

Scripture Reading:

Exodus 1:1 – 12; Matthew 2:1 – 18;
Revelation 1:4 – 8



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Persecution is God's work
in the waiting

1. Persecution is assured
by the mission

Persecution is assured, because the Gospel is
seen as a threat.

This is because it IS a threat.

**The Gospel is a clash of kingdoms, and a
terrifying personal indictment.**

If the Gospel isn't relieving, it's threatening.



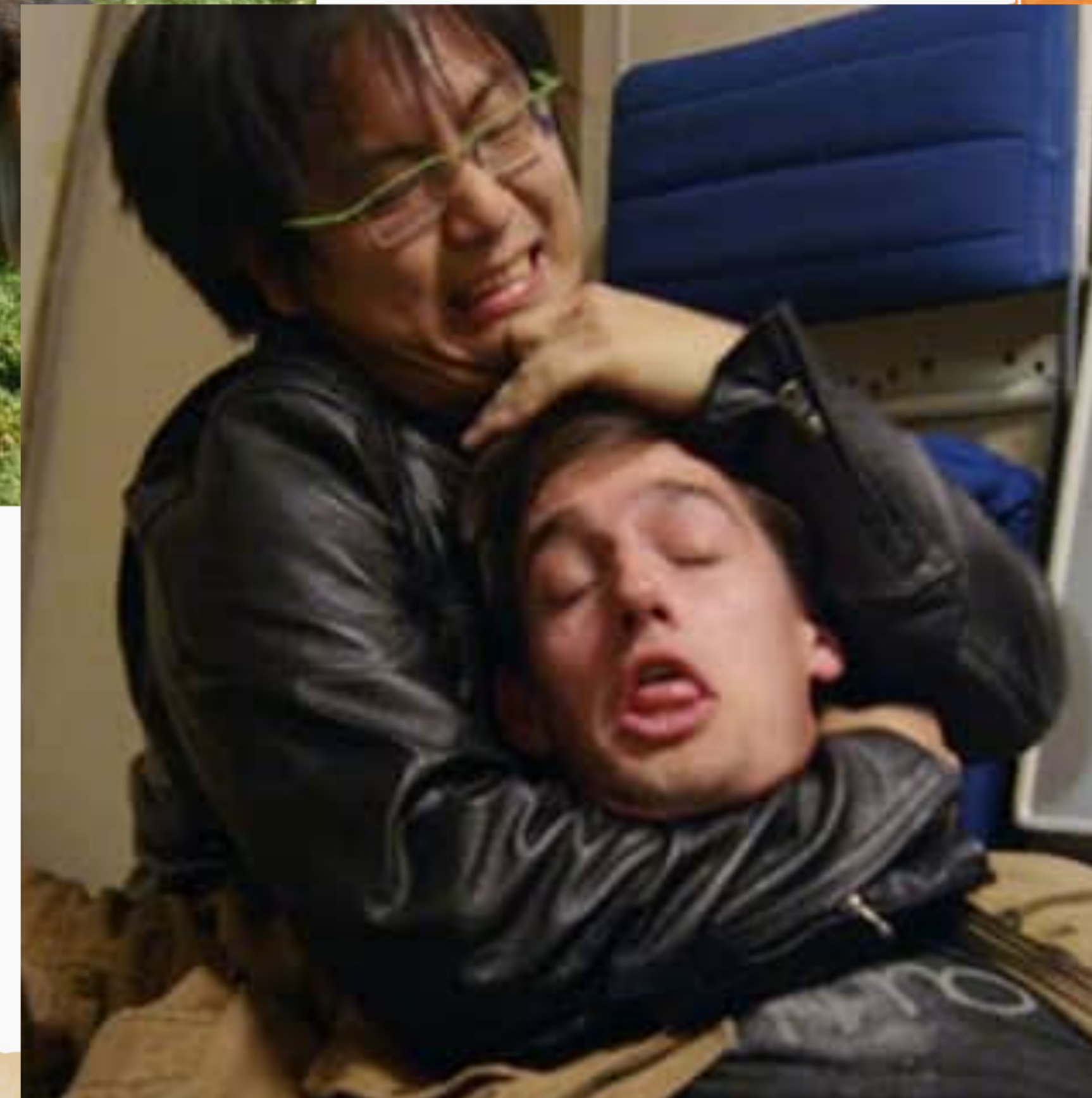
The existence of a people with God's
promises assures persecution



The threat is inherent in the message

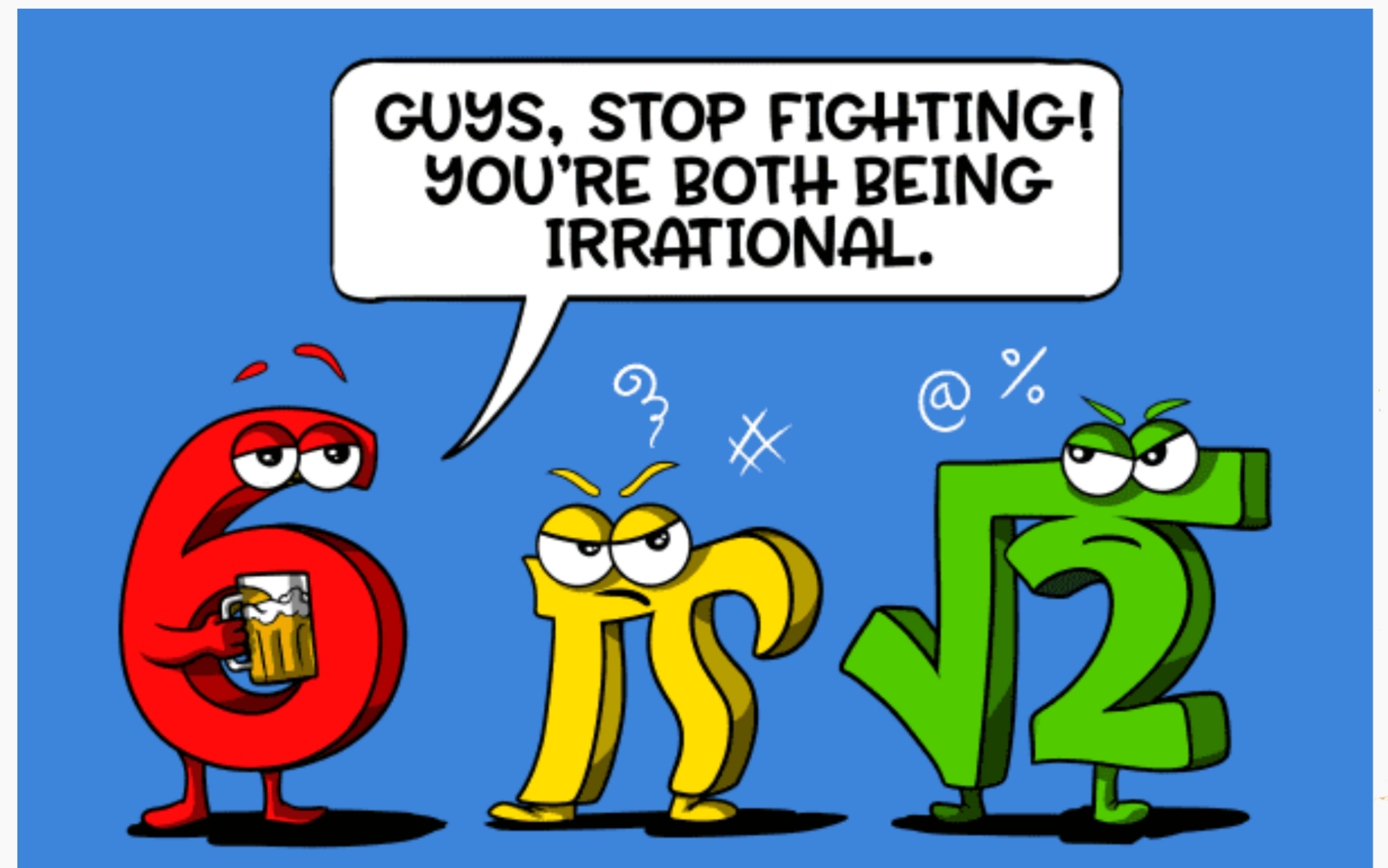


Creatures don't do well when treatened



The rational threat manifests itself in:
irrational explanations and
disproportionate attacks

"They'll fight for
our enemies"
-Pharoah



4 Levels of natural persecution

1. **Separation**- emotional and social informal exclusion

2. **Caricature**- magnification of differences and self-righteous slander

3. **Repression**- Marginalization and containment. Preventing addition and fostering atrophy.

4. **Oppression**- direct attack to plunder, scatter or destroy a weaker adversary with impunity.

Understand the implications of our mission:

2 Tim 3:12-15

1 Thessalonians 3:2-4

1 Peter 2:11-16

Application:

1. Persecution is to be expected
2. You cannot be good enough to escape
3. You cannot be sophisticated enough to escape
4. You can be like Jesus

2. Persecution is part of
believing in Christ

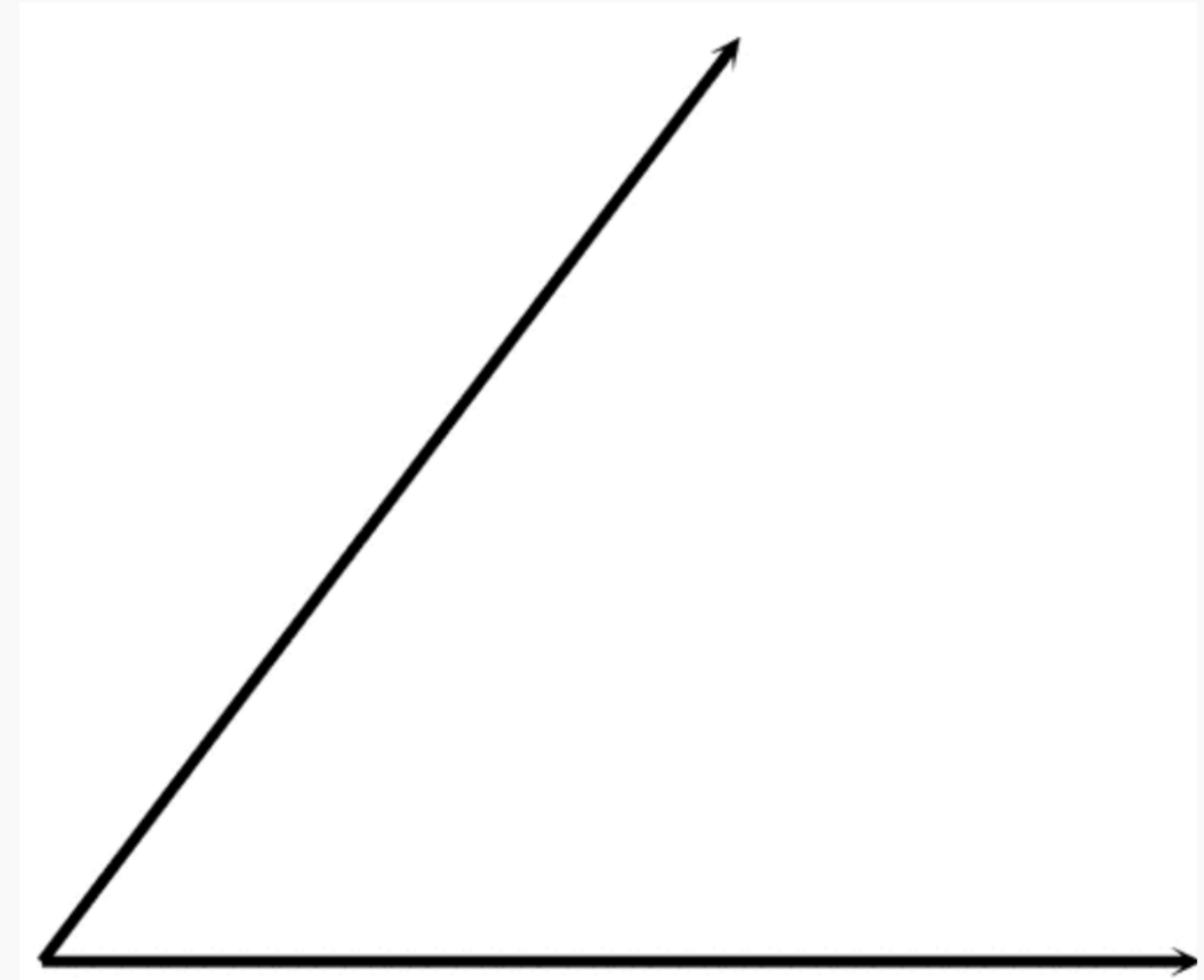
Persecution isn't just a
predictable reaction of the
World,

It is a unique spiritual
discipline of God.

There is some spiritual fruit that
only persecution grows reliably.



Big Principle:

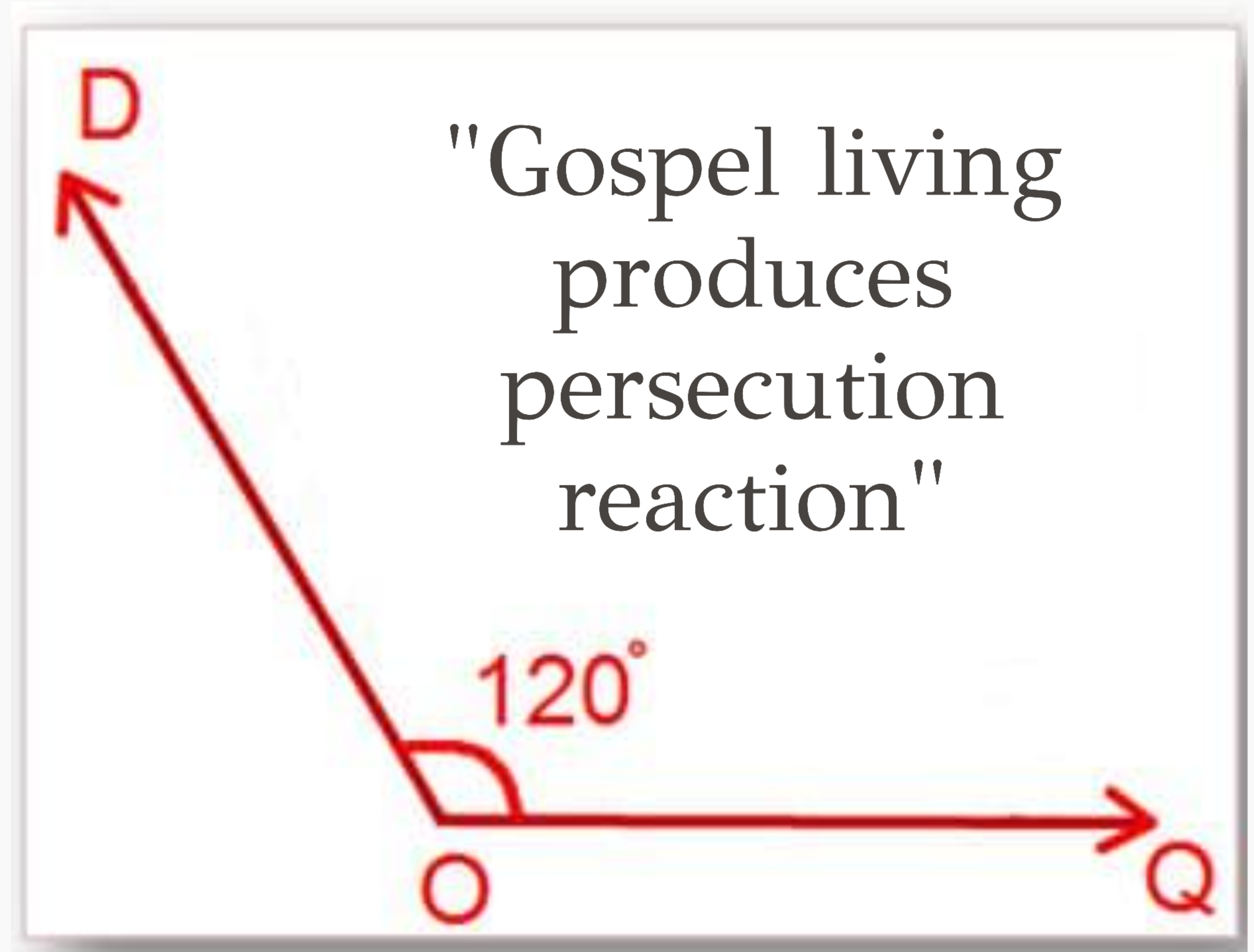


"Single Angle Fallacy"

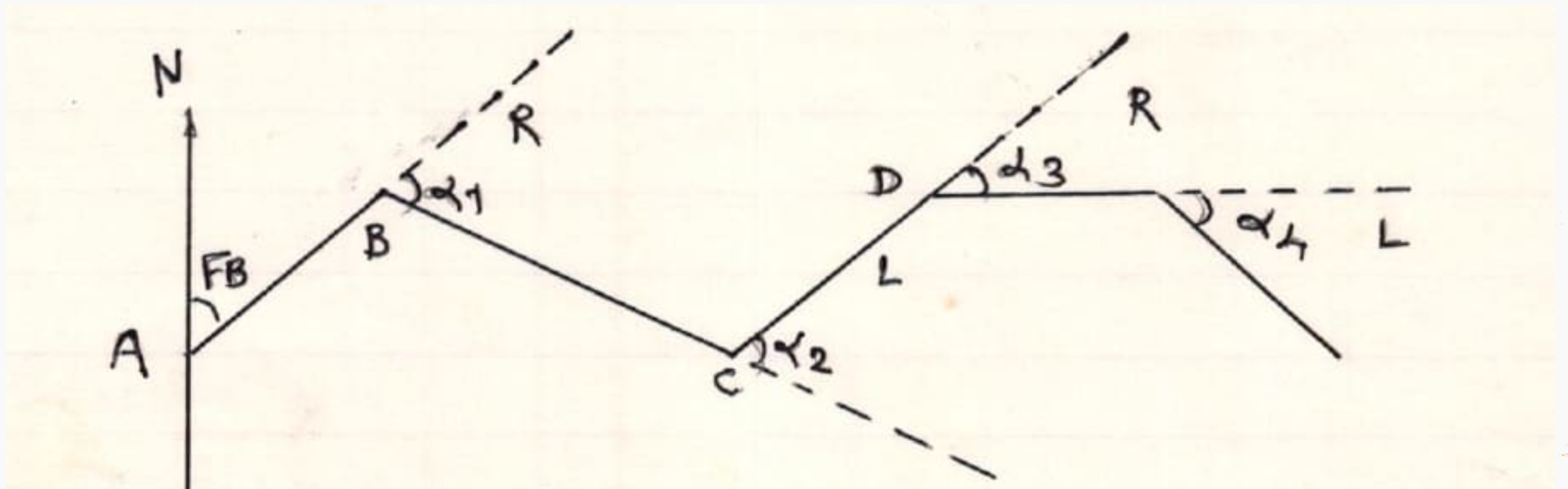
Don't assume God is only working one angle.

He's not that simplistic.

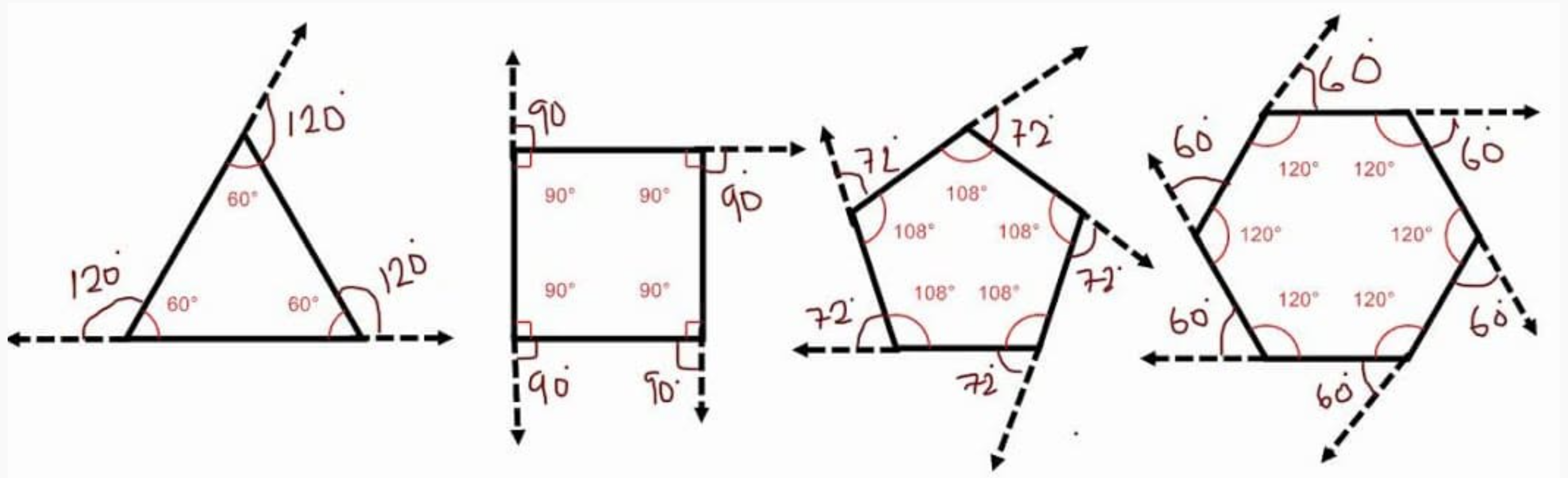
He may not even be working the angle you assume.



Even a "deflection analysis"
is too simplistic



God is working angles within angles.



Which means he "wastes" less than you think.

Persecution is not only part of following Christ in his mission, it is part of how Jesus shapes us in the life of the Spirit.



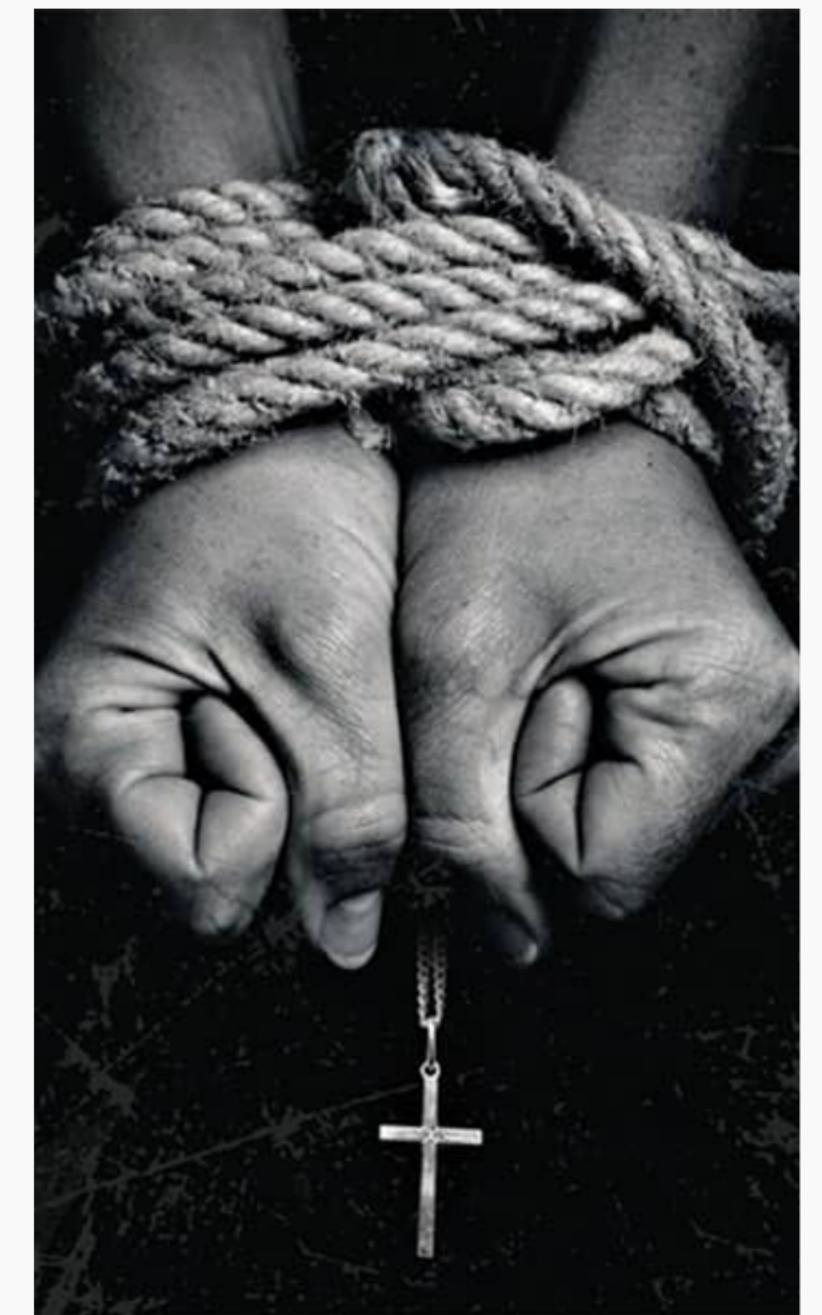
Hebrews 12:7 – 12

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons...God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, *it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace* for those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees.

A few applications...

Application is
primarily
YOUR JOB.

1. The Love of God – instead of the World
2. Love of Truth – unwilling to lie
3. Definite faith – rather than gradual cooling
4. Love of righteousness
5. Love of solidarity
6. Love of humility
7. Love of humanity and God's image



3. Faith is prepared
for persecution

(and so is prepared for anything)

3 human reactions to persecution

1. **Persecution Complex**- Everyone's out to get me (not Pharoah's daughter or Magi)
2. **Victim Mentality** - I can't succeed so it's futile to try (Parable of the Talents, Mt 25)
3. **Persecution Prepared** - I'm mentally and personally prepared to wait, work, and resist as long as it takes.

Persecution Preparedness

Matthew 5:10 – 16

Matthew 10:23 – 39



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