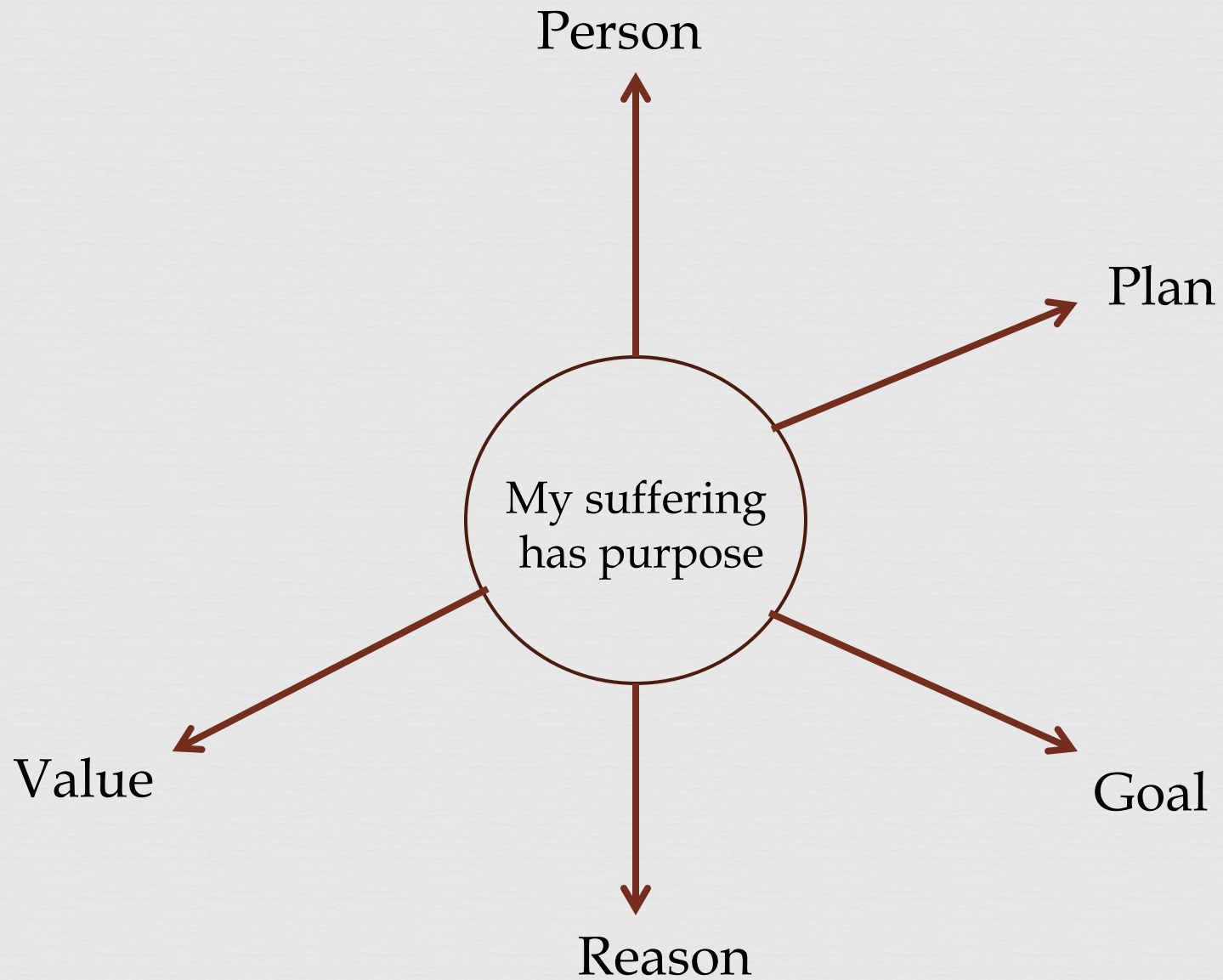




# Purpose indicates a Reason



- ❧ For something to have purpose, it must have a reason for being, an explanation. Peter explains the purpose of suffering for believers in 3 ways:
  - ❧ **Reason 1:** God is protecting me through “trial purifying faith” for salvation (1:5-7; 5:10-11)
  - ❧ **Reason 2:** I am a participant in Jesus’ life and mission to the world (2:4-12; 20-25; 4:1-6)
  - ❧ **Reason 3:** I am in conflict with the devil (4:17-22; 5:6-9)
- ❧ **Summary:** I am suffering because God is saving me, I am part of Jesus’ life and mission to this world, and I am in conflict with the devil.



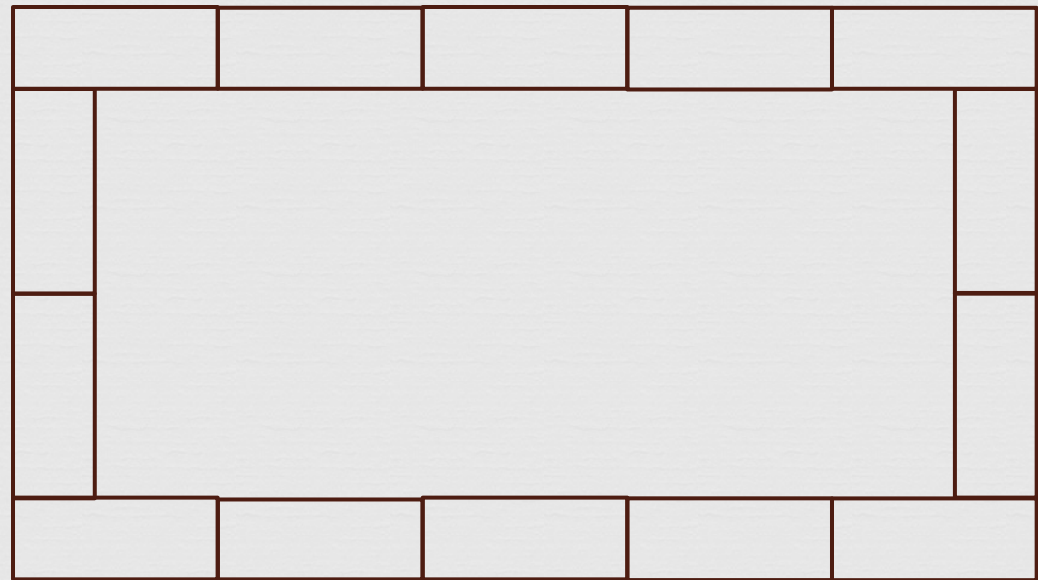
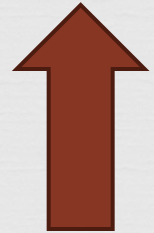
# Purpose indicates Value



- ☞ To say that something has purpose is to place value on that thing. It speaks of significance, worth, honor.
- ☞ When Peter speaks of suffering, he doesn't just say the experience is valuable or worthwhile, he says that it indicates that we are valuable, and of worth.

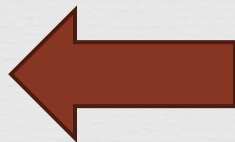
## Status in Relationship to God

- Chosen
- Highly honored
- Priests of God



## Status in Relationship to the World

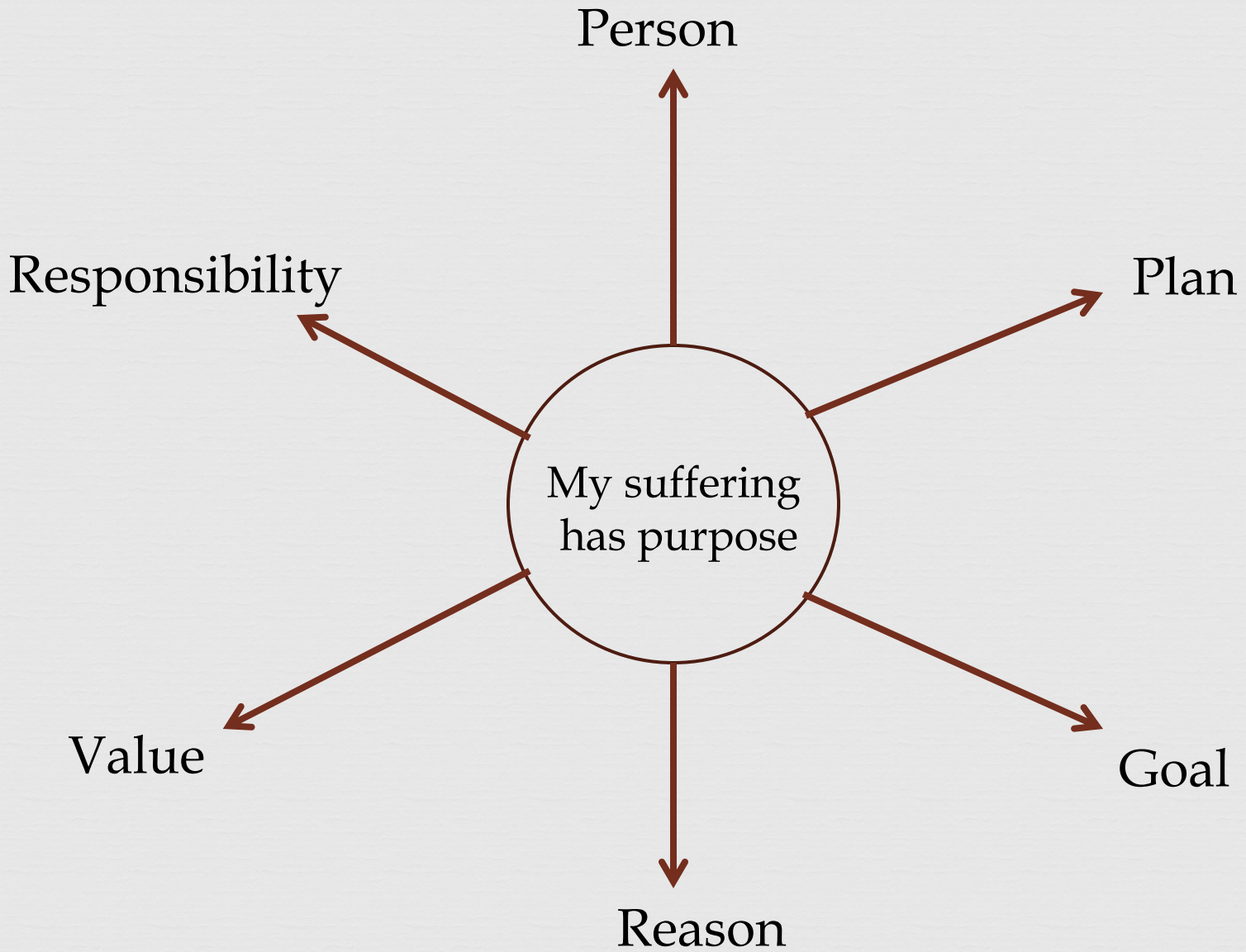
- Evildoers
- Haters of Mankind
- Party poopers



# Purpose indicates Value



- ☞ To say that something has purpose is to place value on that thing. It speaks of significance, worth, honor.
- ☞ When Peter speaks of suffering, he doesn't just say the experience is valuable or worthwhile, he says that it indicates that we are valuable, and of worth.
- ☞ **Summary:** My suffering is not a proof of God's neglect, but a sign of the value, attention, and significance he has placed on my life.



# Purpose indicates Responsibility



- ❧ To say that something has purpose is to say that it has a function to play, a role, a job, responsibility.
- ❧ Peter not only emphasizes the role suffering plays but the part I play while suffering. We have a role, responsibility in suffering.
  - ❧ **Toward God:** Trust, holiness, fear, obedience, submission
  - ❧ **Toward Satan:** Resist
  - ❧ **Toward unbelievers:** Good behavior, submission to authority, returning evil with blessing
  - ❧ **Toward believers:** Fervent love, eager service



# Purpose indicates Responsibility



☞ **Summary:** Soberness and humility leading to submission is the key to responding rightly to suffering.

Chosen by the Father's mercy,  
Set apart to serve His Son,  
Sanctified by His own Spirit —  
Praise the Holy Three in One!  
Saved by resurrection power,  
Shielded in His faithful love;  
Now, no enemy can tarnish  
My inheritance above!

Led by wisdom into suff'ring,  
Grieved by many trials below,  
Yet rejoicing in His purpose,  
That my faith as gold may glow.  
Granted faith for overcoming,  
Filled with love for Christ unseen;  
Even angels cannot fathom  
What salvation God will bring!

Fixed upon this hope completely,  
As obedient children fear;  
For the Holy One who called you  
Purchased you with blood so dear.  
Born anew from seed eternal,  
By His lovingkindness spurred,  
Lay aside all tasteless yearnings —  
Crave the true and living Word!

Built on Christ, the sure foundation,  
We are free from guilt and shame;  
He is fitting us together  
As a house to praise His name!  
We are chosen as God's people,  
Called from darkness into light;  
O what mercy now entreats us  
To proclaim His glories bright!

I'm Born again!  
I'm God's own chosen child of mercy!  
Born again!  
What love and grace!  
Father, keep me walking worthy  
'Til I look upon Your face.

Text by Paul Keew