



The Narrow Road

Matthew 7:13-14

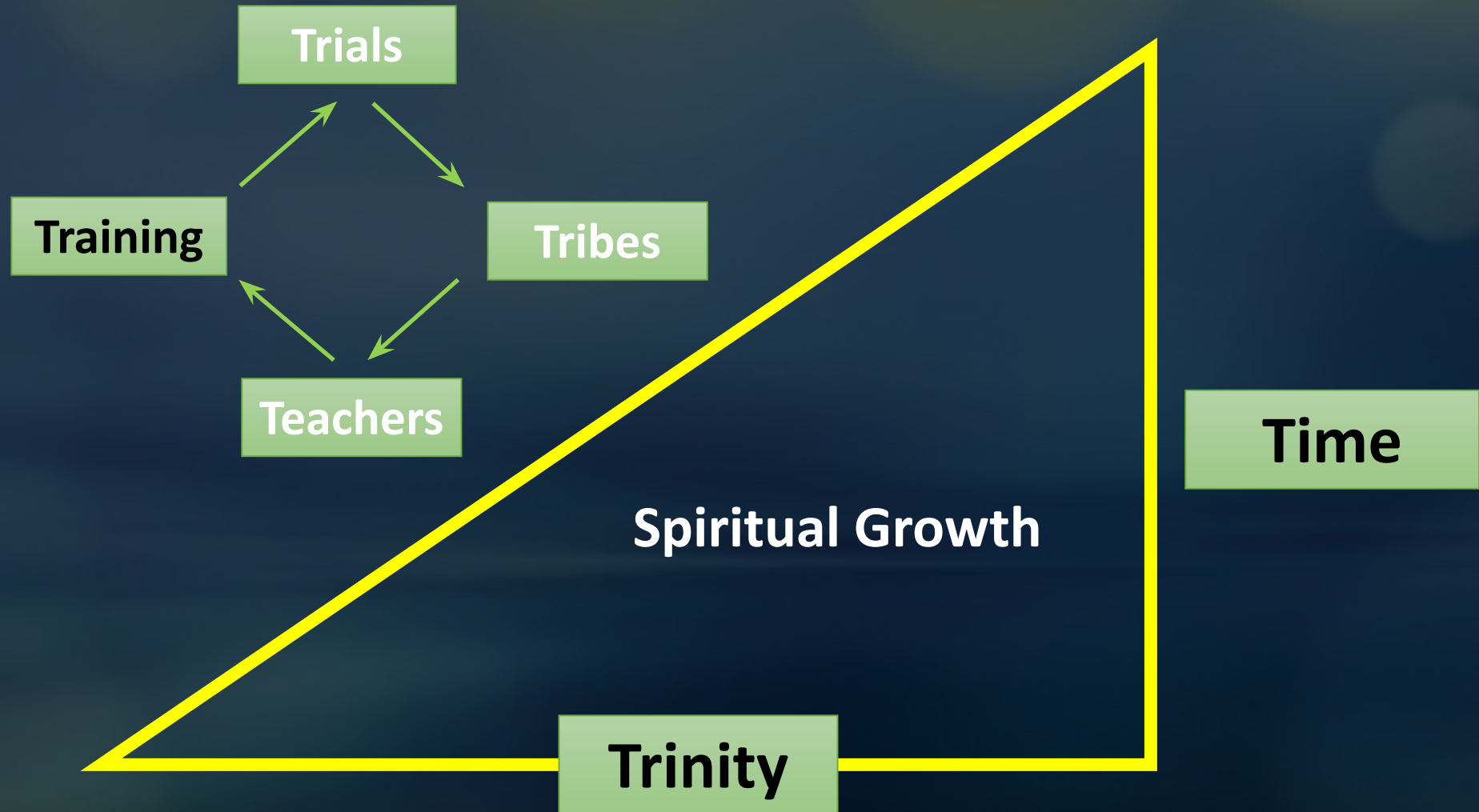
“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But **small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it**

Matthew 7:13-14

The narrow road is to **control your thoughts** and **to strip yourself from your own will** for the sake of God. This is the meaning of the disciples' words, "lo, we have left everything to follow you"

Abba Ammonas – a Desert Father

Six Key Components for Spiritual Growth



Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee, let thy
water and thy blood from thy wounded side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure, save from wrath and **make me**
pure

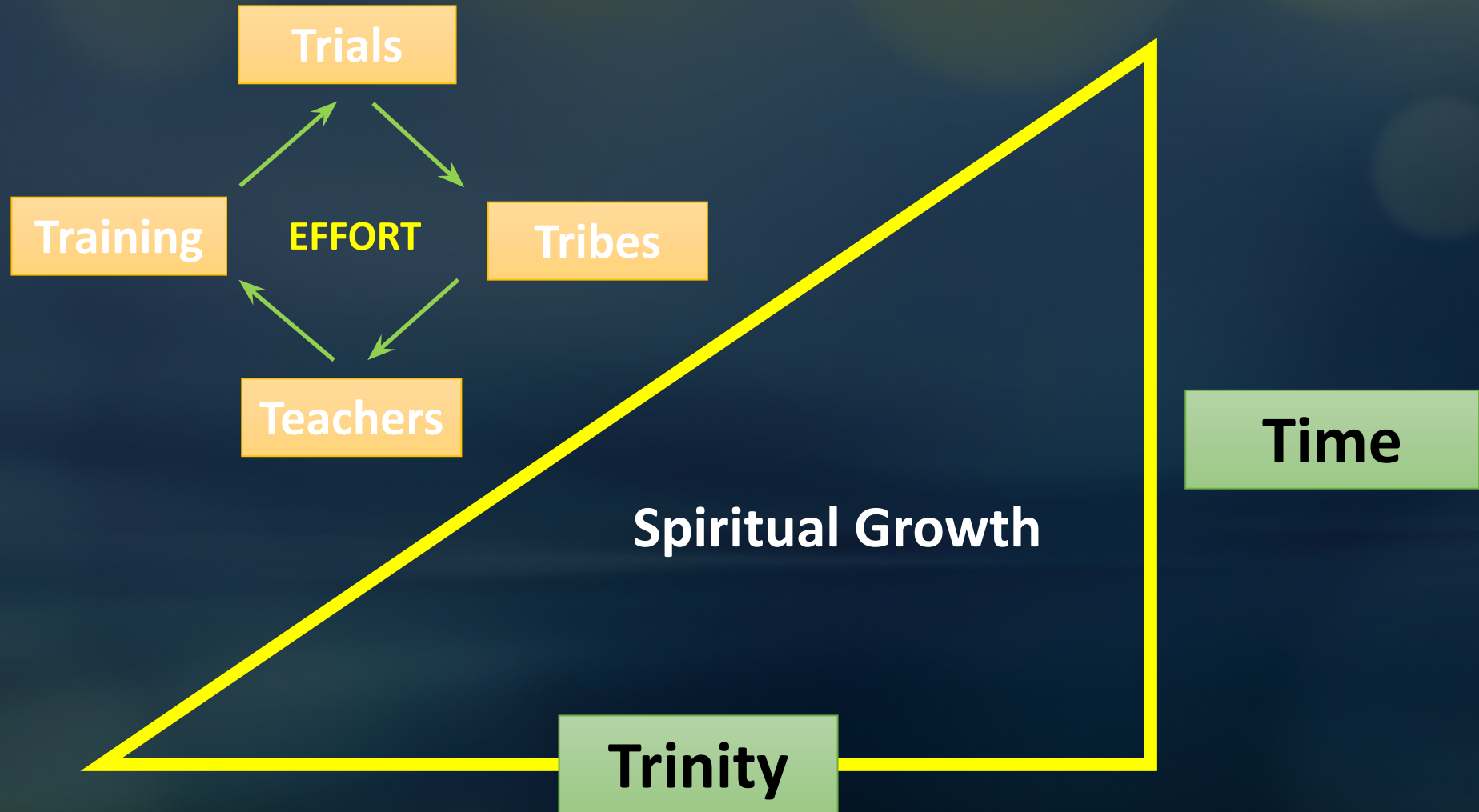
Rock of Ages, Hymn

“Grace is not opposed to effort but to earning”

“It is true that without God we can do nothing, but it is also true if we do nothing we will also be without God”

Dallas Willard

Four Components that Requires Effort



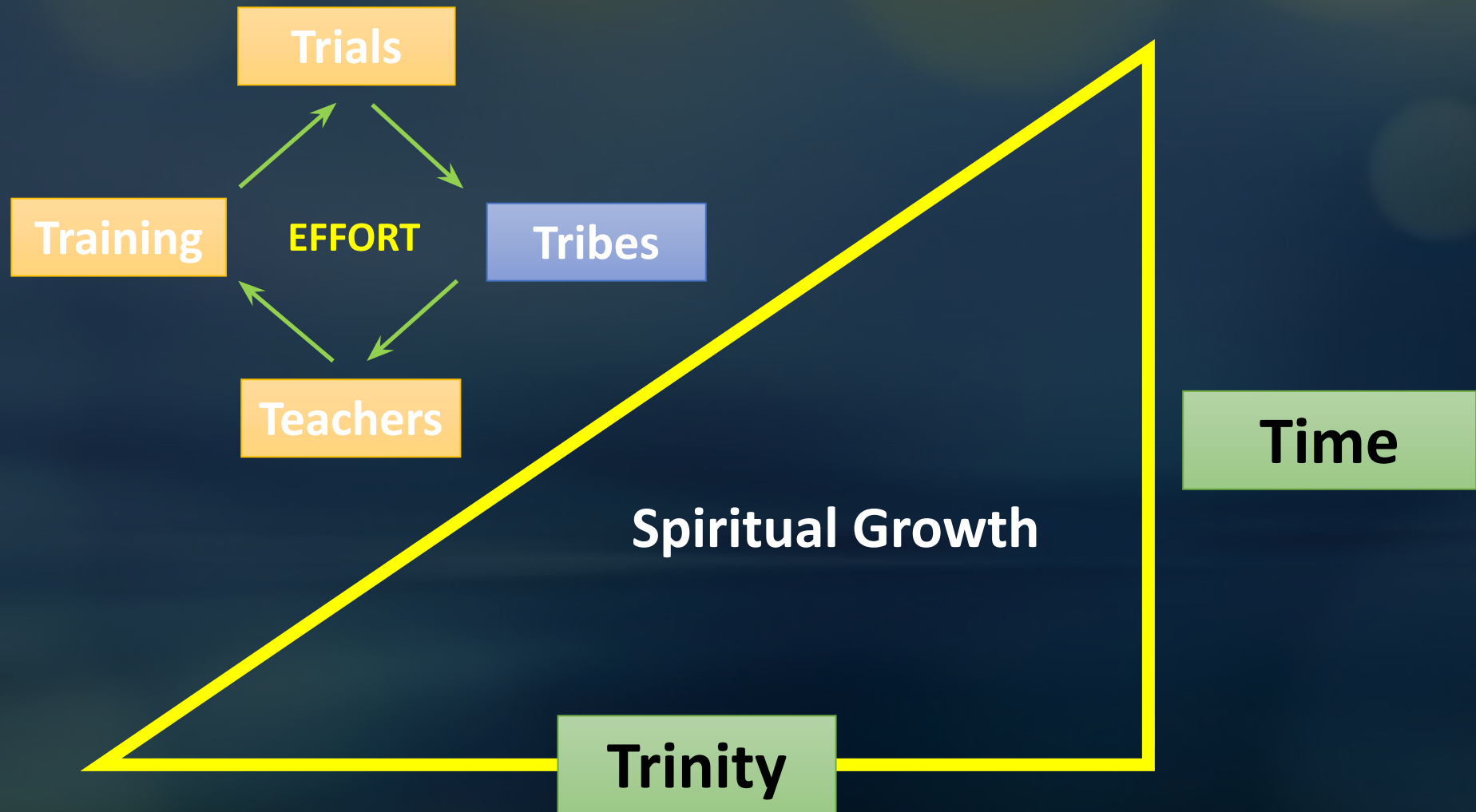
“A bad teacher presents the truth; a good teacher helps us
to find it”

Adolph Diesterweg

Three Cheers for Mentors – Robert Lewis

- A Mentor is one who **supports** rather than **competes** with you
- A Mentor is one who is primarily a **cheerleader**, not a **critic**
- A Mentor is one who seeks to **encourage** the development of your gifts while seeking to **protect** you from costly mistakes.
- A Mentor is the one who **admires** and **delights** in you because he/she **recognizes** your value and potential
- A Mentor is not necessary a close **friend** but a close **confidant**

Role of **Relationships** in Spiritual Growth



Spiritual formation occurs in the context of community. Long term **interpersonal relationships are crucible of genuine progress** in Christian life. People stay and grow. People who leave do not grow. It is simple but profound reality that we grow and thrive together or we don't grow much at all.

Chris Smith and John Pattison – Slow Church

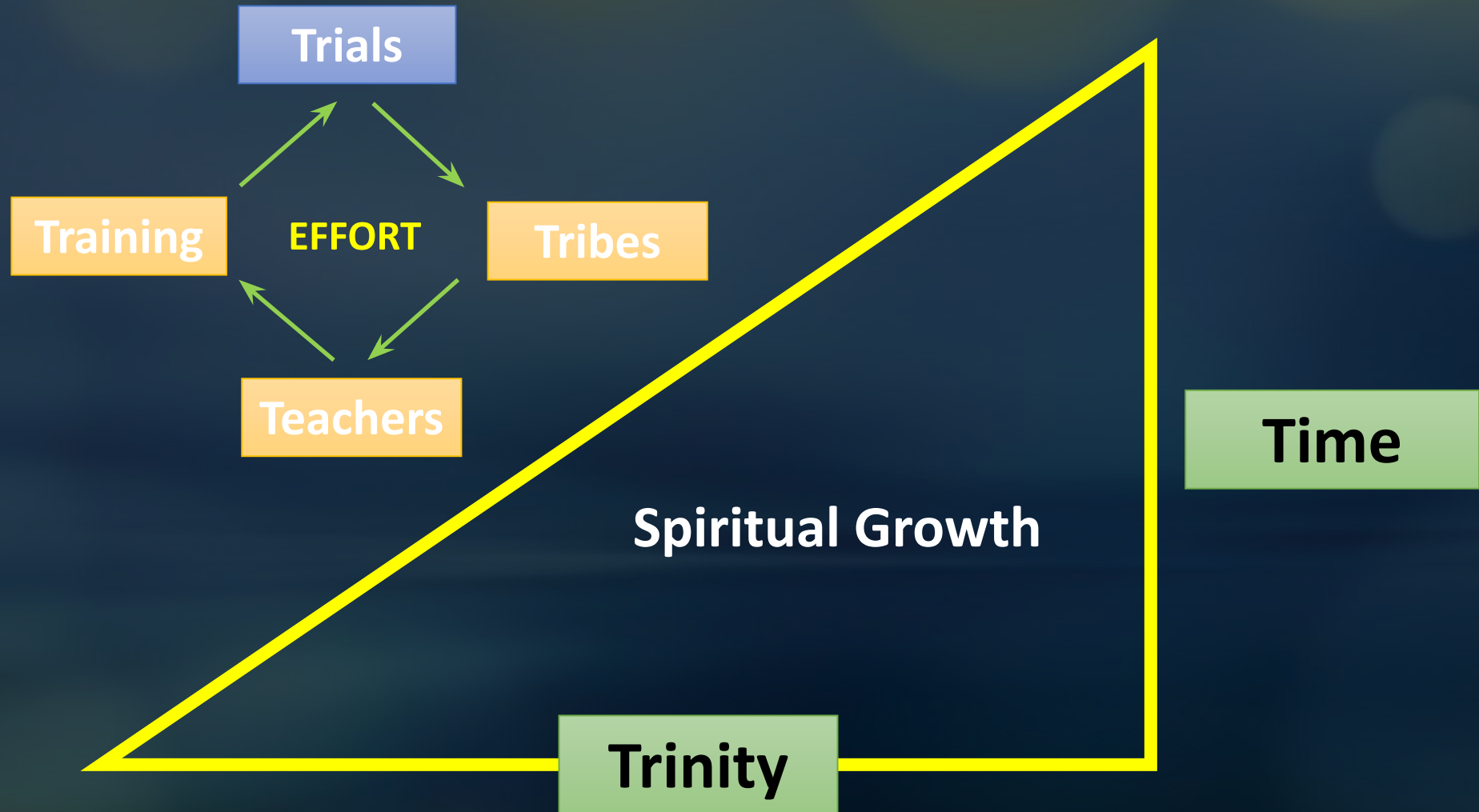
True Christian community is nothing like our fantasies and illusions of a wonderful, welcoming family. Sometimes it is like that, **but more often is like a crucible**. We have to live in proximity to people we don't like. Even if we do like them in the beginning, we will soon discover their annoying qualities.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer – Life Together

A young monk asked his desert Father, “I have found a place where my peace is not disturbed by the Brethren; do you advise me to live there? He replied, “The place for you is where you will not harm the Brethren”.

Abba Poeman - *A Desert Father*

Role of **Trials** in Spiritual Growth



And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have **suffered a little while**, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast

1 Peter 5:10

The road to glory is laid with 3Ps



Promise

*Eternal
glory*



Problem

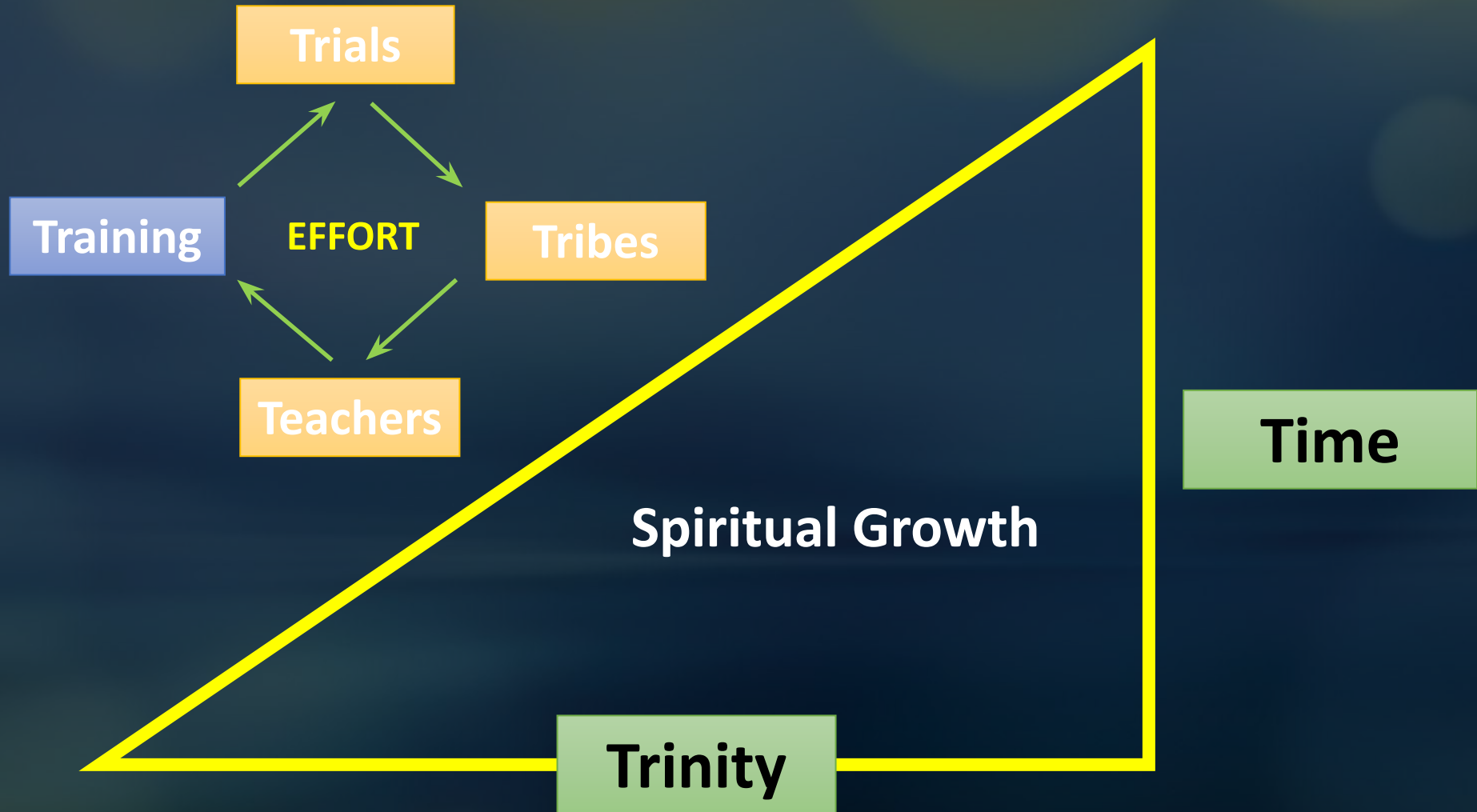
*Suffer a
little while*



Promotion

*Strong,
firm and
steadfast*

Role of **Training** in Spiritual Growth



“Physical training is good, but *training for godliness* is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come”

1 Timothy 4:8

What each **Spiritual Training** is good for?

Starving (Fasting)	Saying no to ungodliness, break down sin patterns
Silence	Home for the heart, wisdom of speech
Solitude	Cure for distraction, unholy dependence (e.g. busyness)
Singing	Staying in God
Scripture memorization	Cure for deception, aid the hearing of the voice of God
Service	Humility
Simplicity	True freedom
Secrecy	Cure for insecurity (e.g. a desire for recognition)

Spiritual Growth takes place over **Time**

