

WHEN FAITH COSTS YOU

1 Peter 4:12–19 (Psalm 1, Jeremiah 17)

April 12, 2026 | Dave Geldart | Tru Community Church

#6 in Series: RIPPLING HOPE IN A WATCHING WORLD: A JOURNEY THROUGH 1 PETER

Announcements: Welcome, Connect Card, Giving. Facilities Lunch, Women's Craft Night

1. [1] INTRO — THE WRONG EXPECTATION

- a. No matter how long you've been here, you have probably lived here long enough to know something about Kansas wind.
- b. It doesn't ask permission. It doesn't arrive when it's convenient.
- c. It just comes — hard and sideways — and suddenly everything in its path is bending or blowing away.
 - i. We used to have a basketball goal over on the west end of the parking lot here
 1. But wind happens
 - ii. The green turtle sandbox in our back yard used to have a matching green cover
 1. But wind happens
 - iii. Who remembers the crazy December wind storm we had on December 15, 2021.
 1. Hit right as kids were getting out of school with 75+ mph sustained winds for over an hour. (88mph gusts at Ft Riley!)
 - a. The MIDWEST DERECHO storm caused widespread power outages across Riley and Pottawatomie counties,
 - b. toppled huge trees (especially in the older neighborhoods near City Park and K-State),
 - c. and even prompted rare December tornado warnings.
 - d. My kids were stuck at school for a long time!
 2. I foolishly but predictably stood in front of our living room window
 - a. Facing straight into the hurricane-force winds
 - b. Watching the glass window clearly ripple inward
 - c. Truly awesome power to behold!
 - d. We were lucky
 - i. Though it ripped up our safety netting and poles,
 - ii. Our trampoline stayed put
 - iii. Because I had anchored it with overkill-length corkscrew anchors all around! → DAD WIN!
 - e. But so many other trampolines didn't make it
 - f. Blown to kingdom come by the awesome power of the Kansas winds

- d. Most of us carry a quiet assumption about the Christian life. We don't say it out loud. But it's there:
 - i. *"If I follow Jesus faithfully... life should go fairly smoothly."* Not perfect. But *better*.
 - ii. More peace. More stability. Things going mostly right.
- e. And then something happens that disrupts that unspoken expectation.
 - i. You choose integrity — and it costs you a relationship.
 - ii. You speak truth — and you get labeled or sidelined.
 - iii. You refuse to compromise — and you lose the opportunity.
 - iv. You try to live for Christ — and suddenly you feel alone in the room.
- f. And the question creeps in:
 - i. *"Did I do something wrong?" "Is this a sign I'm off track?"*
- g. [2] Peter speaks directly to that moment in our passage today.
- h. He's writing to scattered Christians who are already paying a price for their faith — and his message cuts against everything our instincts tell us:
 - i. **Don't be surprised when following Jesus costs you something.**

2. [3] Let's READ it together: 1 Peter 4:12–19:

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as [4] a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" ¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

3. PRAY

4. [5] EXPECT RESISTANCE, NOT COMFORT

- a. Peter opens with a direct command: don't treat this like something *strange*.
- b. We tend to consider difficulty as *abnormal* — as if something in the universe must have malfunctioned. Especially when we've been trying to do what's right.
- c. But Peter says: this isn't strange. This is *expected*.WHY?

- d. [6] Because when you follow Jesus, you're not just adopting a belief system. You're stepping into a **conflict**.
- e. Scripture calls it the *world* — the *kosmos* — the organized system of life that runs apart from God.
 - i. And that system doesn't just ignore righteousness. It **resists** it.
- f. [7] Jesus said plainly in John 16:33: "*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*"
 - i. Not, my followers might have trouble. Not occasionally. **Will**.
- g. Because His way and the way of the world are fundamentally at odds.
- h. When you align yourself with Him, you feel that friction.
 - i. Peter frames it as sharing in the **sufferings of Christ**.
 - ii. That doesn't mean we suffer *for salvation* like He did.
 - 1. It means we suffer *for the same reason He did*.
- i. Jesus didn't suffer because He did evil.
 - i. He suffered because He embodied a different kingdom — a different authority, a different set of values, a different definition of truth and power and goodness. And the world — the *kosmos* — pushed back.
- j. So when you experience resistance for following Him — it's not evidence that something has gone wrong. It may be evidence that something has gone **right**.
- k. In fact, think of it this way: spiritual opposition is often **Satan's backhanded compliment** to those who are genuinely threatening his hold on people.
 - i. We Christians are on mission in enemy-occupied territory.
 - ii. So we should not be shocked when we take fire.

5. [8] IDENTIFY THE KIND OF SUFFERING

- a. Peter makes an important distinction we can't skip: **Not all suffering is equal**.
- b. [9] **Some suffering comes because we do wrong**. And we shouldn't spiritualize that.
 - i. If I lie and lose trust — that's not persecution.
 - ii. If I act harshly and damage relationships — that's not sharing in Christ's suffering.
 - iii. **That's consequence**. And Peter is blunt about it.
 - 1. Christians should not suffer for doing wrong — because we are called to walk in righteousness.
 - 2. Sin still carries natural, temporal consequences even when it's forgiven before God.
- c. But there is another kind of suffering:

- i. **[10] Suffering for doing good. Suffering for holding onto Christ. For following His way. Suffering for living differently.**
- ii. That kind is not meaningless. Peter calls it *blessed*.
- iii. Now that word can feel abstract — or even frustrating. Because it doesn't actually mean life gets easier. It doesn't mean you immediately see rewards.
- iv. It means something deeper.
 - 1. It means you are *living in alignment with reality as God defines it*. You are rooted in the good life — the *makarios* life — even when it feels costly.
 - 2. So that even in the midst of stress and suffering, you can be deeply happy, content, and at peace in your soul.
- d. And to understand what that really means, Peter's idea of blessing connects directly to one of Scripture's most consistent and beautiful images: **A TREE**.

6. [11] TWO PATHS, TWO ROOT SYSTEMS

- a. **Psalm 1** strategically opens the entire Book of Psalms with a picture of two kinds of people. Two paths. Two sources of life. Two outcomes.

[12] 1 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, 2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. 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.

 - i. One kind of person is like a tree planted by streams of water.
 - 1. This is the path of the righteous:
 - a. Deep roots. Steady nourishment. Consistent life. BLESSED
 - ii. The other?
 - 1. *Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. (1:4)*
 - 2. No depth. No water source. No resilience. Just light, hollow husks — carried away wherever the wind blows.
- b. **[13] Jeremiah 17** picks up the same image and adds something important — what happens when stress arrives:
 - i. *"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land." — Jeremiah 17:5–6*
 - ii. **[14] "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear**

when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit." — Jeremiah 17:7–8

- iii. Notice what Jeremiah says about the one who trusts in God when the heat comes.
 - 1. He doesn't say the heat won't come for those who trust in the Lord.
 - 2. **He says that tree doesn't fear it WHEN IT COMES.**
 - a. Not anxious. Not withering. Not stopped. Deeply at peace.
 - 3. Why? Because its life isn't dependent on **surface conditions**. Its roots go deeper than the drought can reach.
- c. From the outside, in mild seasons, these two trees might look similar.
 - i. But pressure **reveals** the truth. It always does.

7. [15] WHAT SUFFERING ACTUALLY DOES

- a. Here's where we need to genuinely adjust the way we think about hardship.
- b. We almost always assume: *"Suffering is a hinderance to the good life. Pain is interrupting my growth."*
- c. Scripture teaches something more precise:
 - i. **[16] God uses suffering to drive your roots deeper.**
- d. Now — I mentioned Kansas wind. Here's something amazing Wanye and Jeanette Doerksen shared with me:
 - i. **[17] In the early 1990s, scientists running Biosphere 2 — a massive sealed** ecological experiment in Arizona — grew trees in a completely controlled environment. No weather. No real wind. Ideal temperature. Perfect soil.
 - ii. The trees grew fast. Impressively fast. They looked strong.
 - iii. And then they fell over.
 - iv. Because without the stress of wind, the trees never developed what's called *stress wood* — the denser, stronger wood fiber that forms precisely in response to resistance.
 - 1. Their root systems were shallow.
 - 2. Their trunks lacked the structural integrity to hold their own weight.
- e. This principle — that stress and pressure produces stronger root and trunk growth — is called **thigmomorphogenesis**. Trees literally need to be stressed to grow strong.
- f. We live in Kansas. You already know this intuitively.
 - i. The trees out on the plains — battered by decades of wind — have root systems that go down *deep*.
 - ii. They are anchored. They have survived things a greenhouse tree never could. And it's made them strong and resilient.

- g. That is exactly the picture Scripture is painting for us who follow God:
- h. The heat, the drought, the wind of stress and suffering — in **God's hands** — are not random disruptions. They are ***instruments of formation!***
- i. They push your roots deeper into Him. They detach you from shallow, surface-level sources of stability. They force you to draw from something unseen — but real.
- j. And over time, you become the kind of person who is not controlled by circumstances. Not because you're strong in yourself — but because you're ***rooted in Someone who is.***

8. [18] THE RESULT: STABILITY AND FRUIT

- a. Go back to Jeremiah 17 for a moment, because there's a detail we can't miss.
- b. The tree not only survives the heat — it continues to ***bear fruit*** through it!
- c. That is the part we often overlook. We tend to set endurance as the goal.
 - i. *"Just hang on. Just get through. Just survive this season."*
- d. But Scripture goes further. It says you can also become a ***source of life for others*** — in the middle of your own hardship.
 - i. You have probably seen this in someone. Someone walking through real suffering — a hard diagnosis, a broken relationship, financial stress, a season that has taken nearly everything — and yet they're steady. Peaceful. Even generous.
 - ii. Not pretending everything is fine. Not performing. But not collapsed either.
 - iii. And their life has *weight*. It has credibility. It has a quiet authority you can't manufacture from the outside.
 - iv. That is what Peter is pointing to.
- e. The tree doesn't bear fruit because life is easy.
 - i. It bears fruit because its roots go down to where the drought can't reach.
- f. [19] In the same way, God's goal is not just to get you *through* your suffering.
 - i. His intention is to ***make you fruitful through it***
 - ii. for your own deepening, and for the blessing of those around you.
 - iii. Blessed to be a blessing.
- g. As Effie taught me this week: **even in the plant world, stress signals a tree to pour its energy into fruit — not to conserve it.**
 - i. And that's also God's plan for us who follow him.
- h. So where the world sees a crisis and expects a wilting,
 - i. God sees a crisis and expects a harvest. → Makarios!

9. [20] THIS IS HOW HOPE RIPPLES

- a. This passage today lands us right at the heart of everything we've been building toward in this series on 1 Peter:
 - i. The way you handle suffering — especially suffering connected to your commitment to God — ***communicates something the world cannot explain.***
 - ii. It exposes the weakness of the world's system.
 - iii. It challenges the assumption that comfort equals blessing.
 - iv. It reveals that there is another source of life.
 - 1. And offers hope for something better than they're experiencing
- b. When someone sees you:
 - i. remain steady under pressure when they expected you to fold.
 - ii. refuse to compromise when compromise would have made everything easier.
 - iii. continue loving when nothing is being returned.
 - iv. stay at peace when by every external measure you should be panicking —
- c. it raises questions:
 - i. [21] ***"Where is that coming from?" "What kind of foundation produces that?"***
- d. **Your life becomes a *signpost*.** Not because your suffering is good in itself — but because of what God produces through it.
- e. Peter says this kind of living *glorifies God*. It puts His sustaining power, His worth, His reality on display.
 - i. And that ripple can travel farther than you will ever see in this life.
 - ii. This is the watching world, watching.
 - 1. And what they see in you — rooted, not collapsed, and even fruitful — is perhaps the most compelling argument for the gospel you will ever make.

10. [22] This all brings us to TWO SOBERING OUTCOMES

- a. Peter doesn't soften the contrast any more than Jeremiah or the Psalmist did.
 - i. There are two trajectories for a person's life.
 - ii. And judgment is coming — not merely as a threat, but as a ***revelation***.
 - 1. Everything hidden will be made plain.

b. [23] For those rooted in God: suffering strengthens, refines, and leads to life.

- i. Blessed.
- ii. The cost they paid will be shown for what it was — wisdom, courage, treasure stored up.

c. [24] For those apart from Him: there is no deep root.

- i. Jeremiah's image is stark — a shrub in the desert, growing in parched, salty wastes where nothing sustains.

- ii. **Psalm 1 calls it chaff** — weightless dry husks, carried away by the wind.
- d. Right now, the world's path can look appealing. Easier. Less costly. Freer from friction.
 - i. But it is ***disconnected from the source of life***.
 - ii. And what looks like the shortcut to the good life is actually a detour into death.
- e. Peter says judgment begins with the household of God.
 - i. What we walk through now is the refining fire that *proves* what we're rooted in.
 - ii. The outcome for the righteous is the deeply blessed life.
- f. This contrast is not meant to make us anxious.
 - i. It is meant to give us ***perspective*** — to help us hold this present suffering lightly, knowing what is coming.
- g. What looks like foolishness now — a costly, counter-cultural life for Christ — will be revealed as brave wisdom.
- h. What looks easy now — going your own way, following the *kosmos* — will be exposed as a long detour into desert wastes that had no life to offer.

11. I don't want that to land as abstract theology. Let me try to make this personal.

12. [25] APPLICATION — HOW DO WE RESPOND?

a. [26] First: Recognize and name your suffering.

- i. Some of you are experiencing resistance right now because you are trying to follow Jesus.
 - 1. Don't dismiss it. Don't minimize or vaguely spiritualize it. **Name it.**
 - a. You chose integrity and it cost you.
 - b. You held the line and it isolated you.
 - c. You stayed faithful and it hasn't been easy.
 - ii. If you misdiagnose this, you will respond wrongly — either growing bitter at God, or beginning to quietly compromise just to make the pressure stop.
 - iii. Instead, recognize: *This is part of following Christ. I am not off track.*

b. [27] Second: Reframe what this suffering means. This is not punishment. This is not God abandoning you.

- i. This is not failure. **This is formation.**
- ii. God is not wasting this season or the stresses.
 - 1. He is using it to drive your roots deeper into Himself — so that you become a person of genuine depth, genuine peace, genuine fruitfulness.
 - 2. Someone the drought cannot take down.

c. [28] Third: Lean in to the root system — and not just your own.

- i. [29] Redwood Trees — the tallest trees on earth, some of them pushing 350 feet!

1. Here's one with Jeanette Doerksen
 2. *Who else has seen these in person?*
 - ii. But what's also interesting is they have remarkably shallow roots.
 1. They only go down six to twelve feet.
 2. By themselves, they should topple. But they don't.
 - iii. Because those roots spread outward
 1. [30] Here's Wayne with a stump. See how the roots go out?
 - iv. They spread out sometimes a hundred feet from the trunk —
 - v. AND they find the roots of neighboring redwoods.
 - vi. And they intertwine.
 1. They actually fuse together, a process biologists call inosculation.
 - vii. And what was one tree standing alone against the wind becomes part of a unified, living underground root system.
 1. A grove that holds as one.
 - viii. And here's the part that gets me: those root networks don't just provide stability. They share nutrients.
 1. If one tree is in a shaded area and struggling, its neighbors feed it through their shared root system.
 - ix. That is the church!
 1. You were not designed to stand alone in the storm.
 2. Your roots are meant to find other roots. To both hold and nourish you.
 3. And what would topple a single believer becomes something that has stood for centuries.
 - x. When the pressure comes, you don't need to manufacture strength.
 1. You need to **draw from the source**.
 - a. **Honest prayer** — not the composed kind, the raw and gasping kind.
 - b. **Meditating on Scripture** that reshapes the story you're telling yourself about what's happening.
 - c. **Community** that speaks truth when your own thinking gets dark.
 - xi. **Roots like this don't grow accidentally.**
 1. **They grow when you lean in – together.**
- d. [31] And finally: **Stay open to bearing fruit *right now*.**
- i. Ask God this week: *"How might you use me for the blessing of others — even here? Even in this stressful season I would not have chosen?"*
 - ii. Sometimes your greatest impact — the ripple that changes someone else's life — comes during the season you would never have chosen for yourself.

13. RESPONSE PRACTICE

- a. Before we close, I want to give us a moment to actually respond — not just think about this, but do something with it together.
- b. **Three things:**
 - i. **[32] First** — Take thirty seconds and identify one place where following Jesus has cost you something recently.
 1. Not years ago. Recently.
 2. It might be small, it might be significant.
 3. But name it internally.
 4. *[Silence — 30 seconds]*
 - ii. **[33] Second** — Ask yourself honestly: Am I reading that cost as something going wrong — or as God at work?
 1. How have you been thinking about that?
 2. *[Brief pause]*
 - iii. **[34] Third** — If you're willing, open your hands in your lap right now.
 1. Not as a performance.
 2. Just as a physical posture that says: *"God, I trust you to use even this."*
 - a. I'm in your hands. Take and give what you see fit.
 3. And let me pray over you
- c. **PRAY:** *Father, we bring you the places where following you has been costly. We ask you to do what only you can do — to use the very pressure and heat of our circumstances to drive our roots deeper into you. Make us trees that don't fear the drought. Make us people whose lives bear fruit for others, even when we are being tested. And let our endurance point a watching world to you — the only source of true and lasting life. In the name of Jesus, who suffered and rose, and who holds all things together. Amen.*

14. CLOSING (invite band up)

- a. **[35] When faith costs you — it reveals something.**
 - i. Not just about the world. But about your roots.
- b. And Peter's word to you is steady and clear:
 - i. **Don't be surprised. Don't lose heart. Don't pull back.**
- c. Because in God's hands —
 - i. Even the heat. Even the wind. Even the cost.
- d. Becomes the very thing that deepens your life in Him.
 - i. And sends ripples of hope into a watching world.
 - ii. AMEN — Lord, let it be.



Rippling HOPE

in a Watching World

A Journey Through 1 Peter

WHEN FAITH COSTS YOU

1 Peter 4:12-19



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¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as

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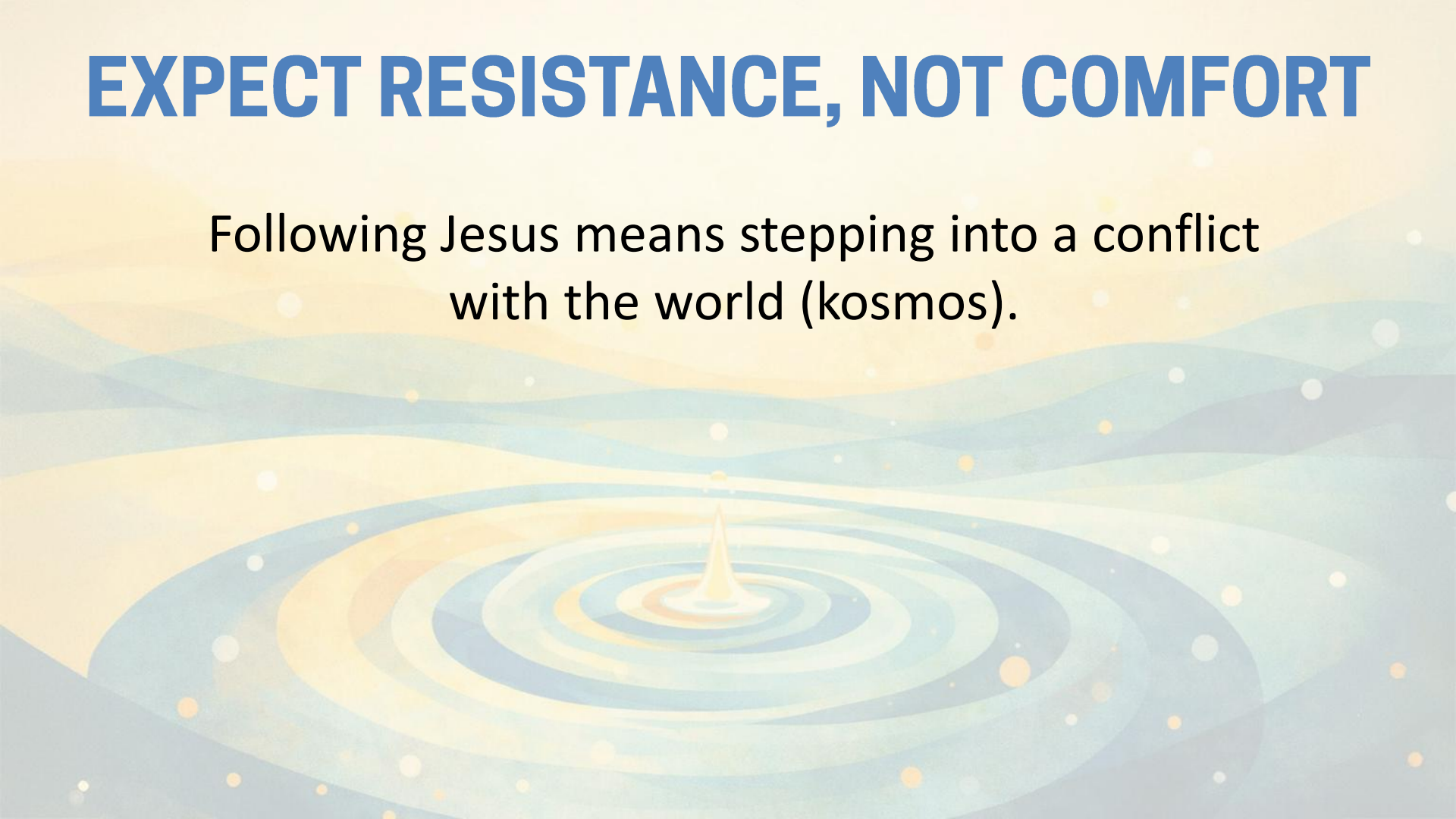
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Following Jesus means stepping into a conflict with the world (kosmos).



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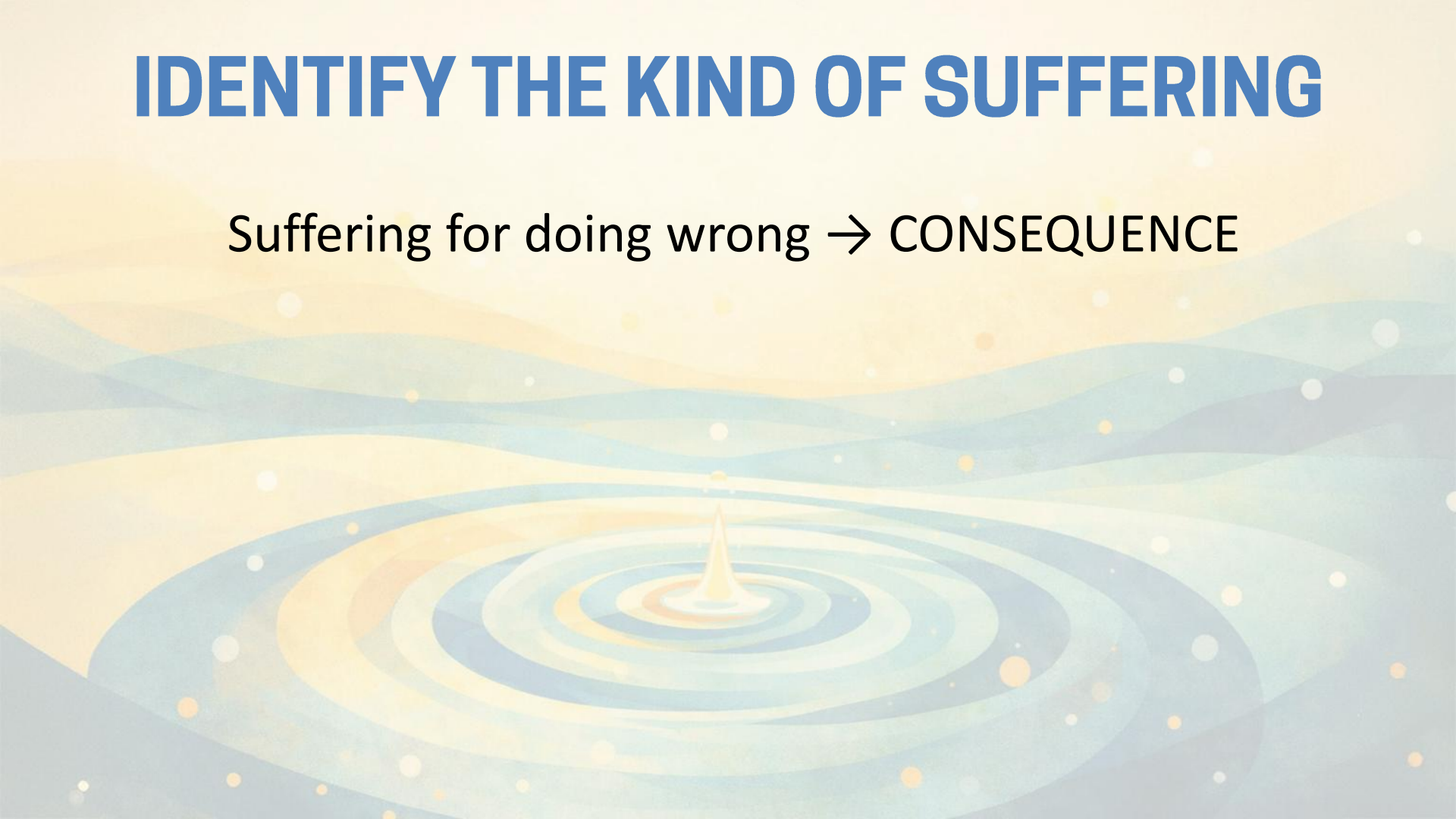
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IDENTIFY THE KIND OF SUFFERING



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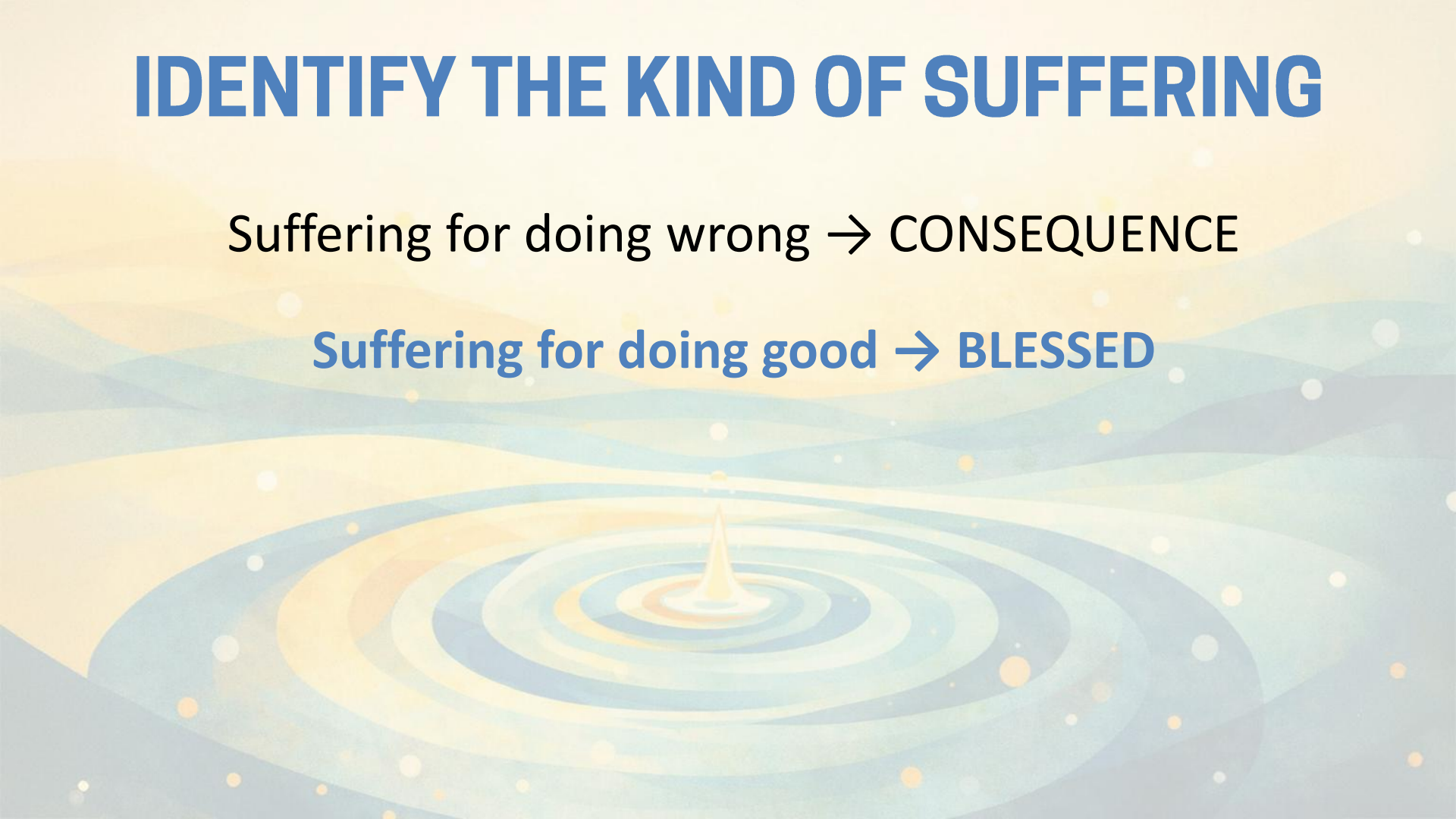
Suffering for doing wrong → CONSEQUENCE



IDENTIFY THE KIND OF SUFFERING

Suffering for doing wrong → CONSEQUENCE

Suffering for doing good → BLESSED



TWO PATHS, TWO ROOT SYSTEMS



TWO PATHS, TWO ROOT SYSTEMS

PSALM 1: ¹ Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, ² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. 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. ⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

TWO PATHS, TWO ROOT SYSTEMS

JEREMIAH 17: ⁵ This is what the LORD says:

“Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the LORD. ⁶ That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives.

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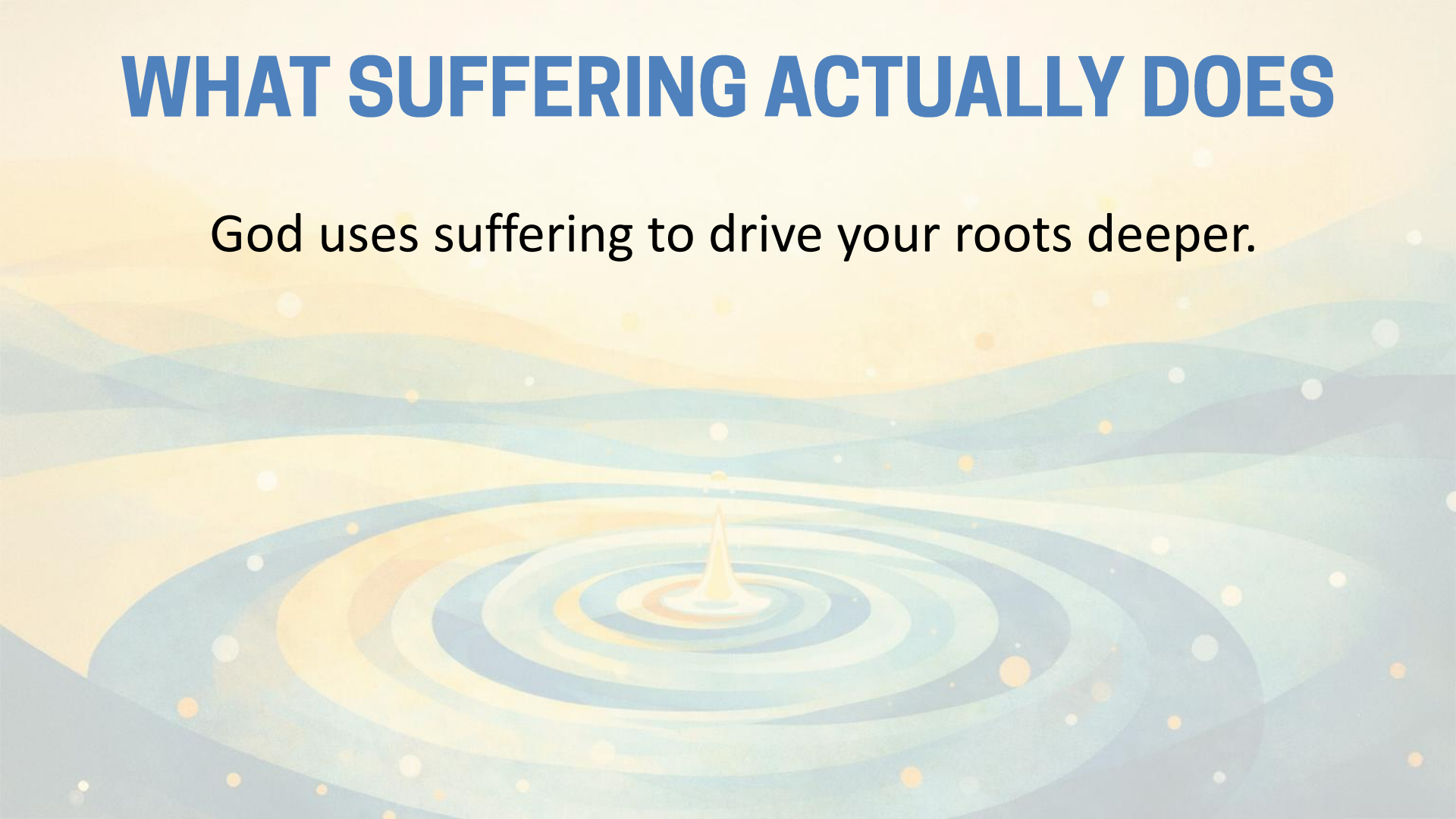
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WHAT SUFFERING ACTUALLY DOES



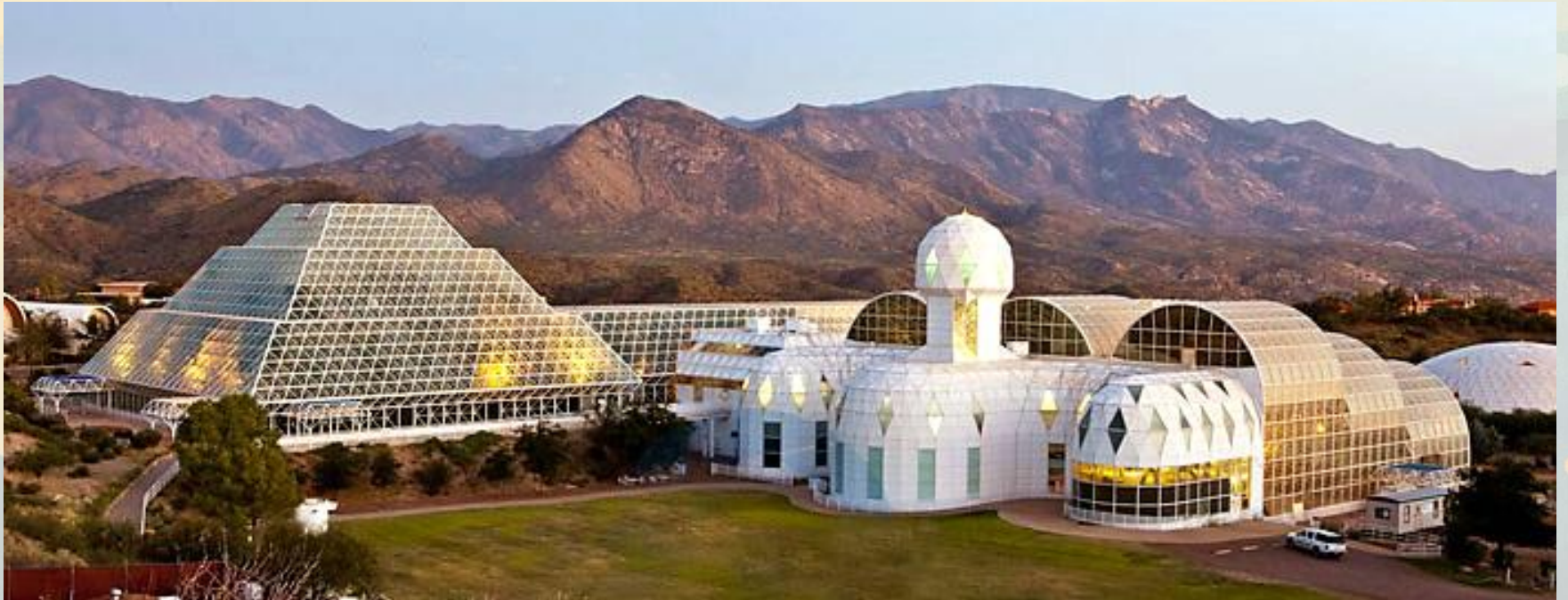
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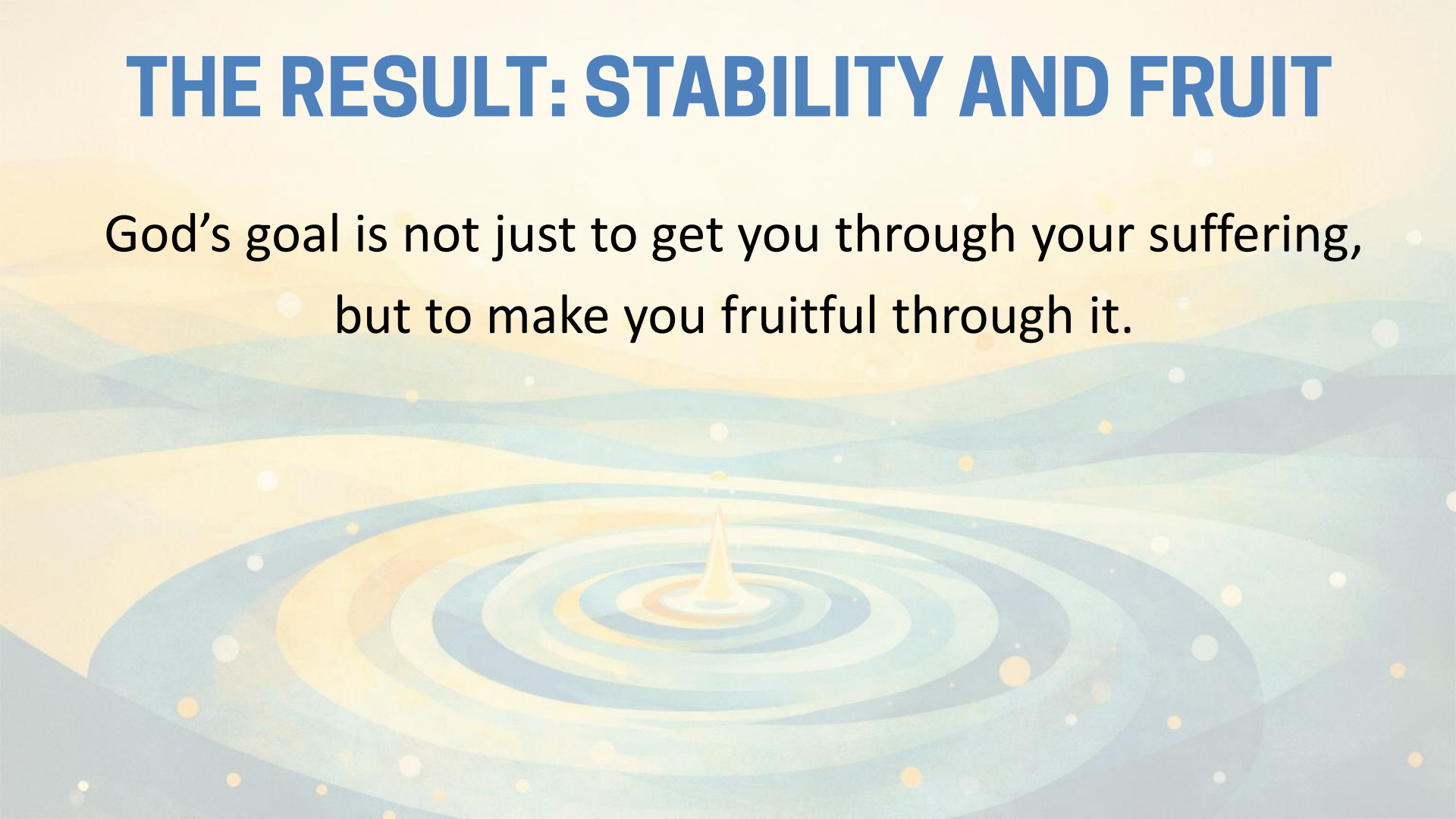


THE RESULT: STABILITY AND FRUIT

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THE RESULT: STABILITY AND FRUIT

God's goal is not just to get you through your suffering,
but to make you fruitful through it.



THIS IS HOW HOPE RIPPLES

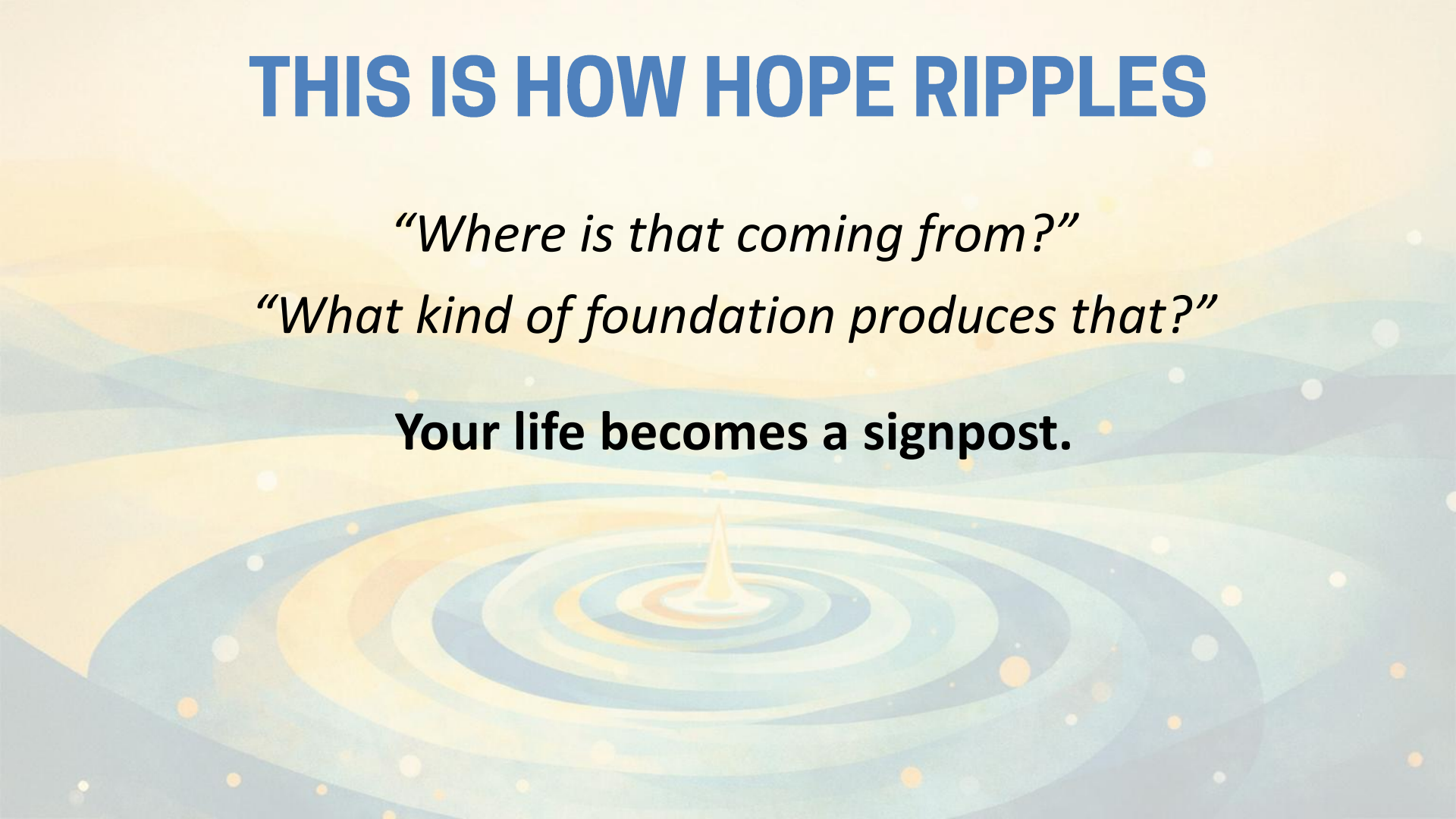


THIS IS HOW HOPE RIPPLES

“Where is that coming from?”

“What kind of foundation produces that?”

Your life becomes a signpost.

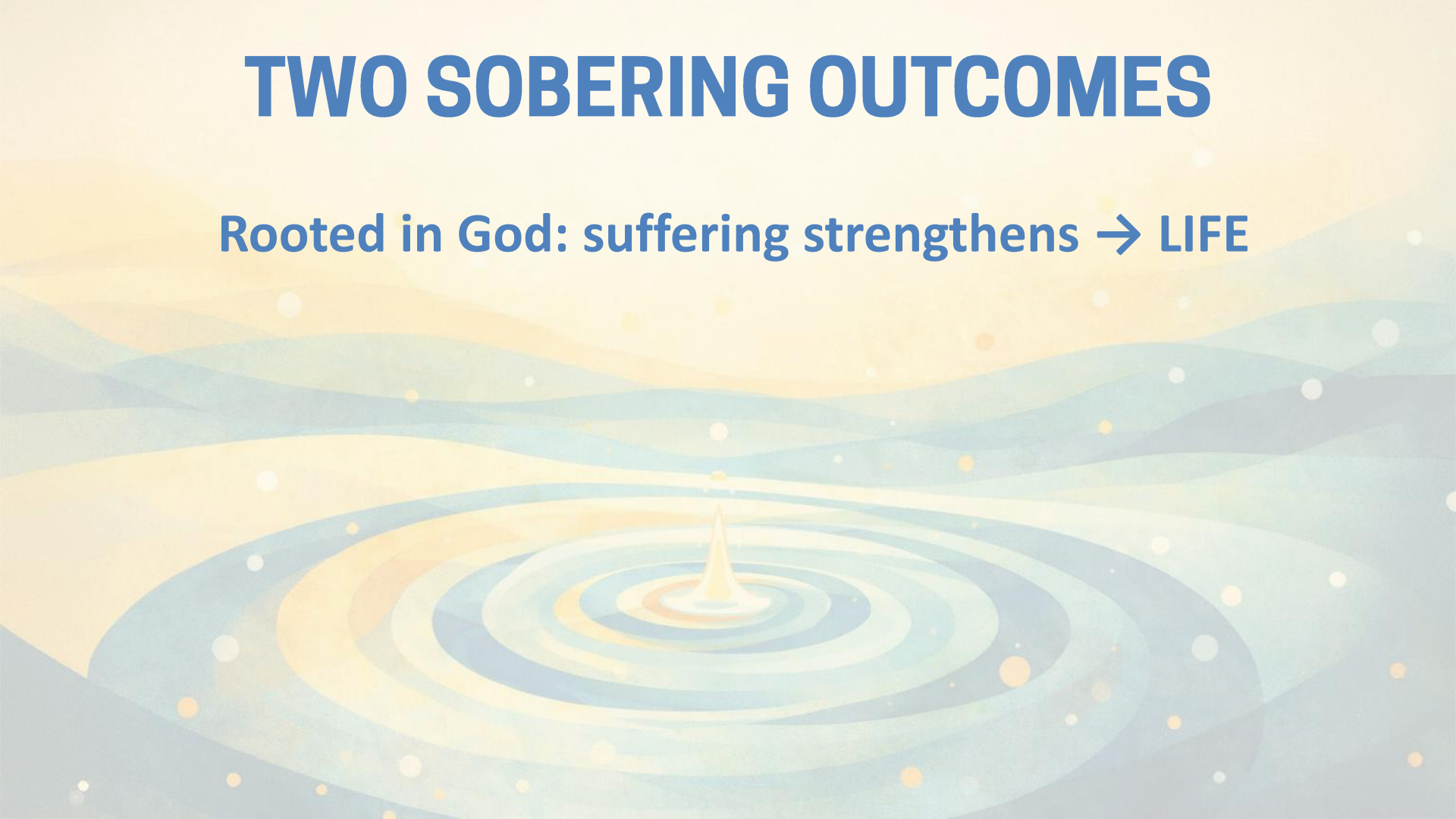


TWO SOBERING OUTCOMES



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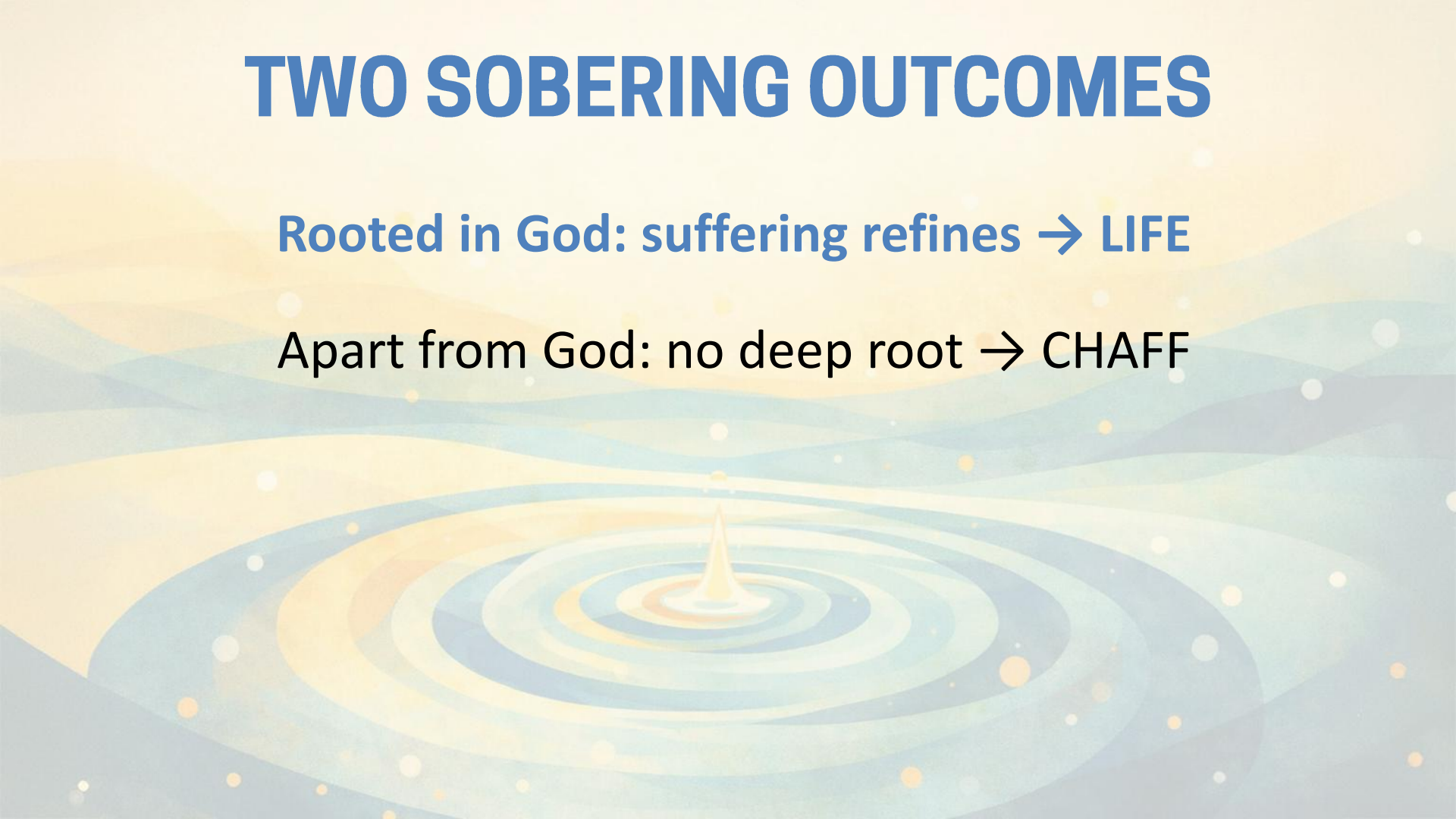
Rooted in God: suffering strengthens → LIFE



TWO SOBERING OUTCOMES

Rooted in God: suffering refines → LIFE

Apart from God: no deep root → CHAFF

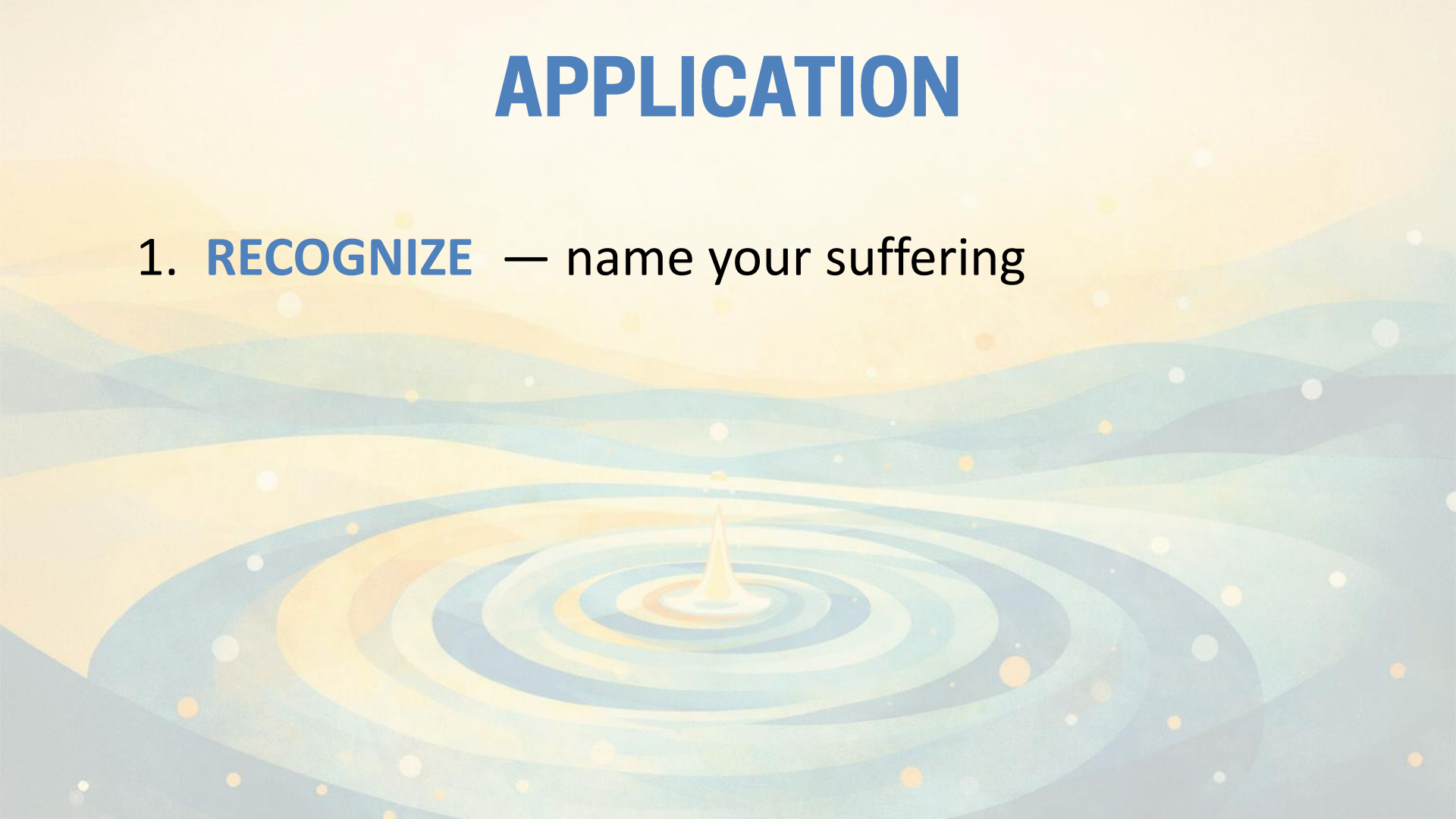


APPLICATION



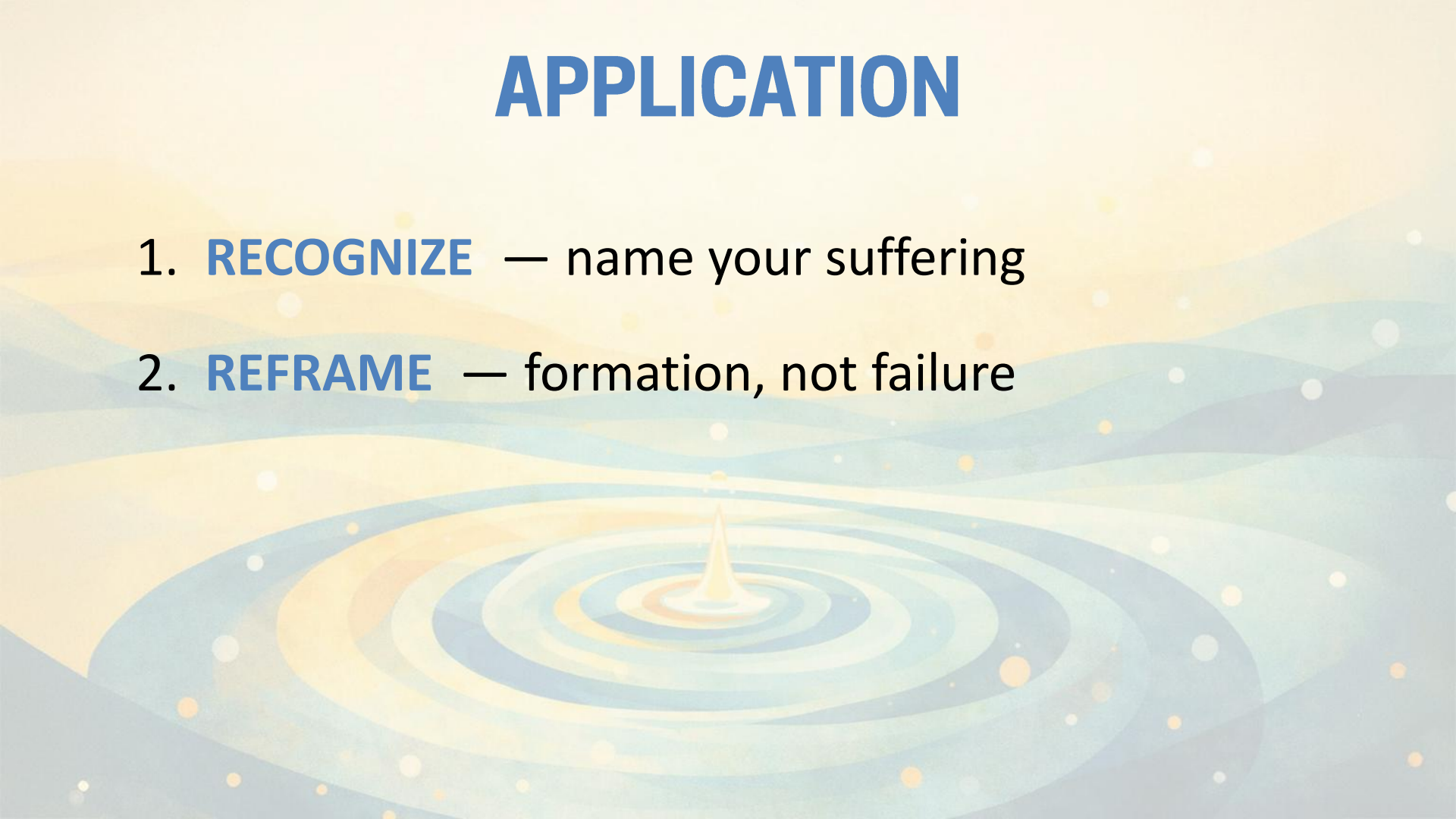
APPLICATION

1. **RECOGNIZE** — name your suffering



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2. **REFRAME** — formation, not failure



APPLICATION

1. **RECOGNIZE** — name your suffering
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3. **LEAN IN** — roots grow together

3. LEAN IN TOGETHER



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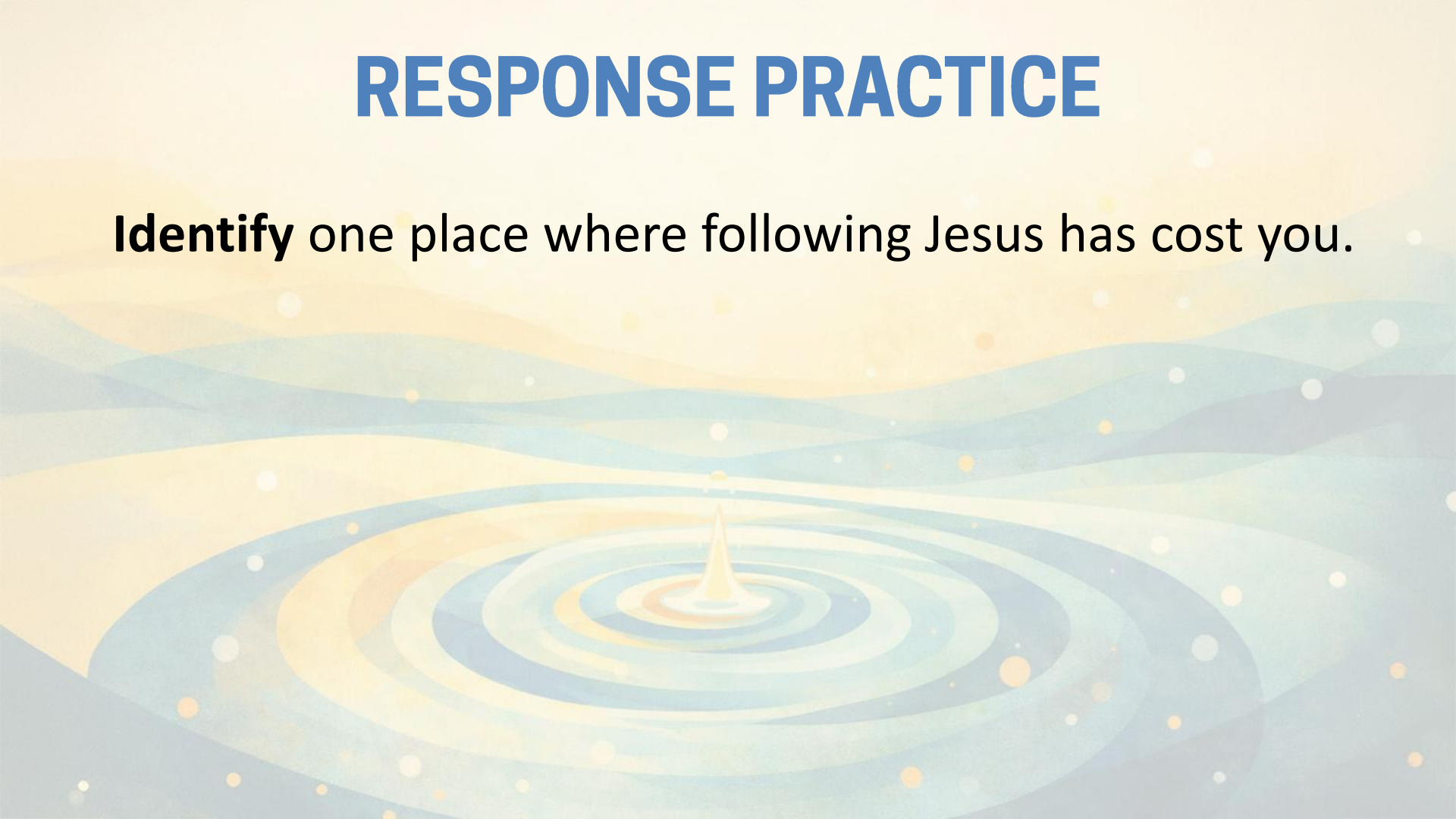


APPLICATION

1. **RECOGNIZE** — name your suffering
2. **REFRAME** — formation, not failure
3. **LEAN IN** — roots grow together
4. **STAY OPEN** — bear fruit right now

RESPONSE PRACTICE

Identify one place where following Jesus has cost you.



RESPONSE PRACTICE

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Open your hands.



WHEN FAITH COSTS YOU

1 Peter 4:12-19

